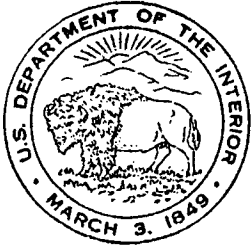


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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF TERRITORIES



For Release JANUARY 31, 1958

#### SEVERAL "FIRSTS" CITED IN OFFICE OF TERRITORIES ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report of the Office of Territories issued today lists two firsts in territorial appointments which show the progress in self-government in the areas under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.

For the first time, native-born citizens were appointed to the Governor posts for Alaska and American Samoa.

In February of 1957, an important milestone was reached when the responsibility for the hospitalization of Alaska's mentally ill was turned over to the Territory by the Department of the Interior.

The Virgin Islands Government, for the first time in years, found it unnecessary to borrow money to finance current operations. And the Virgin Islands Corporation showed a profit for the first time since its inception eight years ago, in the amount of \$215,544.

American Samoa made noteworthy progress with a sharp increase in the port operations at Pago Pago. The fish cannery, sponsored by the Department and the Samoan Government and operated as a private enterprise, continues to be an unqualified success.

The Trust Territory settled approximately \$500,000 in land claims with inhabitants of Bikini and Eniwetok Islands for the use of the land during atomic experimental tests.

In June of 1957 approximately 250 inhabitants were returned to the Rongelap Atoll in the Marshall Islands after being moved three years ago due to radioactive fallout.

Several Guamanians were appointed to positions formerly held by off-island contract employees. These positions include the heads of the Departments of Public Safety and of Land Management and the Dean of the Territorial College.

In Hawaii new farm and homestead acreage has been opened under the auspices of the Hawaiian Irrigation Authority. The tourist industry reached an all-time high and brought an estimated \$77 million dollars into the Island.



An oil strike on the Kenai Peninsula shortly after the close of the fiscal year, and successful pulp operations have been major factors in Alaska's economic progress.

The Alaska Railroad increased its commercial services and operated without congressional appropriations in spite of the loss of a large and profitable petroleum movement to the military Haines-Fairbanks pipeline.

The Alaska Public Works program sponsored additional civic improvements which over the past several years have greatly increased the amenities of living in Alaska towns and cities.

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