

FOLDER NO.

196

T Plan

Valdez, Alaska
February 15, 1956

Mr. George Lehleitner
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear George:

It is a great pleasure to transmit the enclosed resolution to you. I know that you fully understand the sincere appreciation all the delegates and staff at Alaska's Constitutional Convention had for the personal sacrifices you have made in our behalf. We adopted a number of other resolutions. This one, however, expresses the gratitude of Alaskans to a man who, though residing thousands of miles from us, has ignited a spark that was hitherto nonexistent.

I am personally very sorry that it had not been brought to my attention you were leaving on the train. It had been my understanding that you were to catch the plane the next day. Let me apologize for not having seen you off.

If I ever get to your part of the country you can rest assured that I will come and visit you and I surely hope that if you ever return to Alaska, you will come to Valdez and visit with me.

My very best wishes to you, George, and give my kindest regards to your family.

Sincerely yours,

WM. A. EGAN
President

WAE/cwt

Encl.

Condensed - "Alaska Tennessee Plan"

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in a spirit of complete selflessness and at great personal expenditure of time, effort, and money; and

WHEREAS, as a fully enfranchised American citizen, he shares with all Alaskans an earnest desire to see that we achieve our rightful free-born heritage within the American nation; and

WHEREAS, he has made numerous trips to Alaska to assist us in our aspirations for statehood, and has outlined in great detail to this convention and to the people of Alaska the historical advantages of the Tennessee Plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska Constitutional Convention that Mr. George H. Lehleitner of New Orleans, Louisiana, be hereby designated and acclaimed by this body to be an Honorary Member of the Alaska Constitutional Convention and an Honorary Ambassador of Good Will from this Convention to the People of the United States and to the members of Congress in our endeavor to achieve Statehood for Alaska.

DONE at College, Alaska, this twenty-eighth day of January, 1956, by direction of the Convention.

William A. Egan President

ATTEST: _____
Secretary

Alaska Tennessee Plan
Evidence -

RESOLUTION

CERTIFICATION UNDER ALASKA-TENNESSEE PLAN

WHEREAS the Alaska Constitutional Convention has adopted the Alaska-Tennessee Plan as Ordinance Number Two of the Constitution of the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS it has been the practice in territories which have elected their members of Congress before the enactment of statehood enabling legislation to have the President of the Constitutional Convention sign a memorial stating the reasons for this action, and for presentation to the United States Congress by the first senators and representatives, the memorial serving as their credentials:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska Constitutional Convention that President William A. Egan is hereby authorized to prepare and sign a memorial to the Congress of the United States, which memorial shall serve as the certificate of election and as the credentials of the senators and representative elected by the people of Alaska, and which shall contain appropriate statements of the votes cast and the reasons for the election.

DONE at College, Alaska, this fourth day of February, 1956, by the direction of the Convention.

President

William A. Egan

ATTEST: _____

Secretary

Constitutional Convention
February 4, 1956

RESOLUTION

Introduced by the Committee on Administration on
Recommendation of the Committee on Ordinances

WHEREAS, the Convention has adopted the Alaska-Tennessee Ordinance as part of the Constitution, and

WHEREAS, it has been customary in territories using this method of securing statehood, to have the president of the convention sign a memorial to the Congress stating the reason for this action and to deliver the memorial to the senators and representative-elect for their presentation to the Congress and to serve as their credentials, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Delegates in Convention assembled:
That President William A. Egan, be, and he is hereby authorized to prepare and sign a memorial after the election of senators and a representative, directed to the Congress of the United States, which memorial shall be the certification of election and credentials of the officers-elect, and in substance shall contain a statement of the votes cast for the offices and the reasons that the Territory of Alaska used this method to petition Congress.



OPERATION STATEHOOD

ANCHORAGE CHAPTER

P. O. BOX 407

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA



January 30, 1956

Honorable William Egan, President
Alaska Constitutional Convention
University of Alaska
College, Alaska

Dear Mr. President:

The Board of Directors of Operation Statehood re-affirm the support of this organization for the "Tennessee Plan", which plan will afford the opportunity for Alaska citizens to elect a Congressional Delegation which will journey to Washington, D. C., and submit itself for recognition and proper seating.

Operation Statehood first endorsed the election of a Congressional Delegation and offered full support of such a program at its general membership meeting in 1954. Since that date, the membership and the Board of Directors has frequently indicated an increasing belief that such a procedure would expedite the granting of Statehood to the Territory of Alaska.

Operation Statehood is not blind to the improbable negative reactions to the Tennessee Plan, but rests secure in the belief that, as is the history in previous instances, the Congress of The United States will not and cannot refuse full representation to its taxpaying citizens once the issue is clearly drawn.

We therefore urge the adoption of this program of action and remain assured that once undertaken the people of the Territory will respond by enthusiastically endorsing it, all of which will measureably hasten Statehood for Alaska, --which is, after all, inevitable.

Respectfully,

Ancil H. Payne
President,
Operation Statehood

AHP:amw

Alaska Tennessee Plan

For Mr. Stewart's
File

Fairbanks, Alaska
January 25, 1956

To the Honorables, the Delegates to the Alaska State
Constitutional Convention:

Because I am fearful that I may unintentionally fail to express to you, individually, my deep appreciation of your very gracious reception last evening, I should like to use this means of so doing. It was a distinct privilege to have been invited to appear before you, and I shall long remember the warmth of your welcome.

Too, because so many of you afterwards posed the question: "What prompted your initial interest in statehood?", I feel that I am, in a sense, under obligation to satisfy it.

The question is no stranger after 9 years of statehood effort. Yet, it is one that is both easy...and difficult...to answer.

It is easy, for example, to simply say that I work for statehood because I earnestly believe it to be in the best interests of our nation that Alaska and Hawaii become states.

But the answer becomes progressively more difficult to compress into a few sentences when I try to outline ALL of the reasons WHY I believe this to be true. So, in the interest of conserving your time, I'll limit this answer to the principal reason.

Most Americans, I believe, are coming around to the realization that Lenin, Stalin, Molotov and other Soviet leaders were deadly in earnest when they told us, years ago, that the end objective of international communism was domination of the entire world. It has long been my studied belief that the checkmating of this Soviet aim is, by far, America's No. 1 problem. For our success...or our failure...to do so will, I believe, determine whether your grandchildren and my own shall live as free men and women...or as totalitarian slaves!

The war that is being fought is a different kind of struggle than that we are accustomed to associate with the word "war". It is, literally, a war of IDEAS in which the ultimate victory will go to the side that has won the most minds, rather than to they who have broken the most bodies.

Alaska Tennessee Plan

In such a struggle, any American policy which fosters or perpetuates discrimination and injustice IN ANY FORM will be exploited by the Communists to our national disadvantage. It becomes, then, each citizen's duty to do everything in his power to aid in their elimination. And, precisely because territoriality is rankly discriminatory, I deeply believe that its elimination would represent an important victory for our entire nation in its world-wide struggle with communism for the minds of men.

For, in this war, our deeds must confirm our words, or they will be turned against us with devastating effect. Consider this example:

Last year, the Congress of the United States passed a resolution denouncing colonialism. The vote, I believe, was unanimous.

Within a few weeks of that vote the same Congress, for the SEVENTH TIME since the end of World War II, refused to pass legislation that would have removed from Alaska and Hawaii the shackles of colonialism!

Which Congressional action, do you suppose, bit deepest into the minds of the leaders of present and recent colonial peoples in Asia and Africa?

You know what men of principle, both at home and abroad, think of such disgraceful shilly-shallying. They think precisely what you and I think...and respect for high American institutions and principles skids some more...and we've lost yet another skirmish in our vital struggle for the minds of men!

I would not have you think I am so naive as to believe that the grant of statehood to Alaska and Hawaii would, alone, decide this war of ideas in our favor. Far from it.

But I DO mean to convey to you that I believe it to be a matter of much deeper world significance than many of us have realized. For as long as America continues to practice raw colonialism in Hawaii and Alaska, how can she even hope to convince other colonial peoples...and those who have but recently lost their own colonial shackles...that our hearts are with them?

To those inclined to doubt that the remainder of the world takes much note of 700,000 Alaskans and Hawaiians, and the unjust discriminations you are subject to, I should like to pose this question:

How many tens of thousands of men "on the fence" in other parts of the world, do you suppose, lost much of their faith in America and American justice by consequence of the wanton kidnapping and murder of one fifteen year old colored boy...and, more significantly, because of the subsequent refusal of Mississippi authorities to indict the self-confessed kidnapers?

I would charge you to remember that that was a case of a grave injustice to a solitary person; you Alaskans and Hawaiians number three quarters of a million!

With all my heart and all my mind, I firmly believe, then, that each of you who labors for statehood not only works in his own best interest as an Alaskan, but more importantly, you are fighting the good fight for your entire country, and are thereby making a valuable contribution in its war against communist world domination.

And, because I so believe, I work for statehood.

Sincerely,

George H. Lehleitner

George H. Lehleitner

Alaska Tennessee Jan

P. S.

Because of the interest shown in the congressional letters read before the Convention, I felt you would welcome an opportunity to examine them in detail; hence, the photostatic copies attached.

In addition to the seventeen views reproduced here, five other affirmative letters arrived too late for reproduction. These (from one Senator and four Congressmen whose voting records reveal them as true friends of Alaska) uniformly stated that they would not be offended by the contemplated action. Two of these also called attention to their belief that the partisan composition of the congressional delegation would have a distinct bearing upon the reaction of a considerable segment of the Congress.

It is but proper that I should tell you that in addition to these twenty-two positive expressions, I also received three negative letters (from Congressmen Utt and Metcalfe, and Senator Anderson), all expressing their writers' belief that the proposed action would be unproductive of benefit.

And then, of course, most significant of all, is a message the content of which is already known to you. I am referring to the warmly affirmative telegram directed to President Egan by your own outstanding Delegate to Congress, Bob Bartlett.

I have also left with the Message Center some extra copies of the Tennessee Plan presentation mailed you during the holiday recess. You are welcome to such as can be used advantageously.

G. H. L.

STRATEG

Dramatic Bid
For Admission
Gains SupportNewly Elected Solons
Would Go To Congress,
Request To Be Seated

FAIRBANKS (Special) — A dramatic bid for statehood by electing two Senators and a representative to go to Washington and request that they be seated in Congress is under consideration among delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

The plan is gaining momentum and may come to the floor of the convention at the end of the month. No formal proposal has yet been made. It is being discussed in committees and outside the convention hall.

Sen. William F. Knowland of California encouraged the discussion by stating his approval when he met with a group during his recent visit. Delegates said he promised his support and said it would not be offensive to members of the Congress.

The delegates say that Senator Knowland went so far as to say he would support the Alaska even if the admission of the two senators might change control of the Senate from Republican to Democratic leadership.

Some moves by Alaska would be the most unprecedented in the history of the nation. Delegates gained some support for the same method. They were Tennessee in 1796, Michigan in 1820, Oregon in 1859 and California in 1850. Modified forms of the same plan were successful for Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, Kansas and Iowa.

Because Tennessee was the first state to follow this course of action, it is often called the "Tennessee Plan."

B. F. SISK
18TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA
COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 11, 1956

JACKSON T. CARLE
Executive Secretary
432 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

METTY L. CLOUGH
District Office
228 BLACKSTONE AVENUE
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA
TELEPHONE 5-1726

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans - Louisiana

Airmail

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

I want to apologize to you for my delay in responding to your letter of December 23rd concerning your proposed presentation to the members of the Alaska State Constitution Convention. I am sure you will understand the delay in view of the necessity of forwarding it to me in Washington. I have only now had the opportunity to examine your proposed presentation in detail.

I want to offer my highest compliments upon your excellent analysis of the situation confronting the people of Alaska, your analysis of the present situation in Congress respecting the statehood proposal, and your advancement of the "Tennessee" plan as offering the best possibility of Alaska achieving statehood. I am very much impressed by the facts and historical material you have assembled, and my only comment is to urge most strongly that you not fail to deliver your message to the members of the Constitutional Convention.

My conviction that Alaska should be admitted as a state has been reinforced by my recent trip there. I want to assure you that I will do all in my power toward earliest action and for action if your proposals are executed and what in effect would be an established state is presented to Congress for admission during the current session. I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity you have extended me to further familiarize myself with these facts.

Very truly yours,

Bernie Sisk
B. F. SISK, H. C.

DFS:j/a

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
LABOR AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
January 10, 1956

AIRMAIL

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

Thank you for your kind letter of December 23 enclosing a copy of the address you are to give at the Alaska State Constitutional Convention later this month.

While I have, unfortunately not had time to examine your proposal in detail, I certainly believe that the Tennessee Plan for entering into statehood has stood the test of time, and see no reason why Alaskans, should they so decide, might not follow suit. As you know, I am a co-sponsor of S. 49, the bill now in the Senate for statehood for Alaska and Hawaii. Since we in the Senate successfully passed a statehood bill in the last Congress, we are waiting this time, for the House to act first. I should think that action such as that you propose would spur them to respond favorably.

I hope that you will extend my greetings and best wishes to the Convention delegates.

With best wishes,

Faithfully,

Paul H. Douglas

PHD:lcy

WILLIAM A. DAWSON
in Charge, Utah
1225 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 6, 1956

Mr. Geo. H. Lehleitner
601 South Galves Street
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

Thank you for your letter of December 23 in which you enclosed a copy of the proposal you intend to make before the Alaska State Constitutional Convention.

I personally would not be offended if Alaska should take the action proposed by you. I of course can not anticipate how this action would be interpreted by other members of Congress.

For your information I am enclosing a copy of a statement I am making January 9 to accompany a bill I am introducing to provide for an elective governor of Alaska.

Sincerely yours,

William A. Dawson, H.C.

WAD:nb
Enclosure

FRANK T. BOW
18TH DISTRICT OF CALIF.
DISTRICT OFFICE
512 FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING
CANTON, OHIO
NEW HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 4, 1956

Mr. Geo. H. Lehleitner
601 South Galves Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

Thank you for your letter of December 23 and the enclosed copy of the talk you proposed to give before the Alaska Constitutional Convention. I find it very interesting and you have my sincere compliments upon it. The Delegates at Fairbanks will profit thereby.

As to the effect of choosing two Senators in advance of Statehood, I doubt that it would be offensive to anyone. It might help.

Sincerely yours,

Frank T. Bow, H. C.

FTB/g

JACKSON T. GARLE
Executive Secretary
432 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON 24, D. C.

B. F. SISK
15TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA
COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.
January 11, 1956

BETTY L. CLOUGH
FIELD REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT OFFICE
217 BLACKSTONE AVENUE
FERRIS, CALIFORNIA
TELEPHONE 4-1700

Airmail

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans - Louisiana

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Very truly yours,

Bernie Sisk
B. F. SISK, M. C.

BFS:l/a

Anchorage Daily Times
ALASKA, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1955

STRATEGY

Dramatic Bid For Admission Gains Support

Newly Elected Solons Would Go To Congress, Request To Be Seated

FAIRBANKS Special — A dramatic bid for statehood to elect the two senators and a representative to go to Washington and request that they be seated in Congress is under consideration among delegates to the constitutional convention.

The plan is gaining momentum and many come to the front of the convention to hear the latest news. The proposal has been discussed by delegates and outside the convention hall.

Sen. William F. Knowland of California encouraged the discussions by stating his approval when he met with a group during his recent visit. Delegates said he promised his support and said it would not be offensive to members of the Congress.

The delegates say that Senator Knowland went as far as to say he would support the Alaska even if the admission of the two senators might change control of the Senate from Republican to Democratic leadership.

The move by Alaska would be the first by a state to do this since Michigan in 1837. Oregon in 1859 and California in 1850. Modified forms of the same plan were successful for Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas and Iowa.

Because Tennessee was the first state to follow this course of action, it is often called the "Tennessee Plan."

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Group Head Offer Recomp

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FAIRBANKS Special

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
601 South Galvez Street
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

I have read with much interest your note and the enclosed address which you are to make before the Alaska State Constitutional Convention in January. It is a most fascinating analysis, and I can only say that I am in complete agreement with your presentation.

In my opinion, only by such an approach can Alaska and now achieve statehood. Of course, it is imperative that the individual constitutions be very carefully drawn so that no valid objection to the republican form of government provided in the Constitution can be made. I will be most interested in your impressions of the reception which the Convention gives to your presentation and, of course, hope you will informally say that those of us who have, in the past, supported statehood, will continue to do so and will be happy to cooperate in every way possible.

This takes to you, personally, not only my keen admiration but a very warm hope for a new year of happiness and good luck for you and all close to you.

Sincerely yours,

James Roosevelt
JAMES ROOSEVELT

JP:cs

FRANK T. BOW
15th District of Ohio
DISTRICT OFFICE
215 First National Building
Columbus, Ohio
New House Office Building
Washington 24, D. C.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 4, 1956

Mr. Geo. H. Lehleitner
601 South Galvez Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

Thank you for your letter of December 23 and the enclosed copy of the talk you proposed to give before the Alaska Constitutional Convention. I find it very interesting and you have my sincere compliments upon it. The Delegates at Fairbanks will profit thereby.

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Sincerely yours,

Frank T. Bow
Frank T. Bow, M. C.

FTB/g

You enclose
the Alaska
should take the
appropriate how
of Congress.
statement
producing

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE RELATED AGENCIES
LEGISLATIVE
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS AND
SUPERVISION OF THE
AND DEFENSE ACT

SEN. WALTER DILL
SEN. CHARLES McNICHOLS
SEN. PHILIP H. FRANK
SEN. CLYDE WATSON
SEN. ALBERT WENDEL
SEN. C. VANDERGRIFT
SEN. JAMES H. EASTLAND
SEN. CARROLL A. O'DAY
SEN. JAMES EASTMAN
SEN. HENRY H. HALL
SEN. JOHN S. SPOFFORD
SEN. FRANK M. WHALEY
SEN. JAMES EARL RAY
SEN. H. RICHARD ROBERTS
SEN. JAMES ALBERT HASTINGS
SEN. FRANCIS P. MATCOCK
SEN. JOSEPH W. CLARK
SEN. T. CLAYTON KENNEDY
SEN. CHARLES McNICHOLS
SEN. JOHN W. MOHR

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

January 9, 1956

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
GEORGE H. LEHLEITNER & COMPANY
601 South Galvez Street
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of recent date, relative to Alaska's admission as a state, in which you seek my comment on a procedure suggested by you as being more conducive to that territory's admission than any heretofore attempted. I found of interest your attached memorandum setting forth the so-called "Tennessee Plan" and asserting that this approach had been pursued by the States of Tennessee, Michigan, Oregon and California in gaining statehood.

I can assure you that, in declining comment on your proposed plan, as far as I am concerned it would be difficult indeed for the good people of Alaska to alienate me in their cause to gain statehood. It goes without saying that I feel strongly that Alaska should be admitted to the Union.

However, since I can only speak for myself I would not hazard an opinion as to the feeling others might hold toward your proposal.

The value of educating the public to the worthiness of Alaska's pursuit of statehood is, of course, an important element of her undertaking, and doubly so as most folks will not have the occasion to visit Alaska as I have and know the situation first hand.

Your thoughtfulness in making available your research and thinking on this matter is appreciated.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Earle C. Clements
Earle C. Clements, U.S.S.

Clair Engle
in Denver, Colorado
1935 JANUARY
1935 BLUFF, CALIFORNIA
1935 JANUARY
1935 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Chairman
Committee
Interior and Insular
Affairs

December 30, 1955

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

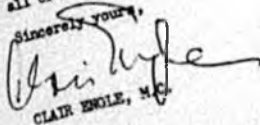
Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

I have read your letter of December 23, 1955, and the attached statement, regarding the "Tennessee Plan" with great interest.

Inasmuch as I agree with your basic premise that we are really slipping further away from statehood rather than gaining more strength, I cannot see how either Territory has anything to lose by adopting the "Tennessee Plan" or taking any other action short of open revolt and secession.

Your long and conscientious and wholly voluntary efforts on behalf of statehood for these two great Territories warrants the appreciation and admiration of all of us.

Sincerely yours,



CLAIR ENGLE, M.C.

CE:JTS

WILLIAM A. DAWSON
in Denver, Utah
1955 JANUARY 6

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 6, 1956

Mr. Geo. H. Lehleitner
601 South Galvez Street
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans, Louisiana

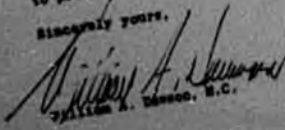
Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

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I personally would not be offended if Alaska should take the action proposed by you. I of course can not anticipate how this action would be interpreted by other members of Congress.

For your information I am enclosing a copy of a statement I am making January 9 to accompany a bill I am introducing to provide for an elective governor of Alaska.

Sincerely yours,



WILLIAM A. DAWSON, M.C.

WAD:eb
Enclosure

MEMBER:
COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND
INSULAR AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE:
PUBLIC LANDS
INDUSTRIES AND REGULATIONS
TERRITORIES AND INSULAR
ACQUISITIONS
MINES AND MINING
WATER AFFAIRS

JAMES E. MURRAY, MONT., CHAIRMAN
CLAYTON B. ANDERSON, N. DAK.
RUSSELL B. LONG, LA.
HARRY W. JACKSON, WASH.
JOSEPH E. BURNETT, WYOM.
ALAN BELLE, IND.
WENDELL L. HARRISON, MISS.

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

January 4, 1956

Mr. Geo. H. Lehleitner
601 South Galvez Street
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

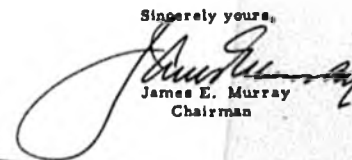
Thank you for sending me copies of the material you propose to submit to the Alaska State Constitutional Convention.

I cannot speak for the other friends of Alaska in Congress, but I do not at this time see any reason why the action you propose would prove offensive to me. You have presented the legal precedents in very convincing terms.

I would like to suggest, however, that you also submit the matter to Senators Clinton P. Anderson and Henry M. Jackson. Senator Anderson is ranking Majority Member of the Committee, and Senator Jackson is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Territories, where the statehood bill now rests.

Thank you for letting me know of your proposal.

Sincerely yours,



JAMES E. MURRAY
Chairman

JAMES I. DOLLIVER
BY CHESTER, IOWA

HOME ADDRESS:
FORT DENNIS, IOWA

COMMITTEE ON
INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN
COMMERCE

SECRETARY:
BARBARA WHITE SULLIVAN
FORT DENNIS, IOWA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 4, 1956

COUNTRIES:
BORN
CLARK
CRAWFORD
ENNET
GIBSON
HAMILTON
WYOMING

CLERK:
JO BIRDELL
FORT DENNIS, IOWA

Mr. Geo. H. Lehleitner,
Geo. H. Lehleitner & Co.,
601 South Galvez St.,
P. O. Box 1097,
New Orleans 4, La.

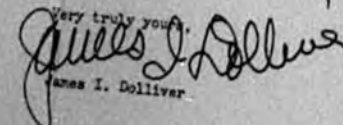
Dear Sir:

Having examined the proposal made in your letter of December 23, I see no reason why the steps proposed there should not be taken by Alaskans. The pattern set by the "Tennessee Plan" is a historic one and has been used repeatedly by other states seeking admission.

Having had more than an ordinary opportunity to study and examine the situation, I am firmly convinced that Alaska should have statehood and the sooner the better.

With all good wishes,

Very truly yours,



JAMES I. DOLLIVER

JID:JHB

HERBERT M. LEHMAN
NEW YORK

AIR MAIL SPECIAL DELIVERY

Mr. George H. Lehleitner
601 South Galvez Street
P. O. Box 1097 - Zone 4
New Orleans

Dear Mr. Lehleitner:

Thank you for your letter and the statement you propose to submit to the Convention.

I found it very stimulating the general climate of opinion in what kind of reaction would be given a firm believer in free discussion and discussion that plans, programs,

You ask specifically whether the outline, would prove offensive to the hood for Alaska. I want the people in every constructive way open to

letter
of the
over
as time
as far
advise
approach

Immediate
see no reason
of the procedure
of securing
At least, I do
they should not
new method. It
for their present
a supporter of
I do not care who
done soon.

With best

JOHN A. HANCOCK, MASS., CHAIRMAN
CLAYTON A. ANDERSON, N. DAK., MEMBER
FRANK B. ROWLAND, ILL., MEMBER
WILLIAM H. LOUIS, ILL., MEMBER
ARTHUR W. CROSSLAND, IOWA, MEMBER
W. ARTHUR HAYES, N. C., MEMBER
ALAN GARDNER, ILL., MEMBER
ROBERT L. HENDERSON, MISS., MEMBER

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

January 4, 1956

Mr. Geo. H. Lehlitner
601 South Galvez Street
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehlitner:

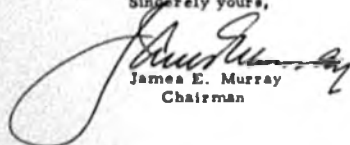
Thank you for sending me copies of the material you propose to submit to the Alaska State Constitutional Convention.

I cannot speak for the other friends of Alaska in Congress, but I do not at this time see any reason why the action you propose would prove offensive to me. You have presented the legal precedents in very convincing terms.

I would like to suggest, however, that you also submit the matter to Senators Clinton P. Anderson and Henry M. Jackson. Senator Anderson is ranking Majority Member of the Committee, and Senator Jackson is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Territories, where the statehood bill now rests.

Thank you for letting me know of your proposal.

Sincerely yours,


James E. Murray
Chairman

JAMES I. DOLLIVER
Six District, 1954

HOME ADDRESS:
Fort Collins, 1954

COMMITTEE ON
INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN
COMMERCE

MEMBERS:
HARRINGTON MILLER
Florida, 1954

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.
January 4, 1956

COUNTRIES:
MEXICO
CANADA
CUBA
CHINA
INDIA
GREECE
HAWAII
OTHER

CLERK:
JO BRIDGELL
Fort Collins, 1954

Mr. Geo. H. Lehlitner,
Geo. H. Lehlitner & Co.,
601 South Galvez St.,
P. O. Box 1097,
New Orleans 4, La.

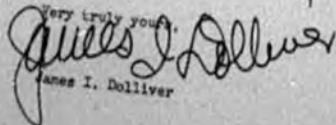
Dear Sir:

Having examined the proposal made in your letter of December 23, I see no reason why the steps proposed there should not be taken by Alaskans. The pattern set by the "Tennessee Plan" is a historic one and has been used repeatedly by other states seeking admission.

Having had more than an ordinary opportunity to study and examine the situation, I am firmly convinced that Alaska should have statehood and the sooner the better.

With all good wishes,

Very truly yours,


James I. Dolliver

JID:JHE

HERBERT H. LEHMAN
NEW YORK

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D. C.

JULIUS C. EDELSTEIN
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
THOMAS V. BRUNKARD
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

January 7, 1956

AIR MAIL SPECIAL DELIVERY
Mr. George H. Lehlitner
601 South Galvez Street
P. O. Box 1097 - Zone 4
New Orleans

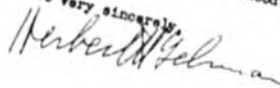
Dear Mr. Lehlitner:

Thank you for your letter and the opportunity to read the statement you propose to give at the Alaska State Constitutional Convention.

I found it very stimulating. I, of course, do not know what kind of opinion in Alaska intimately enough to know what kind of reaction would be given to such a proposal. But I am a firm believer in free discussion of all ideas, for it is in discussion that plans, programs, ideas become clear and precise.

You ask specifically whether or not such action, as you outline, would prove offensive to me. Certainly not, I am for statehood for Alaska. I want the people of Alaska to work for statehood in every constructive way open to them.

Yours very sincerely,



CHARLES E. BENNETT
MEMBER
SEVENTH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

J. W. HORNMAN
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.

January 4, 1956

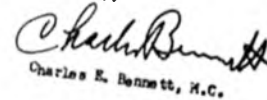
Mr. George H. Lehlitner
Geo. H. Lehlitner & Co.
601 S. Galvez Street
P.O. Box 1097
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehlitner:

Thank you for your December 23 letter, in which you ask if I would personally be offended if the people in Alaska by way of a local Constitutional convention set in motion a procedure for Alaska being taken in as a state. The answer to this is that it would be in no way offensive to me. I do not know if this plan would work, but it would not in any way offend me. You certainly deserve great credit for putting the energy and effort that you have into this worthwhile idea of having Alaska made a state.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,


Charles E. Bennett, M.C.

WAYNE N. ASPINALL, M. C.
SEVENTH DISTRICT
COLORADO

HOME ADDRESS:
PALMER, COLORADO

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT
CLERK
RESEARCH ASSISTANT
MESSAGE & BERRY

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.

January 3, 1956

Mr. George A. Lehlitner
601 South Galvez Street
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

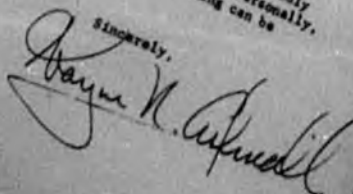
Dear Mr. Lehlitner:

I have received your letter of recent date together with the letter and statement which you have prepared for delivery to the Members of the Alaska State Constitutional Convention on January 16. I have read over the papers very thoroughly, and say I say, studied them as closely as time has permitted. You have brought to my attention a new approach as far as Alaska's progress for statehood is concerned, although I can advise that I have known enough history to appreciate the fact that your approach is entirely factual.

It is my opinion that you have evaluated Alaska's chances for immediate statehood under the usual processes quite accurately. I can see no reason why if the people of Alaska should accept the responsibility of securing it through the usual processes, that the ordinary procedure of securing it through the usual processes should be followed. Most assuredly, at least, I can't see where they have quicker than by the ordinary procedure. The precedents before heretofore established should be sufficient for their presentation before Congress. As you know, I am wholeheartedly a supporter of immediate statehood for both Alaska and Hawaii. Personally, I do not care what route they choose but I hope that something can be done soon.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,



COMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
MEMBERS:
CLAYTON A. ANDERSON
FRANK B. ROWLAND
WILLIAM H. LOUIS
ARTHUR W. CROSSLAND
W. ARTHUR HAYES
ALAN GARDNER
ROBERT L. HENDERSON

CLERK:
JO BRIDGELL

RESEARCH ASSISTANT
MESSAGE & BERRY

JOHN F. STANTON, CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
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WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
January 12, 1956

Mr. George H. Lehlitner
601 South Galvez Street
P. O. Box 1097
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehlitner:

I appreciate your letter of December 23, and regret that I have not had a chance to reply to it sooner.

The procedure you are suggesting for Alaska and Hawaii to follow in their efforts to win statehood is certainly not objectionable to me, but I cannot of course, speak for my colleagues in the Congress. The historical research you and others have done outlines a fascinating story, and I find it very interesting.

As you know, I am strong for granting statehood to both Alaska and Hawaii, and hope that our work to this end will ultimately be crowned with success.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

W. Kerr Scott
W. Kerr Scott

WKS:ep

OTTO E. PARMAN
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
10th District, Louisiana
WALTER H. WILLIAMS
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
10th District, Louisiana
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
1000 PENNSYLVANIA BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D. C.
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
1200 PENNSYLVANIA STREET
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 11, 1956

Mr. George H. Lehlitner
601 South Galvez Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

My dear George:

This will acknowledge with sincere thanks the copy of the address that you will deliver before the Alaska Constitutional Convention.

As per usual, your material is excellently prepared, factual, and convincing. Insofar as I am personally concerned, I would not change one sentence in the entire statement.

George, I have taken the liberty of writing the President of the Alaska Constitutional Convention. I hope that I shall not be reprimanded for pointing out certain facts and pertinent information to the President. Let that be the letter out of my heart; I want

JOHN F. STANTON, CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
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WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN
WALTER D. DILLON, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
January 12, 1956

Mr. George H. Lehlitner
601 South Galvez Street
New Orleans 4, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Lehlitner:

Please forgive my delay in replying to you, but your letter originally went to my address in Portland, Oregon.

I have been acquainted for some time with your unselfish work in backing Alaskan Statehood. How I wish there were more people who, living thousands of miles from Alaska, nevertheless had the altruistic desire to see to it that their fellow Americans in Alaska secure full citizenship.

As a resident of the state of Oregon who is familiar with Oregon's history, I share your view that the so-called "Tennessee Plan" would be a potential help in alerting the nation to the justice and equity of Alaska's claim. As you know of course, Oregon used the "Tennessee Plan" and by this method hastened its own entrance into full membership in the United States. In view of the stalemate which now exists concerning Alaska's claim to statehood, it seems to me no possible harm could come from the election in Alaska of a slate of Representatives and Senators in Congress who could then further the cause of Alaskan statehood.

For these reasons, I intend to issue a statement supporting the proposal which you have so effectively advocated and promoted. I hope you will continue to advise me of ways in which I can join with you and others who realize that Alaska has long been entitled to full membership among the States of the Union.

Because of your interest in Alaska's resources, you might want to look over this little pamphlet which I have prepared for the Public Affairs Institute under the title, "Our Natural Resources - And Their Conservation." While there are few direct references to Alaska, the question of conservation is quite as urgent and important in Alaska as it is in the United States proper.

-2-

With thanks for the splendid leadership you have shown in promoting the true interests of Alaska, I am

Sincerely,

Richard L. Neuberger

Richard L. Neuberger
United States Senator

RLN:jc
Encl.

P.S. You will be interested to know that two of the most illustrious persons in the entire history of Oregon, Delazon Smith and Joseph Lane, were elected as Oregon's first United States Senators. The stature of these men helped greatly to advance Oregon's cause and to bring about statehood for our state.

RLN

cc: Hon. E. L. Bartlett
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.
Miss Ianthe Smith
820 W Fourth Street
Albany, Oregon

Dear Mr. Lebleitner:

I appreciate your letter of December 23, and regret that I have not had a chance to reply to it sooner.

The procedure you are suggesting for Alaska and Hawaii to follow in their efforts to win statehood is certainly not objectionable to me, but I cannot of course, speak for my colleagues in the Congress. The historical research you and others have done outlines a fascinating story, and I find it very interesting.

As you know, I am strong for granting statehood to both Alaska and Hawaii, and hope that our work to this end will ultimately be crowned with success.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,


W. Kerr Scott

WKS:ep

OTTO E. PASSMAN
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
9th DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

MARTHA T. WILLIAMS
SECRETARY

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
1225 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

CHAMBER OFFICE
1225 WALNUT STREET
MONROE, LOUISIANA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.

January 11, 1956

Mr. George H. Lebleitner
601 South Calvez Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

My dear George:

This will acknowledge with sincere thanks the copy of the address that you will deliver before the Alaska Constitutional Convention.

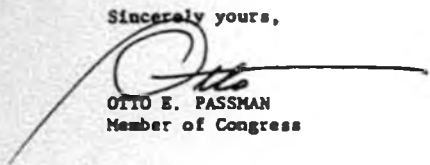
As per usual, your material is excellently prepared, factual, and convincing. Insofar as I am personally concerned, I would not change one sentence in the entire statement.

George, I have taken the liberty of writing the President of the Alaska Constitutional Convention. I hope that I shall not be reprimanded for pointing out certain facts and pertinent information to the President. Let that be as it may, I dictated the letter out of my heart; I meant every word of it; I hope that it is helpful rather than hurtful.

Good luck to you on your mission, and I anticipate favorable results.

With kindest personal regards and every good wish to you and yours, I remain

Sincerely yours,


OTTO E. PASSMAN
Member of Congress

Enclosure

Air Mail

...to see to it that their fellow Americans in Alaska secure full citizenship.

As a resident of the state of Oregon who is familiar with Oregon's history, I share your view that the so-called "Tennessee Plan" would be a potential help in alerting the nation to the justice and equity of Alaska's claim. As you know of course, Oregon used the "Tennessee Plan" and by this method hastened its own entrance into full membership in the United States. In view of the stalemate which now exists concerning Alaska's claim to statehood, it seems to me no possible harm could come from the election in Alaska of a slate of Representatives and Senators in Congress who could then further the cause of Alaskan statehood.

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-2-

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Sincerely,



Richard L. Neuberger
United States Senator

RLN:jc
Encl.

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RLN

cc: Hon. E. L. Bartlett
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.
Miss Ianthe Smith
820 W Fourth Street
Albany, Oregon

TELEGRAM

ALASKA COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
SIGNAL CORPS, UNITED STATES ARMY
FEDERAL BLDG., FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

1956 JAN 19 PM 10 10

KPA034KU107

FA SEA105 GOVT NL PD BU WASHINGTON DC JAN 19
WILLIAM A EGAN, PRESIDENT CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
COLLEGE ALASKA

2203

FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM ME IS BASED UPON MANY AND REPEATED
REQUESTS I MAKE PUBLIC MY POSITION REGARDING TENNESSEE
PLAN AND I TRANSMIT IT TO YOU BECAUSE IT IS MY
UNDERSTANDING CONSTITUTION CONVENTION IS GIVING
CONSIDERATION TO PLAN: "MANY TIMES DURING THE LAST
SEVERAL MONTHS I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO GIVE MY OPINION AS TO
WHETHER ALASKA SHOULD ADOPT THE SO-COLLED TENNESSEE PLAN
IN AN EFFORT TO PROMOTE THE CAUSE OF STATEHOOD. PARA MY
RELUCTANCE TO STATE THAT OPINION UNTIL THIS TIME HAS BEEN
BASED UPON A NUMBER OF REASONS. CHIEFLY, PERHAPS, I
DESIRED TO MAKE AT LEAST A PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF
STATEHOOD ATTITUDES IN THE SECOND SESSION OF THE 84TH
CONGRESS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PRESIDENTS 1956 STATE
OF THE UNION MESSAGE. PARA FURTHER, I WANTED ADDITIONAL
TIME TO MAKE A REASONABLE EVALUATION OF THE TENNESSEE
PLANS CHANCES OF SUCCESS IN THE MID-20TH CENTURY,
REMEMBERING THAT MANY, MANY YEARS HAVE GONE BY SINCE IT
WAS LAST USED. WHETHER OR NOT IT CAN BE TRANSLATED TO

THESE TIMES WITH EQUAL EFFECTIVENESS IS OF COURSE THAT
WHICH ONLY THE FUTURE WILL DEFINITELY DISCLOSE. PARA
A MORE POSITIVE STATEMENT CAN BE MADE AS TO THE
PROBABILITIES OF ATTAINING STATEHOOD NOW BY THE
TRADITIONAL APPROACHES. THOSE PROSPECTS ARE BLEAK. NO
HOPEFUL SIGN HAS PRESENTED ITSELF FROM ANY SOURCE SINCE
THIS SESSION OF CONGRESS BEGAN EARLIER IN THE MONTH AND
HE WOULD BE AN OPTIMIST INDEED WHO WOULD PREDICT
FAVORABLE ACTION SOON. PARA SO THE CAUSE OF STATEHOOD
IS NOT ADVANCING NOW. INDEED, THERE ARE THOSE WHO SUGGEST
THAT INTEREST IS TENDING TO DECREASE RATHER THAN
INCREASE AND THAT UNLESS A STIMULATING FACTOR IS ADDED
ALASKANS MAY HAVE TO WAIT LONG BEFORE COMING INTO THE
DAY WHEN STATEHOOD IS ATTAINED. PARA THE TENNESSEE PLAN
COULD PROVIDE THAT STIMULATING FACTOR, ITS IMPACT COULD
JAR THE NATION AND THE CONGRESS FROM LETHARGY. THE
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AM CONVINCED THAT IF ALASKA WERE TO ADOPT THE TENNESSEE
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DECIDE TO TRY THE TENNESSEE PLAN IT WILL HAVE MY
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E L BARTLETT

84.1956 20

(52).

196 Correspondence - "Alaska Tennessee Plan"

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED

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| DOMESTIC | | CABLE | |
| TELEGRAM | | FULL RATE | |
| DAY LETTER | | DEFERRED | |
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| NIGHT LETTER | X | SHIP RADIOGRAM | |

ALASKA COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
 SIGNAL CORPS U. S. ARMY
TELEGRAM

ACCOUNTING DATA

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| TOTAL |

PATRONS SHOULD CHECK CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED; OTHERWISE MESSAGE WILL BE TRANSMITTED AS A FULL RATE COMMUNICATION

| | | |
|--------|------------|-------|
| NUMBER | TIME FILED | CHECK |
|--------|------------|-------|

SEND THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE. SUBJECT TO THE TERMS ON BACK HEREOF:

GEORGE H. LEHLEITNER
 601 SOUTH GALVEZ STREET
 NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

January 14, 1956
 3:45 p.m.

YOUR ARRIVAL FAIRBANKS JANUARY TWENTY-THIRD PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE
 HAVE ARRANGED FOR ACCOMODATIONS AT POLARIS APTS. REGARDS

WILLIAM A. EGAN
 PRESIDENT, ALASKA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Irsha

Confirmation copy
 ✓ Reading file

ACS-SC FORM 920
 REV. 29 MAY 51

ARMY-ALASKA COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED

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| DOMESTIC | | CABLE | |
| TELEGRAM | | FULL RATE | |
| DAY LETTER | | DEFERRED | |
| | | NIGHT LETTER | |
| NIGHT LETTER | X | SHIP RADIOGRAM | |

ALASKA COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
 SIGNAL CORPS U. S. ARMY
TELEGRAM

ACCOUNTING DATA

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| T/L |
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| TOTAL |

PATRONS SHOULD CHECK CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED; OTHERWISE MESSAGE WILL BE TRANSMITTED AS A FULL RATE COMMUNICATION

| | | |
|--------|------------|-------|
| NUMBER | TIME FILED | CHECK |
|--------|------------|-------|

SEND THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE. SUBJECT TO THE TERMS ON BACK HEREOF:

GEORGE H. LEHLEITNER
 601 SOUTH GALVEZ STREET
 NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

January 6, 1956

REURLET ~~com~~ JANUARY 26TH WOULD BE PERFECT IF ACCEPTABLE DATE FOR YOUR ARRIVAL IN FAIRBANKS STOP LOOKING FORWARD TO VISITING WITH YOU STOP ADVISE BY RETURN WIRE AND WE WILL ATTEMPT ARRANGE LIVING ACCOMODATIONS REGARDS

WILLIAM A. EGAN
 PRESIDENT
 ALASKA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Confirmation copy
 ✓ Reading file

ACS-SC FORM 920
 REV. 29 MAY 51

ARMY-ALASKA COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
 1956 Correspondence - "Alaska Tennessee Plan"

GEO. H. LEHLEITNER & CO.

INCORPORATED

601 SOUTH GALVEZ STREET
P. O. BOX 1087

NEW ORLEANS
ZONE 4

PHONE CANAL 9131

January 16, 1956

To the Honorables, the Members of the
Alaska State Constitutional Convention:

Had Alaskan distances been less formidable, or could I have "stretched" my vacation, I would have been privileged to meet and share these views with each of you on my October visit to your magnificent area. These are the conclusions reached in eight years of labor in behalf of statehood for Hawaii and Alaska, and have been prepared in this form at the suggestion of you with whom it was my privilege to have discussed them.

Briefly stated, it is my deep conviction that unless Alaskans, THEMSELVES, initiate some action which will advance their cause more effectively, statehood will remain a will-o-the-wisp, perhaps for the remaining lifetimes of you who read these pages. In justification of this statement, may I suggest that while the past ten years have revealed that there are many additional impediments to statehood, the chief obstacles seem to have been these:

Every postwar Congress has been very closely divided between Democrats and Republicans. In such a situation it is almost impossible for one major Party to force its will upon the other in issues involving partisan considerations. While statehood, properly, should not be a partisan matter, realism prompts one to recognize that Congress has permitted it to degenerate into exactly that.

Nor is the situation apt to change materially in the near future. Almost every political scientist expects the next Congress to again be closely divided. And the next. As a matter of fact, such IS the traditional American Congress; generally it has taken some earth-shaking event, such as a major depression or a great war, to disturb this pattern and provide a top-heavy majority for one Party.

Too, a closely divided Congress is "made to order" for a tightly knit minority group -- and we now know that statehood's most dedicated opponents are precisely that. Under these circumstances, such a group will invariably wield the balance of power; particularly if its membership holds a majority of the vital Congressional control posts. Especially is this true when a substantial segment of the proponents of a measure are either lukewarm or unstable in their support.

In the present Democratic Congress, anti-statehood Southerners, though representing less than 25% of the country's population, hold 11 of the 16 key committee chairmanships in the House, and 7 out of 12 in the Senate. Moreover, the Majority Leader of the Senate, as well as the Speaker of the House, and the

Alaska Tennessee Plan

Chairman of the all-important Rules Committee of that body, are ALL Southerners. . . . and outspoken opponents of statehood!

Therefore, should the Democrats control the next Congress, is it not reasonable to expect a continuation of the status quo? The South's single party system will certainly insure the return to Washington of most, and perhaps all, key incumbents. I am even more certain there will not be any diminution in the intensity of their anti-statehood zeal!

Even were those presently holding committee chairmanships and other key positions to pass from the political scene, the picture would not be altered materially, as the Congressional Directory reveals that opposed Southerners also occupy 16 of the No. 2 spots on the 28 basic Congressional committees!

Nor can the passage of any reasonable period of time, alone, be expected to soften the opposition of most of these men. From my vantage point as a third generation Southerner, I believe I can fully understand the basis for their opposition, even though I do not share it. They are NOT wanton obstructionists. Rather are they a group of ultra-conservatives who earnestly believe that the best interests of the South would be jeopardized by an expansion of the Congress, and of the Senate in particular.

Nor has Southern opposition to the Union's expansion come into being coincidental with the blossoming of Hawaii's and Alaska's statehood aspirations. Instead, it is a tradition that predates the War Between the States. Only when this fact is clearly grasped can one fully comprehend why it is that not even the possibility of Alaska AND Hawaii sending 100% Democratic delegations to both Houses of Congress would, of itself, reconcile those men to the admission of either area.

It occurs to me that I should point out that Hawaii is no longer the rock-ribbed Republican bastion of former years. Indeed, a study of voting trends in Hawaii will quickly convince one that within a relatively short time it is almost certain to become a nominally Democratic area. Which is another way of saying that if statehood is deferred until this presumption becomes an actuality, the Republican Party in Congress would then be faced with the probability that admission of both areas would buttress only the Democratic Party. A further stiffening in many Republican Members' opposition to Alaska would, inevitably, follow.

Should the Republicans capture the next Congress, and/or the Presidency, would it not seem logical to conclude that the majority of the Members of Congress in that Party, the President, and the House Minority Leader, Mr. Martin (who, in such an event, would probably again be Speaker), will continue to obstruct Alaskan statehood? Add to their opposition that of the Southern bloc previously discussed, and there becomes apparent the reasoning behind my sober belief that instead of steadily inching TOWARD statehood, we've been

Alaska Tennessee Plan
evidence -

drifting farther AWAY from it. In support of this contention, may I respectfully point out it is generally conceded that several Congresses ago we came within one vote of statehood. The gap has never since been so small!

Another handicap Alaska and Hawaii must hurdle is this: When new states were added previously the House of Representatives made room for their Representatives by expanding its membership accordingly. In 1929, however, House membership was "frozen" at its prevailing strength, 435. Thus it is that before a Representative votes "aye" on a statehood bill he must reconcile himself to the possibility that the new state's admission may cost his state a seat (perhaps his own!) when reapportionment next rolls around.

It is my considered judgment that the infrequency with which this objection is raised is not an accurate index of its significance. True, Congress IS at liberty to increase House membership beyond 435 by passing a bill to this effect. It has also been at liberty to pass a statehood bill -- but it hasn't! And because all efforts to expand its membership, since 1929, have met with failure it must be conceded that this is a very real hurdle.

But bleak as this analysis paints the scene -- and I do not believe it exaggerates the difficulty of the situation -- I hasten to say that there also appears to be a decidedly brighter alternate route to statehood... if Alaskans will but take it!

For an intensive study of the histories of other American Territories -- especially those that, like Alaska, had found themselves repeatedly ignored or rebuffed by Congress -- prompts the equally strong belief that an effective action DOES lie within the power of Alaskans... IF they and their leaders, and especially the Members of this Constitutional Convention, want statehood badly enough to pursue it with the boldness, the ingenuity, and the dedication applied by an earlier generation of American pioneers in Tennessee, Michigan, Oregon and California.

In each of these four cases, their citizens' pleas for Constitutional self-government had also fallen upon deaf or ineffectual Congressional ears... until the delegates to their Constitutional Conventions, by means of a life-giving clause WRITTEN INTO THE DOCUMENTS THEY FASHIONED, precipitated the action that achieved statehood within two years thereafter!

Their story is, to me, all the more fascinating because it is not commonly known that FIFTEEN American areas entered the Union without the authority of prior Congressional enabling acts. And, because the circumstances that preceded the admissions of Tennessee, Michigan, California and Oregon offer many parallels to those which, today, prevail as regards Alaska, it is hoped that the historical happenings related in the pages that follow will hold particular interest for you, the Members of Alaska's Constitutional Convention.

I would not leave you with the impression that these pages have stemmed solely from my own interest and research. While it is true that I have long since lost count of the historical volumes personally examined in pursuit of this unique

Alaska Tennessee Plan

approach to statehood, there have been two far more significant studies made on this subject, and it is from these that the bulk of my documentation has been drawn. The earlier of the two was made in 1951 by the University of Hawaii's Dr. Robert M. Kamins. It is a most excellently prepared document of 49 fact-filled pages.

The second study was made this summer by the Library of Congress' Legislative Reference Service. It was conducted by Dr. William R. Tansill, and its well-documented nineteen pages attest to the accuracy of the statement made in its introduction that

"One hundred and nineteen volumes of local history were examined in an effort to ascertain popular attitudes; and to capture Congressional viewpoints, local histories, political biographies and memoirs, the 'Annals of Congress', the 'Register of Debates', and 'Congressional Globe' (predecessor to the 'Congressional Record'), and numerous Congressional Journals and reports were perused."

I also wish to record my very great obligation to Senator Russell B. Long, of Louisiana, at whose request the Library of Congress made the intensive study referred to in the preceding paragraph.

A debt is also owed Dr. William R. Hogan, Chairman, Department of History, Tulane University of Louisiana, for his encouragement, suggestions, and, most particularly, for his having edited my manuscript.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge my obligation to Mrs. Allen Lewis, my secretary, for her indefatigable labors, over the years, in the interest of statehood.

If I were to compress into one sentence the moral to be drawn from the case histories of other statehood-seeking Americans discussed herein, it would be this: Working on the assumption that the full citizenship possible only in statehood was their natural entitlement, they boldly acted accordingly...and, without exception, their areas BECAME STATES!

Sincerely yours,

GEO. H. LEHLEITNER

GHL:jl
Attach.

pendence - Alaska Tennessee + Jan

GEO. H. LEHLEITNER & CO.

INCORPORATED

601 SOUTH GALVEZ STREET
P. O. BOX 1097

NEW ORLEANS
ZONE 4

PHONE CANAL 9131

January 5, 1956

Mr. J. F. McKay
Executive Director
Alaska Legislative Council
Box 51
Juneau, Alaska

My dear Jack:

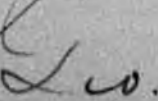
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As you will note from the date used, it was my original intent to withhold this material until the closing weeks of the convention. However, the premature publicity that broke unexpectedly made it advisable to step up the mailing.

I am also attaching a copy of a letter I have this day written the Alaska Resource Development Board. This copy is being sent you in the hope that you might have available the data I am requesting. If so, I would be most grateful if you will rush it to me by air mail as I would like to work it into the material I plan presenting the Constitutional Convention later this month.

With warmest regards and every good wish for a happy and healthy 1956,
I am

Sincerely yours,



GEO. H. LEHLEITNER

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Alaska Tennessee Plan
Correspondence -

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VIA AIR MAIL

NEW ORLEANS
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January 5, 1956

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Alaska Resource Development Board
Juneau, Alaska

Gentlemen:

As a student of Alaskan government I have found most interesting your July, 1955 publication, Financial Data Regarding the Incorporated Towns and Cities of Alaska, 1954. Permit me to commend you on the orderliness of your presentation.

I have urgent need of some supplementary information on the cities of Anchorage, Fairbanks, Ketchikan and Juneau, and I am writing in the hope that you have this data available.

What I would like very much to know is the total amounts expended individually by these four cities in 1954 for the servicing and retirement of their outstanding obligations. (Both general and revenue.)

If possible, I'd also like to know what percentile part of the total budgetary expenditures of those particular cities was actually required in the servicing of their outstanding indebtednesses.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in replying, and I shall be most grateful for anything you can do to expedite this information, the need for which is truly urgent.

Yours very sincerely,

GEO. H. LEHLEITNER

GHL:jl
Encl.

WHOLESALE ONLY

Correspondence - Alaska Tennessee Plan

GEO. H. LEHLEITNER & Co.

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Alaska Tennessee Plan
Correspondence

THE "TENNESSEE PLAN"

-- Admission of the Bold --

This is the story of what has always seemed to me to be some of the most fascinating (and exciting!) chapters of our country's history: the record of how an earlier generation of American pioneers secured their birthrights of first-class American citizenship, through the attainment of statehood, in the face of major obstacles which -- as with Alaska -- included repeated Congressional refusals to pass enabling legislation.

Tennessee. -- Because this approach to statehood was first conceived and executed by the Territory of Tennessee, I shall take the liberty of referring to it as "The Tennessee Plan". The life-giving clause which the members of the Tennessee Convention wrote into their Constitution was simply the proviso that all state officials called for by that document were to be elected immediately following ratification. Because the Federal Constitution at that time provided for the choosing of U.S. Senators by the various state legislatures, Tennessee's Senators were selected by the Tennessee General Assembly which convened initially for that purpose March 28, 1796, or about one month following the election of that body's membership.

Shortly after their designation as such, Senators-elect William Cocke and William Blount departed for Washington with their credentials. Although the Senate, understandably, refused to seat them prior to Tennessee's formal admission, they must, indeed, have done an admirable job of lobbying their "State's" case as Congress, which previously had refused to consider an enabling act for this Territory, completed passage of an admission bill on May 31, 1796! President Washington signed the bill the following day, and Tennessee became our 16th State... less than four months following the spirited action of these pioneer Americans in THEMSELVES setting into motion the events that brought them statehood!

It is interesting to note that even prior to the election of their State and Federal officers the Tennesseans wished to make it clear that they were through with "the hat-in-hand approach" to statehood. Believing that, as American citizens, they were entitled to the sovereignty of statehood -- and without undue delay -- Territorial Governor William Blount (who also had served as Chairman of the Constitutional Convention) wrote the U.S. Secretary of State February 9, 1796, three days after the final draft of Tennessee's Constitution had been completed:

"As Governor, it is my duty, and as President of the Convention I am instructed, by a resolution of that body, to forward you a copy of the Constitution formed for the permanent government of the State of Tennessee, which you will herewith receive by the hands of Major Joseph McMinn...."

"The sixth section of the first article will inform you that the first General Assembly to be held under this Constitution is to commence on the last Monday in March next. The object of the Convention, in determining on this early day, is a representation in the Congress of the United States before the termination of the present session...." ¹

Michigan. -- Thirty-nine years after Tennessee's success, the Legislative Council of the Michigan Territorial Legislature decided that this was the logical avenue for 85,816 Michiganders to take to achieve statehood, as Congress had failed to pass an enabling act for it despite the fact that the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 had indicated that statehood would follow when a population of 60,000 had been achieved.

A call was issued for the election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention and that body convened May 11, 1835. The document that resulted was ratified by the people in October, by a vote of 6,299 to 1,395. At the same election, a complete slate of State officers was chosen, as well as Isaac E. Crary, to serve as Michigan's first Representative in Congress.

Next, the State Legislature convened November 2, 1835, as ordained by the Constitution and selected two U.S. Senators. The Senators, Lucius Lyon and John Norvell, together

1. J.G.M. Ramsay, The Annals of Tennessee (Kingsport, Tenn.) 669-670

with Representative-elect Crary, proceeded to Washington, where they presented their credentials....and began lobbying for the passage of an admission act.

Michigan's admission was delayed longer than was that of Tennessee, partly because the State of Ohio protested her entry into the Union on the grounds that Michigan's Constitution laid claim to the Toledo area, which Ohio considered to be her territory. After some delay, Michigan consented to the deletion of this area from its boundaries, and in January, 1837, Congress passed, and the President signed, a bill admitting Michigan as the 26th State.

Thus, again -- and within sixteen months of the date the American citizens of Michigan had vigorously exercised their fundamental right of self-determination by approving a State Constitution, and had selected the officials called for by that document -- there was demonstrated the power of the people, when their object was just, and they approached it with sufficient determination.

Oregon. -- Twenty years later, in 1857, men of leadership and vision in the Territory of Oregon, impatient over Congress' failure to pass enabling acts which it had considered at two prior sessions, decided to use the "Tennessee Plan". Accordingly, following a favorable plebescite on the subject, delegates were elected to a Constitutional Convention which sat in August and September, 1857.

The resultant Constitution contained a provision (Sec. 6) that, after ratification, there would follow, in June, 1858, a special election for State, County, and Federal officers. Further, it provided for the assembly of the State Legislature, one month thereafter, in order that that body might choose two U. S. Senators.

This Constitution was ratified by a vote of 7,195 to 3,215 on November 9, 1857, and the elections previously referred to were duly held. Lafayette Grover was elected to serve as Representative, and the legislature chose Delazon Smith and Joseph Lane as U. S. Senators. Grover and Smith left immediately for Washington; Lane was already there in the capacity of Oregon's Territorial Delegate to Congress.

Collectively, the three labored hard and well for their cause. Carey, in his excellent work on the Oregon Constitution, states that "they diligently sought out and interviewed the members of both Houses, and were eager to get their seats and to begin drawing their pay".² Delazon Smith, in November, 1858, writing a friend back in Oregon, revealed his own activities on behalf of statehood:

"You may bet high on the admission of Oregon early in the session. I have seen every member now in the city, and you better believe I have 'labored' with them! Everybody is for us!"³

Alaskans who are nettled by the opposition to statehood expressed by some Alaskan newspapers can, perhaps, derive some comfort from the fact that Oregon also had to carry a similar cross. Senator-elect Smith wrote on this score:

"I must say, in all candor, that I derive but very little satisfaction from the perusal of our Oregon papers. It requires more labor here in Washington to counteract the influence of the Oregon press than it does to meet and vanquish all its other enemies!"⁴

Though the margin of victory (the Senate passed the bill 35 to 17, the House 114 to 103) was not as broad as Smith's previously expressed optimism, the important point is that an admission bill did pass, and was signed by President Buchanan on February 14, 1859, only eight months after the people of Oregon, under aggressive and competent leadership, elected their State and Federal officers, and in all other salient respects followed the unique path to statehood blazed by Tennessee and Michigan.

2. Charles Henry Carey, The Oregon Constitution (Salem, Oregon, 1926), 46.

3. Ibid., 47.

4. Ibid., 47.

California. -- But, unquestionably, the most spectacular result obtained from use of the "Tennessee Plan" was the achievement of statehood by California in 1850.

You will recall that title to California was obtained from Mexico by the treaty of peace that followed the Mexican War. Congress, however, "never got around" to organizing it as a Territory; the general belief seemed to be that that area was much too remote, and too lacking in potential, to justify an organic act which, by historic precedent, would give California the status of an apprentice-state. Instead, Congress was content to let this area remain an unorganized Military District, with Brig. Gen. Bennet Riley, the military commander, doubling as its civil governor.

Then, in 1848, with the discovery of gold, there suddenly began to flow into California a deluge of new settlers. But these were not the farmers, homesteaders, and restless frontiersmen who had populated the other western lands. These were gold-seekers, and they came in vast numbers from the populous cities of the East and South. Shopkeepers....lawyers....artisans....doctors.... 'the butcher, the baker, and the candle-stick maker'....all poured into California in search of quick fortunes.

Some were irresponsible and lawless, and with their coming there developed problems in law-enforcement and government which soon over-taxed the shoddy, inadequate military government provided by Washington.

Others were conscientious men of good will. And, most had this in common: Coming from the older American states they had known the benefits of stable, constitutional government, under statehood, and they were determined that no inferior form would be acceptable. It is both interesting -- and inspiring -- to note the enthusiasm and the dispatch with which they acted.

In June, 1849, Gen. Riley was prevailed upon to issue a call for a Constitutional Convention. This he did (without prior Congressional authorization) and the delegates thereto were elected August 1, 1849.

The Convention convened at Monterey one month later, and sat until October 13, 1849. The document it produced provided for the establishment of a state government, and specified that a ratification election would be held thirty days after adjournment, at which time all the elective state offices would be filled, as well as those of the two Representatives to Congress.

On November 13, the people enthusiastically approved this Constitution by a vote of 12,061 to 811. The first State Legislature convened thirty days later and selected John C. Fremont and William M. Gwin as California's first Senators. Within a few days of their selection they, and the two Representatives-elect, Edward Gilbert and George W. Wright, left by stagecoach for Washington, to urge immediate admission.

Their arrival created quite a stir at the Capitol -- as may well be imagined -- for it will be remembered that Congress had not been willing to grant even Territorial status to this area, and now these brash Westerners had come demanding statehood!

Bancroft, in his History of California, reported that "their presence in Washington was regarded by some of both sections, but especially by the South, as unwarranted, even impertinent".⁵

Pro-slavery Southerners were enraged because California proposed to be admitted as a "free" state. William R. Tansill, Library of Congress analyst, states: "The South was so strong in its denunciation of the proposed admission that talk of secession was heard in more than one Southern State."⁶

The Congressional debate which California's bold action precipitated lasted eight months. During its course Californians were bitterly assailed as "a group of ill-mannered adventurers and ruffians who had not bothered to wait for an enabling act".⁷

5. Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California (San Francisco, 1888), VI, 342.

6. William R. Tansill, Election of Congressional Delegations Prior to the According of Statehood (Library of Congress, 1955), 14.

7. Ibid., 14.

But, whereas Congressional sentiment initially appeared to be against her, the weight of Justice, (and the persuasiveness of her four stellar "lobbyists"), ultimately tipped the scales in her favor, and on September 9, 1850, California was admitted... eleven months after its Constitutional Convention had completed its labors on the document which set into motion the chain of events that led to statehood.

It seems peculiarly appropriate that the documentary section of this presentation should be concluded with an historian's forceful comment on the memorial California's Congressional delegation-elect presented to the Congress:

"A state government, and such a system of measures as a state legislature, alone, could enact was imperatively necessary. The neglect of Congress had forced California to form such a government.

"They (Californians) did not present themselves as supplicants, nor with arrogance or presumption. They came as free American citizens -- citizens by treaty, by adoption, and by birth -- and asked only for a common share in the common benefits and common ills, and for an opportunity to promote the general welfare as one of the United States." ⁸

Conclusion. -- The deeper this researcher has probed into the subject during the past eight years, the stronger his convictions have become that the "Tennessee Plan" offers Alaskans their most logical avenue to statehood.

Not merely because of historic precedent -- though it is certainly true that the plan has, heretofore, been followed by statehood in all seven instances ⁹ in which it was used. While this unbroken chain of successes is, in itself, quite encouraging, it is felt that there are other, and even more positive, advantages which may reasonably be expected to follow such an action. Among them are these:

1. Such an action by Alaskans would almost surely "capture the headlines"... and if the story of Alaska and its entitlement to statehood is to be gotten across to stateside Americans, it will have to be by use of page one, for, as every editor knows, Mr. and Mrs. Average American do not read even the best written editorial page.
2. The dramatic values of such an action would also, I believe, cause Alaska's Senators and Congressman-elect to be much sought-after for appearances on national TV and radio programs, and for articles in broadly read magazines. Here would be further opportunities to tell Alaska's story, and to enlist that measure of militant public support which, to date, has been sadly lacking.
3. This story, if told broadly and effectively, will make it clear not only to Americans, but to other peoples as well, that Uncle Sam, the leader of the Free World, would, himself, be guilty of "colonialism" were Congress to continue territorialism in Alaska and Hawaii. For in the final analysis "territorialism", as practiced in Alaska and Hawaii, is simply the American version of "colonialism". It is my deep conviction that the untenability of this position, once the floodlights of full publicity were turned upon it, would, itself, virtually guarantee that Alaska's statesmen would not be sent home empty-handed.
4. Perhaps the most positive single benefit which could reasonably be expected to stem from this action would be this: It would give Alaska three "Super-Lobbyists" to plead her just cause.

8. Zoeth Skinner Eldredge, History of California (New York, 1915), 278-374.

9. In addition to Tennessee, Michigan, California and Oregon, the Territories of Iowa, Minnesota and Kansas took similar action. Though they, too, were successful, their case histories have not been detailed here because of some unusual circumstance that attended their admissions. Kansas, for example, was admitted in 1861 after the Southern States had seceded.

Can anyone question the salutary effect of calls upon Senators and Representatives by these, the elected representatives of the people of Alaska, who, if seated, would thereafter cast Alaska's VOTES on measures that come before the Congress? Including, I might add, numerous bills in which the gentlemen called upon would have a very deep interest!

While realism prompts the feeling that many Southern opponents will remain such to the end, it seems equally realistic to expect that such face-to-face conversations will surely help to allay some of the present concern of this group.

Moreover, irrespective of what one may think of the brand of arch-conservatism espoused by these men, it must be conceded that they are, indeed, astute practical politicians.

5. Finally, but surely not least in importance, would be the invigorating effect of a dynamic deed of this kind upon the people of Alaska.

Is it not reasonable to presume that this essentially American action could well provide the spark which would ignite latent public enthusiasm for statehood? That, at least, was the experience of the other statehood-seeking areas discussed. . . . and I do not believe Alaskans would react differently. That is, if they really WANT statehood to the degree it was desired by those earlier Americans.

I am not blind to the possibility of failure. . . . even though the "Tennessee Plan" has succeeded each time it has been used. Each of those successes could have been a failure, had the leadership of those areas been less astute, or were they lacking in vision, boldness, or enthusiasm. However, even had they failed there can hardly be any question but that their dynamic action would have brought their areas closer to ultimate statehood. In this respect the "Tennessee Plan" appears to be the sort of endeavor wherein Alaskans would have everything to gain. . . . and nothing to lose!

But, subject only to the proviso that it be properly executed, it is difficult to believe that the plan would fail. Alaska's chances of success with it should be greater than were those of California or Oregon. For you, today, would have the tremendous advantage of modern communication for the task of molding public opinion.

Principally, however, the "Tennessee Plan" would provide a vehicle for an aggressive attack. No people in history ever accomplished anything worth-while without making a commensurate effort. No nation has ever won a war by remaining on the defensive. Deeds win wars. . . . and achieve ideals!

That there would be protests against this action, both from within and without, is a foregone conclusion. Some will perceive to see in it the seeds of anarchy; others will base their objections upon its "irregularity".

You have already seen that it is NOT irregular. Nor is it illegal. For the very first Article of our Bill of Rights, you will recall, guarantees that "Congress shall make no law. . . . prohibiting the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances".

In its very essence the "Tennessee Plan" is a forthright and logical form in which to petition the Government for the redress of a monstrous grievance. Because the grievance is real and stubborn the petition for its correction must be vigorous and dramatic. For these reasons the "Tennessee Plan" has ALWAYS succeeded in the past.

I firmly believe that it can succeed again -- for Alaska.

OUR 49th and 50th STATES

BY
GEORGE LEWLEITNER

(Delivered to Baton Rouge, Louisiana,
Lions Club, May 1955)

Though not a mind reader I believe I can imagine that when your President announced my subject would deal with statehood for Alaska and Hawaii, some of you asked yourselves: "didn't Congress kill that proposal a few weeks ago"?

So it did . . . for the current session of Congress. But when the next Congress convenes the statehood issue will come up AGAIN; and it will continue to come up in every Congress until Hawaii and Alaska become our 49th and 50th states.

Incidentally, if I appear to concentrate my remarks on Alaska I do so because it is the lesser known of the two Territories. But substantially every inequity suffered by Alaskans is also the lot of our Hawaii-Americans . . . and for the identical reason that neither area is a state.

Principally I favor statehood for Alaska and Hawaii because of what it would do for the United States.

Alaska is more than twice as large as Texas. It is NOT a vast area of perpetual ice and snow. Much of it is fertile and adaptable to agriculture; the climate of those sections compares very favorably with some of our more northerly states. The winter temperatures of Juneau, Alaska's capital, are approximately the same as those of Washington, D.C. !

Despite the disgraceful fact that after 88 years of Federal stewardship most of Alaska yet remains to be accurately surveyed, it is known that the Territory contains important deposits of copper, iron, coal, tin, cobalt, nickel, tungsten, molybdenum, zinc, titanium, platinum, lead, antimony, fluorite, chromite, zirconium, magnetite, bismuth and mercury. You, of course, know of Alaska's gold -- of which there has already been mined an amount that has returned Uncle Sam his purchase price 100 times over, and geologists believe the Territory contains huge petroleum and uranium reserves. Yes, Alaska is, by far, our Nation's richest mineral storehouse.

In addition, Alaska's swift rivers represent hundreds of millions of undeveloped kilowatts of power. She has more timber than all 48 states combined; that which ripens annually -- and goes to waste -- in her tremendous softwood forests could be converted into paper sufficient to take care of a large part of our national needs in perpetuity!

But, ladies and gentlemen, these are largely latent resources. Little has been done to develop them for the very good reason that Alaska has been firmly held in a bureaucratic vise since acquisition, and this handicap has throttled her economic and political development. For the startling truth is that today, 88 years after annexation, the Federal government still owns 99.4% of Alaska.

It is fundamental that the development of any frontier area depends largely upon its transportation facilities. Because the Federal government has owned over 99% of Alaska; the construction of that area's transportation system, obviously, has been a Federal responsibility. Louisiana, only one-twelfth as large as Alaska, has constructed more than 15,000 miles of highways; the Federal government has built 3,500 miles in Alaska . . . and most of that is military, or wholly within a Federal reservation!

Federal development of other modes of transportation has lagged equally. There is one Federally-owned railroad, 470 miles long, to develop an area one-fifth as large as the entire United States! You can judge the manner in which this government-operated railroad performs its assignment of "developing the Territory" by the fact that its ton-mile freight rates are EIGHT TIMES the U.S. average!

Our American history reveals that, without a single exception, in each of the 35 states added to the original 13, development was retarded until AFTER those areas became states. And, if it took the stability of statehood - - and the initiative of private enterprise which flourishes ONLY in such an atmosphere - - for each of the 35 to develop its potentials, why should not the same hold true for Alaska?

Where is the logic - - or the fairness - - in asking Alaska to develop more fully PRIOR to statehood when every historical precedent plainly tells us statehood PRECEDES, rather than follows, economic and political development? A recent Scripps-Howard editorial very aptly points out that those who contend Alaska should develop more fully before the grant of statehood are taking the position of a parent who insists that her child learn to swim BEFORE going into the water!

To those who believe that Alaska's northerly location - - rather than its inadequate form of government - - has been the prime barrier to her growth, I'd like to suggest that Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland share Alaska's latitudes, topography and climate; yet they, in a smaller area - - and, I believe, with less natural resources - - support a healthy, prosperous population of 19 millions of people!

Our Nation urgently needs a robust Alaska and the full development of Alaska's rich resources. She can - - and will - - become one of our great states if we will only cast off her bureaucratic

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shackles and give her the statehood her people need, want, and deserve!

But there seems to me to be a yet more compelling reason for statehood: These Territories are America's showcase of democracy, and as such, are on view to the entire world.

And what do we display to the world in our Alaskan and Hawaiian showcases? An intelligent, well-educated, and devoutly loyal citizenry, who have fought with valor and distinction in four American wars. Many are your and my former neighbors. This is particularly true in Alaska where more than three-fourths of the people are former residents of the 48 states, who, following the examples of their American pioneer ancestors, moved to our Nation's last frontier to carve homes, businesses and professions from the wilderness.

I would not leave you with the impression that Alaska is all wilderness. For despite the hardships they've had to contend with because of the inadequacies of Territorial government, these hardy Americans have transplanted their skills and cultures to that area. You would feel very much at home there. Alaskans have excellent schools, churches and towns; over 80,000 people live in Anchorage, Alaska's largest city, and you would find it to be as modern as your own splendid city.

Alaska pays its teachers higher salaries than do ANY of the 48 states; and the average Alaskan has had more years of schooling than his cousin back home. Alaskan women were privileged to vote six years before our 48 states ratified the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Alaska was also the first American community to establish the 8 hour day. In short, Alaskans have shown themselves to be good citizens.

But good citizenship is a two-way contract. A nation has a right to expect that its people will be good citizens . . . and they, in turn, are entitled to expect equality of treatment from the nation. Especially when a crystal-clear promise to that effect has been made. I should like to read Article III of the Treaty of Cession between the U. S. and Russia, by which Alaska was acquired in 1867. I quote:

"The inhabitants of the ceded territory, according to their choice, reserving their natural allegiance, may return to Russia within three years, but if they should prefer to remain in the ceded territory, they, with the exception of uncivilized native tribes, shall be admitted to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States, and shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and religion." (Art. III of Treaty of Cession between United States and Russia; ratified by the U. S., May 28, 1867.)

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How have we kept that solemn treaty obligation to admit Alaskan-Americans "to the enjoyment of ALL the RIGHTS, ADVANTAGES and IMMUNITIES of citizens of the United States"?

The greater part of 100 years have passed since that pledge was given . . . and no Alaskan has yet voted for a President of the United States!

Nor for their own Governor. Or Judiciary. For Alaskan and Hawaiian governors and judges are not selected by the people they are to govern and judge; instead they are political appointees of the Party in power in Washington.

Hawaiians and Alaskans are permitted to select their own Territorial Legislatures, but even this turns out to be a hollow privilege . . . for every act of these legislatures is subject to TWO vetoes: one, by its Washington-appointed governor, and the second (and this one is absolute!) by the U. S. Congress!

Perhaps the most vital RIGHT denied them is one we are sometimes inclined to take for granted: the protection we receive from our Senators and Representatives. Alaskans and Hawaiians have no vote in Congress . . . for only states may send Representatives and Senators to Washington.

What, do you suppose, would happen were some northern Congressman to propose that all oil produced in Louisiana be shipped in crude form to northern refineries for refining and processing? The question, I know, is academic . . . for if any such law had ever been proposed our Louisiana Congressmen would STILL be talking against it. Were such a discriminatory law passed it would be short-lived, for the Supreme Court would have no choice but to declare it unconstitutional under that clause of the Constitution which prohibits discrimination against any State.

It happens that sugar is as important to Hawaii as petroleum is to Louisiana. It - - and not tourists - - is Hawaii's biggest industry.

In 1934 Congress passed the Jones-Costigan Act which made it mandatory that all sugar grown in Hawaii must be shipped in raw form to some mainland refinery for refining and processing as finished sugar!

Alaska has been the victim of a similar viciously discriminatory law passed by Congress in 1920. Sponsored by a Senator from Washington State, it gave the port of Seattle - - and Seattle railroad and steamship interests - - a monopoly on freight moving to and from Alaska. In the intervening 35 years Alaskans have had to pay exorbitant freight rates that have been as much as four times higher than those applying to similar movements between the states. I might also add that this unjust law is still on the statute books, and will probably remain until statehood expunges it.

Naturally, these cases were taken to the U. S. Supreme Court. That body frankly recognized that discrimination existed which would have nullified these laws had they applied to Americans residing in a state; but these were not illegal because the discrimination was against Americans living in a Territory!

In other words, the only relief open to these Americans is: Statehood!

In the early years of this century, when Alaska's huge coal deposits were found, Pennsylvanians and West Virginians in Washington made the alarming discovery that their states' coal reserves would be depleted (in about 6,000 years) and so the Federal government promptly designated the Alaskan area containing the newly discovered coal deposits a "Federal Forest Reserve" - - and that very effectively put the padlock on Alaska's coal . . . and, incidently, eliminated it as a potential competitor of Pennsylvania and West Virginia mines!

Ladies and Gentlemen, "colonialism" is still "colonialism", no matter by what name it is called - - and these practices are "colonialism" in its crudest form. To my eyes - - and, I'm sure, to yours as well - - the ugly cape of colonialism doesn't look good on my Uncle Sam!

I only wish I could, somehow, indelibly implant in your minds the fact that these injustices and indignities are being imposed upon fellow Americans. Fellow Americans, I might add, who are required to pay Uncle Sam every Federal tax you and I pay as Louisianians!

Let us be honest with ourselves: in the face of such examples of raw "colonialism", are we privileged to point an accusing finger at Soviet Russia, or at Communist China, because they make a mockery of the democratic process by permitting but ONE name on each ballot?

Our country came into being 179 years ago because the degradation of "colonialism" was repugnant to our Founding Fathers. They believed that "Taxation Without Representation" was tyranny . . . and that "Government Without the Consent of the Governed" was an evil thing.

Are these injustices lesser evils in 1955? Rather am I inclined to feel that you share my belief that they are greater evils, today, when the practice of "colonialism" is despised throughout the world. And, may I add, a world in which, even now, a titanic struggle is being waged for the minds of men.

Thus far we appear to be trying to buy the loyalties of the so-called "uncommitted peoples" with dollars. It is a matter of record

that since the end of World War II we've given away about sixty billions of dollars in various "foreign aid" programs.

I submit, my fellow-Lions, that insofar as the peoples of India, Indonesia, Burma, Korea, and many another former colony are concerned, the act of granting the equality of statehood to Alaska and Hawaii would carry more weight than all of the billions we've already spent -- or intend to spend. For until this is done we stand equally guilty, with the "Colonial Powers", of practicing "colonialism" upon a subject people. If anything, our offense is the greater, as we, while professing to be against it, have imposed it upon a group of our own fellow-citizens!

There is yet a final injustice I am sure you would have me bring to your attention: the young men of Alaska and Hawaii are drafted by Uncle Sam even as you and your sons are. Almost 30,000 young men from Alaska and Hawaii were conscripted in the first World War; over 60,000 served in World War II, and 30,000 more were drafted -- and wore American uniforms with honor and distinction -- in the Korean War.

Please do not misunderstand me: Alaskans and Hawaiians are PROUD to serve this, their Country, whenever it needs them. But they, too, are entitled to the dignity and the comfort that comes from knowing that they are risking their lives to preserve the "democratic way of life" for themselves, and their families.... as well as for others! That ominous telegram which begins: "The Secretary of Defense deeply regrets the necessity of informing you..." brings as much pain to the hearts of Alaskan and Hawaiian mothers, fathers and wives as it does to Louisianians.

Yes, when the world looks into our Alaskan and Hawaiian "showcases" it finds incontrovertible evidence of an American which -- as far as her citizens in those Territories are concerned -- has turned her back upon the principles upon which she was founded. They are, indeed, shabby showcases for American democracy!

Invariably, then, the question arises: "Why hasn't Congress granted statehood"? My answer can be brief: selfish, partisan politics! While I do not personally subscribe to this arbitrary conclusion, it is unfortunately true that many men in Congress feel that Alaska would send Democrats to Washington, and Hawaii would elect Republicans.

Consequently, each Party has striven to bring in the Territory it believed would add to its own numerical strength, and because Congress, for years, has been almost evenly divided it has been impossible for one Party to enforce its will upon the other.

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And when the two bills are tied together -- as has been the case in the two past Congresses -- the leaderships of BOTH Parties lose their enthusiasm for statehood and the joined measure attracts the combined opposition!

Typical of that opposition is the position taken by some Texans: they are frank to admit they will always oppose Alaska because it would become the largest state!

And, as a Southerner, I am ashamed to say that many Southern Congressmen oppose both because they fear that Alaskan and Hawaiian Congressmen will not vote as they (the opposed) would want them to vote. This is, to my mind, the most disgraceful of all reasons for opposing statehood. May I add, also, that until Alaska's and Hawaii's Congressmen are chosen how can anyone short of God presume to know how those men will vote on any given issue?

I am immensely proud, as a Louisianian, to tell you that several Louisiana Congressmen have consistently favored statehood. Senator Long, in particular, has been outstanding in his support and has thereby added considerably to his stature as a statesman of vision who places the best interests of his Nation and its people above petty considerations of partisan politics.

When will Alaska and Hawaii become States? This will occur when enough Americans take sufficient interest in this disgraceful situation to write their Congressional representatives and insist upon its correction. Only Congress has the power to admit new states...and Congress, apparently, will not act until YOU, the people back home, express your wishes clearly and distinctly. Certainly your fellow-citizens in Alaska and Hawaii are powerless to influence Congress; they have no vote!

No...the responsibility rests squarely upon you...and me...and upon our fellow-Americans in the 48 states.

May I suggest, then, that you -- this very day -- write Congressman Morrison and Senator Ellender your views on this vital matter? And while you're writing, drop Senator Long a note to let him know you appreciate the statesmanlike stand he has taken. It is both our privilege and our duty, as good citizens, to let our Congressional representatives know our feelings on such vital issues.

If you will do these things -- and will help spread the Hawaiian and Alaskan story among your friends -- you'll have the deep satisfaction that comes from knowing that you did your part to help correct a long-standing injustice.

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Moreover, you will know that you helped make your Country bigger and stronger...both physically and morally.

Perhaps most important of all, at this critical period in history, you will have helped our beloved Nation stand before the world erect and with clean hands, and proudly show that it truly "practices what it preaches" when it advocates government "OF the people, BY the people, and FOR the people"...for all men... everywhere.

I am most grateful for the privilege of appearing before you, and for your very gracious attention.

(Delivered to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Lions Clubs, May, 1955.)

Alaska Tennessee Plan 4

The Tennessee Plan

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... how the bold became States

pendence — " Alaska Tennessee Plan "

—FOREWORD—

As was the case with so many of us who saw service in that conflict, World War II brought me into initial contact with Hawaii and Alaska. It also served as my introduction to the vast problems our fellow Americans in those Territories must contend with as a result of the inadequacies and inequities of Territorial government. Ever since I've considered it a privileged duty to aid the Alaska-Hawaii statehood movement.

Out of the disappointments and frustrations that have attended those efforts, there developed a strong curiosity over the manner in which other American areas — especially the more remote ones — had attained statehood.

Curiosity begat research; and, out of that labor there developed the realization that several of the states had to hurdle the identical barriers of distance, non-contiguity, bitter opposition from a powerful segment of Congress, and broad public and Congressional apathy, which are, today, the principal obstacles that stand between Alaska and Hawaii, and statehood.

In itself that was no unique discovery; Congressional friends of the Territories have long known and stressed that fact. What did come to light that is unique, however, was the METHOD by which several of those pioneer areas won statehood from the frequently reluctant Congresses of their day.

It has been almost 100 years since this unusual highway to statehood was last used by an American people determined to obtain their proper birthrights of representation in their national government, and the privilege of administering their own local affairs. Perhaps it was because of this long period of disuse that the road's contour had become hidden from popular view.

But, when the overgrowths and dusts of the intervening century are removed the tracks left by our pioneer forefathers from Tennessee, Michigan, California and Oregon lie in clear relief. It is my earnest hope that our Nation's pioneers of today — the Alaskans — will find the road as serviceable as did those earlier Americans, who, through its use, secured for themselves and their children their full measure of the dignity and freedom of American citizenship.

Geo. H. Lehleitner

New Orleans, La.
October, 1956

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Correspondence

—ACKNOWLEDGMENTS—

It would not be accurate to leave you with the impression that the evidence of the following pages stems exclusively from my own research. In addition, there have been at least two very scholarly studies on this subject, and I have drawn liberally upon both.

The earlier was that made in 1951 by the University of Hawaii's Drs. Robert M. Kamins and Daniel W. Tuttle, Jr., titled *State Elections Prior to Admittance into the Union*. Its 49 fact-filled pages reflect intense study.

The other was done by the Library of Congress. This study, by Dr. William R. Tansill, of the Library's American National Government Division, began in the summer of 1955 and carried over into 1956. Its results are documented in the paper, *Election of Congressional Delegations Prior to the According of Statehood*, in the foreword to which Dr. Tansill states:

"One hundred and nineteen volumes of local history were examined in an effort to ascertain popular attitudes; and to capture Congressional viewpoints, local histories, political biographies and memoirs, the 'Annals of Congress', the 'Register of Debates', and 'Congressional Globe' (predecessor to the 'Congressional Record'), and numerous Congressional Journals and reports were perused."

I also wish to record my very great obligation to Senator Russell B. Long, of Louisiana, at whose request the Library of Congress made its exhaustive study.

A debt is owed Dr. William R. Hogan, Chairman, Department of History, Tulane University of Louisiana, for his encouragement and suggestions. Similarly, I am indebted to Dr. Ernest R. Bartley, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, for his many helpful suggestions.

And, lastly, I am grateful to the President and the Delegates of the Alaska Constitutional Convention for their gracious invitation to place before that body the historical background of the *Tennessee Plan*. This was done in January, 1956.

The Convention's decision to recommend its use, and the subsequent ratification of this action by the people of Alaska, followed.

The material in this booklet is a summation of that placed before the Convention.

G.H.L.

THE TENNESSEE PLAN

—How the Bold Became States—

This is the story of what has always seemed to me to be some of the most fascinating (and exciting!) chapters of our country's history; the record of how earlier generations of American pioneers secured their birthrights of first-class American citizenship, through the attainment of statehood, in the face of major obstacles which—as with Alaska— included repeated Congressional refusals to pass enabling legislation.

Today, Tennessee, Michigan, California and Oregon do not, in any sense, appear to us to be isolated or remote parts of our Union. Nor will Alaska or Hawaii so appear to our children and grandchildren.

But, in 1795, the highest mountains in the Appalachians, which lay astride the North Carolina-Tennessee border, were looked upon by many short-sighted men of that day as virtually impassable barriers to the extensive development of Tennessee and other western lands then owned by the infant Nation.

Fortunately for the Nation, there lived in those areas sufficient men of vision and vigor, and, to a very appreciable degree, we are indebted to their foresight and zeal for the unparalleled speed with which the United States evolved from a handful of relatively weak colonies hugging the Atlantic coastline to a continent-spanning giant.

Because this unique approach to statehood was first conceived and applied by the men who settled Tennessee, it seemed both fitting and proper that it should be designated as "The Tennessee Plan". In addition to Tennessee, six other American areas attained statehood through use of *The Tennessee Plan*, and this is the way it happened:

TENNESSEE

Angered and impatient over the failure of the Nation's first three Congresses to award them statehood, the rugged frontiersmen of the Tennessee area (then known as the Southwest Territory), in 1796, held a Constitutional Convention. The historic document drafted by that body was described by Jefferson as "The least imperfect and most republican of any state." Into it was written a simple, life-giving clause

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that fixed a date on which all federal and state officials were to be elected.

Because the Federal Constitution at that time provided for the choosing of U. S. Senators by the state legislatures, Tennessee's Senators were selected by the Tennessee General Assembly which convened initially for that purpose March 28, 1796, or about one month following the election of that body's membership.

Shortly after their designation as such, Senators-elect William Cocke and William Blount departed for Washington with their credentials. Although the Senate, understandably, refused to seat them prior to Tennessee's formal admission, they did such an admirable job of lobbying their "State's" case that Congress, which previously had refused to consider an enabling act for this Territory, completed passage of an admission bill on May 31, 1796! President Washington signed the bill the following day, and thus Tennessee became our 16th State . . . the first state to be carved from national territory . . . and less than four months following the spirited action of these pioneer Americans who, THEMSELVES, set into motion the events that brought them statehood!

It is interesting to note that even prior to the election of their State and Federal officers the Tennesseans wished to make it clear that they were through with the "hat-in-hand approach" to statehood. Believing that, as American citizens, they were *entitled* to the sovereignty of statehood—and without undue delay—Territorial Governor William Blount (who also had served as President of the Constitutional Convention) wrote the U. S. Secretary of State February 9, 1796, three days after the final draft of Tennessee's Constitution had been completed:

"As Governor, it is my duty, and as President of the Convention I am instructed, by a resolution of that body, to forward you a copy of the Constitution formed for the permanent government of the State of Tennessee, which you will herewith receive by the hands of Major Joseph McMinn.
The sixth section of the first article will inform you that the first General Assembly to be held under this Constitution is to commence on the last Monday in March next. The object of the Con-

vention, in determining on this early day, is representation in the Congress of the United States before the termination of the present session. . . ."²

Among the inspired delegates to the trail-blazing Tennessee Constitutional Convention of 1796 was a spirited young lawyer whom the people chose to be their new state's first Representative in Congress. Later, he became our seventh President, Andrew Jackson.

MICHIGAN

A generation later, in 1835, it was the settlers of Michigan Territory who found their political and economic progress blocked by those who felt that the area was yet "too remote" to justify statehood.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 had indicated that statehood would follow when a population of sixty thousand had been attained . . . and the most recent census had shown the Territory's population to have been 85,816 . . . but the intervening Congresses had failed to pass an enabling act.

Thus, in 1835, the Territorial Legislative Council decided that it was logical that Michigan, too, should follow the road Tennessee had blazed. A call was issued for the election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention. That body convened in May, 1835, and the document it produced was ratified by the people in October of that year, by a vote of 6,299 to 1,395. At the same election a complete slate of State officers was chosen, as well as Isaac E. Crary, to serve as Michigan's first Representative in Congress.

Next, the State Legislature convened November 2, 1835, as ordained by the Constitution, and selected two U. S. Senators. The Senators, Lucius Lyon and John Norvell, together with Representative-elect Crary, proceeded to Washington, where they presented their credentials . . . and began lobbying for the passage of an admission act.

Michigan's admission was delayed because the State of Ohio protested her entry into the Union on the grounds that Michigan's Constitution laid claim to the Toledo area, which Ohio considered to be her territory. After some delay, Michigan consented to the deletion of this area from its boundaries, and in January, 1837, Congress passed, and the President signed, a bill admitting Michigan as the 26th State.

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Thus, again—and within sixteen months of the date the American citizens of Michigan had vigorously exercised their fundamental right of self-determination by approving a State Constitution, and had selected the officials called for by that document—there was demonstrated the power of the people, when their object was just, and they approached it with sufficient determination.

OREGON

Twenty years later, in 1857, men of leadership and vision in the Territory of Oregon, impatient over Congress' failure to pass enabling acts which it had considered at two prior sessions, decided to use the *Tennessee Plan*. Accordingly, following a favorable plebiscite on the subject, delegates were elected to a Constitutional Convention that sat in August and September, 1857.

The resultant Constitution contained a provision (Sec. 6) that, after ratification, there would follow, in June, 1858, a special election for State, County, and Federal officers. Further, it provided for the assembly of the State Legislature, one month thereafter, in order that that body might choose two U. S. Senators.

This Constitution was ratified by a vote of 7,195 to 3,215 on November 9, 1857, and the elections previously referred to were duly held. Lafayette Grover was elected to serve as Representative, and the legislature chose Delazon Smith and Joseph Lane as U. S. Senators. Grover and Smith left immediately for Washington; Lane was already there in the capacity of Oregon's Territorial Delegate to Congress.

Collectively, the three labored hard and well for their cause. Carey, in his excellent work on the Oregon Constitution, states that "they diligently sought out and interviewed the members of both Houses, and were eager to get their seats and to begin drawing their pay."⁸ Delazon Smith, in November, 1858, writing a friend back in Oregon, revealed his own activities in behalf of statehood:

"You may bet high on the admission of Oregon early in the session. I have seen every member now in the city, and you better believe I have 'labored' with them! *Everybody* is for us!"⁴

Alaskans who are nettled by the opposition to statehood expressed by some Alaska newspapers can, perhaps, derive some comfort from the fact that Oregonians also had to carry a similar cross. Senator-elect Smith wrote on this score:

"I must say, in all candor, that I derive but very little satisfaction from the perusal of our Oregon papers. It requires more labor here in Washington to counteract the influence of the Oregon press than it does to meet and vanquish all its other enemies!"⁵

Though the margin of victory (the Senate passed the bill 35 to 17, the House 114 to 103) was not as broad as Smith's previously expressed optimism, the important point is that an admission bill did pass, and was signed by President Buchanan on February 14, 1859, only eight months after the people of Oregon, under aggressive and competent leadership, elected their State and Federal officers, and in all other salient respects followed the unique path to statehood blazed by Tennessee and Michigan.

CALIFORNIA

But, unquestionably, the most spectacular result obtained from use of the *Tennessee Plan* was the achievement of statehood by California in 1850.

You will recall that title to California was obtained from Mexico by the treaty of peace that followed the Mexican War. Congress, however, "never got around" to organizing it as a Territory; the general belief seemed to be that that area was much too remote, and too lacking in potential, to justify an organic act which, by historic precedent, would give California the status of an apprentice-state. Instead, Congress was content to let this area remain an unorganized Military District, with Brig. Gen. Bennet Riley, the military commander, doubling as its civil governor.

Then, in 1848, with the discovery of gold, there suddenly began to flow into California a deluge of new settlers. But these were not the farmers, homesteaders, and restless frontiersmen who had populated the other western lands. These were gold-seekers, and they came in vast numbers from the populous cities of the East and South. Shopkeepers . . . lawyers . . .

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Evidence

artisans . . . doctors . . . 'the butcher, the baker, and the candle-stick maker' . . . all poured into California in search of quick fortunes.

Some were irresponsible and lawless, and with their coming there developed problems in law-enforcement and government which soon overtaxed the shoddy, inadequate military government provided by Washington.

Others were conscientious men of good will. And, most had this in common: coming from the older American states they had known the benefits of stable, constitutional government, under statehood, and they were determined that no inferior form would be acceptable. It is both interesting—and inspiring—to note the enthusiasm and the dispatch with which they acted.

In June, 1849, Gen. Riley was prevailed upon to issue a call for a Constitutional Convention. This he did (without prior Congressional authorization) and the delegates thereto were elected August 1, 1849.

The Convention convened at Monterey one month later, and sat until October 13, 1849. The document it produced provided for the establishment of a state government, and specified that a ratification election would be held thirty days after adjournment, at which time all the elective state offices would be filled, as well as those of two Representatives to Congress.

On November 13, the people enthusiastically approved this Constitution by a vote of 12,061 to 811. The first State Legislature convened thirty days later and selected John C. Fremont and William M. Gwin as California's first Senators. Within a few days of their selection they, and the two Representatives-elect, Edward Gilbert and George W. Wright, left by stage-coach for Washington, to urge immediate admission.

Their arrival, more than a month later, created quite a stir at the Capitol—as may well be imagined—for it will be remembered that Congress had not been willing to grant even Territorial status to this area . . . and now these brash Westerners had come demanding *statehood!*

Bancroft, in his *History of California*, reported that "their presence in Washington was regarded by some of both sections, but especially by the South, as unwarranted, even impertinent."⁶

Pro-slavery Southerners were enraged because California proposed to be admitted as a "free" state.

William R. Tansill, Library of Congress analyst, states: "The South was so strong in its denunciation of the proposed admission that talk of secession was heard in more than one Southern State."⁷

The Congressional debate which California's bold action precipitated lasted eight months. During its course Californians were bitterly assailed as "a group of ill-mannered adventurers and ruffians who had not bothered to wait for an enabling act."⁸

But, whereas Congressional sentiment initially appeared to be against her, the weight of Justice, and the persuasiveness of her four stellar apologists, ultimately tipped the scales in her favor, and on September 9, 1850, California was admitted . . . eleven months after its Constitutional Convention had completed its labors on the document which set into motion the chain of events that led to statehood.

California's successful application of the *Tennessee Plan* becomes all the more remarkable when one remembers that it occurred at the height of the sectional controversy over slavery. For when California's "Congressional delegation" reached Washington there were fifteen "slave" and fifteen "free" states; her intent to enter the Union as a "free state" was the principal factor that enkindled the South's bitter opposition.

California's admission, in the face of that enormous obstacle, combined with the further handicap of her remoteness, would appear to be incontrovertible proof of the inherent efficacy of the *Tennessee Plan*, as well as of the outstanding abilities of the four indomitable men she sent to Washington.

The rancor this action aroused among the "slave states" was a strong factor in Congress' decision (the 1850 Compromise) to award territorial status, rather than statehood, to New Mexico after that area followed California's lead and drafted a constitution forbidding slavery.

It seems peculiarly appropriate that the documentary section of this presentation should end with the ringing declaration that concluded the memorial that first California delegation presented the Congress:

"The people of California are neither rebels, usurpers, nor anarchists. . . .
"They do not present themselves as supplicants, nor do they bear themselves

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with arrogance or presumption. They come as free American citizens—citizens by treaty, by adoption, and by birth—and ask that they may be permitted to reap the common benefits, share the common ills, and promote the common welfare as one of the United States of America!"⁹

CONCLUSION

The deeper this researcher has probed into the subject during the past eight years the stronger his convictions have become that the *Tennessee Plan* offers Alaskans their most logical avenue to statehood.

While the record of its past successes is, of itself, quite encouraging, is it not reasonable to anticipate that these developments would logically follow were Alaska to adopt the *Tennessee Plan*:

1. Such a newsworthy action would surely capture the headlines . . . and this is a prerequisite if the story of Alaska and its entitlement to statehood is to be gotten across to stateside Americans.

2. The drama of such an action would, I believe, cause Alaska's Senators and Congressman-elect to be much sought after for appearances on national TV and radio programs, and there would be articles in broadly read magazines. Here would be further opportunities to tell Alaska's story, and to enlist the essential element of *militant* public support which, to date, has been lacking.

3. This story, told broadly and effectively, will make it clear not only to Americans, but to other peoples as well, that Uncle Sam, the leader of the Free World, would, himself, be guilty of "colonialism" were Congress to continue territorialism in Alaska and Hawaii against the express wishes of the peoples of those areas. For in the final analysis "territorialism", as practiced in Alaska and Hawaii, is simply the American version of "colonialism", and it is my deep conviction that the untenability of this position, once the floodlights of full publicity are turned upon it, would itself virtually guarantee that Alaska's statesmen would not be sent home empty-handed.

Perhaps the most positive single benefit which could reasonably be expected to stem from this action would be this: It would give Alaska three "Super-Lobbyists" to plead her just cause.

Can anyone question the salutary effect of calls upon Senators and Representatives by these, the elected representatives of the people of Alaska, who, if seated, would thereafter cast Alaska's VOTES on measures that come before the Congress? While realism prompts the feeling that some opponents will remain such to the end, it seems equally realistic to expect that such face-to-face conversations will surely help to allay some of the present concern of this group.

I am not blind to the possibility of failure, even though the *Tennessee Plan* has succeeded each time it has been used with boldness and dispatch. Each of its seven successes¹⁰ could have been a failure had the leadership of those areas been less astute, or were they lacking in vision, courage, or enthusiasm. Or, had they procrastinated.

Therefore, were I to inject a sober note of caution into this presentation it would be this: in my judgment it would be better that Alaska NOT apply the Plan unless Alaskans are resolved to execute it promptly, wholeheartedly, and with the intelligent enthusiasm of the American pioneers who previously attained statehood with this vehicle.

Otherwise the Territory could lose, rather than gain ground, in its quest for statehood.

Historical support for this view exists in the case of New Mexico which, you will recall, was a Mexican War prize, as was California. Both areas had been occupied since 1846 and were governed by American military commanders.

Spurred by California's application of the *Tennessee Plan* the New Mexicans belatedly decided to do likewise, and convened a constitutional convention 8½ months following that of California. Thereafter, the entire chain of events that constitute the *Tennessee Plan* necessarily were executed with about that same time lag.

As a result, when Richard H. Weightman, a Senator-elect (and, apparently, the sole member of the New Mexico "Congressional delegation" to make the journey)¹¹ arrived in Washington, September 11, 1850, it was too late! Two days before his arrival Congress had approved the *Compromise of 1850* which awarded statehood to California . . . whose four-man *Tennessee Plan* delegation had been on hand, working diligently, for eight months. The same act

gave unrepresented New Mexico the politically impotent status of "Territory", and as a consequence of this compromise New Mexico's Americans had to endure the frustrating inequities of territorialism for sixty-two years thereafter. Statehood finally came, in 1912.

Is there not, then, a cogent moral in New Mexico's experience that might be profitably examined by Alaskans and Hawaiians? Especially by those who do not see the hidden danger to their statehood aspirations concealed in the various compromise measures—such as "commonwealth status", or, "an elective governorship"—proposed as "intermediate steps" to statehood.

One cannot leap a chasm in two jumps. Equally so, under our American system of government there is *no* intermediate stage between the colonialism of territoriality and statehood. Participation in our Federal government is constitutionally limited to its member *states*; and an area either is—or isn't—a state.

Hence, subject to the proviso that it be promptly and properly executed, it is difficult to believe that the plan would fail. Alaska's chances of success should certainly be greater than were those of California or Oregon. For you would have the tremendous advantage of modern communication for molding favorable public opinion.

Principally, however, the *Tennessee Plan* would be a program of aggressive action. No people in history ever accomplished anything worth-while without making a commensurate effort. No nation has ever won a war by remaining on the defensive. Deeds win wars . . . and achieve ideals!

That there would be protests against this action, both from within and without, is a foregone conclusion. Some will perceive to see in it the seeds of anarchy; others will base their objections upon its "irregularity".

You have already seen that it is **NOT** irregular. Instead, it seems to have been a regular route to statehood for those Territories whose geographical remoteness was being used in the Congress as an excuse for the denial to their peoples of their fundamental rights as Americans.

Is it not highly significant that of our three Pacific Coast states—the states that are most distant

from the Nation's capital—two of them (California and Oregon) came into the Union through the use of the *Tennessee Plan*? As you have seen, it brought them statehood in 1850 and 1858, respectively. The third Pacific Coast area, Washington, did *not* use this vehicle; it was not admitted until 1889 . . . 31 years after its neighbor, Oregon, and 39 years following California's admission.

Nor is the *Tennessee Plan* illegal. The very first Article of our Bill of Rights, you will recall, guarantees that "Congress shall make no law . . . prohibiting the . . . right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

In its very essence the *Tennessee Plan* is a forthright petition to the Government for the redress of a monstrous grievance. Because the grievance is stubborn the petition for its correction must be vigorous and dramatic. For these reasons the *Tennessee Plan* has succeeded in the past.

I firmly believe that it can succeed again—for Alaska.

APPENDIX

¹Columbia Encyclopedia, 2nd Edition (New York City, 1950) p. 1955-56.

²J. G. M. Ramsay, *The Annals of Tennessee* (Kingsport, Tenn., 1926) p. 669-670.

³Charles Henry Carey, *The Oregon Constitution* (Salem, Oregon, 1926), p. 46.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco, 1888), VI, p. 342.

⁷William R. Tansill, *Election of Congressional Delegations Prior to the According of Statehood* (Library of Congress, 1955), p. 14.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁹Senate, Miscellaneous No. 68. *Memorial of the Senators and Representatives Elect from California*. 31st Congress, 1st Session, March 13, 1850.

¹⁰In addition to Tennessee, Michigan, California and Oregon, the Territories of Iowa, Minnesota and Kansas took similar actions. Though they, too, were successful, their case histories have not been detailed here because of some unusual circumstance that attended their admissions. Kansas, for example, was admitted in 1861 *after* the Southern States had seceded.

¹¹Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st Session, September 12, 1850, p. 1808.