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ROBERT K. SHOECRAFT NAMED CHIEF JUSTICE OF TRUST TERRITORY

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today announced the appointment of Dr. Robert K. Shoecraft as Chief Justice of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. He will succeed Judge Edward P. Furber who is retiring on January 31, 1968, following 20 years' service as Chief Justice.

Dr. Shoecraft, an outstanding Negro attorney, has served with distinction in the Trust Territory since 1958. He began his career with the Trust Territory as Assistant Attorney General and in 1961 was named Attorney General with responsibility for the entire legal program for the Trust Territory. He brings to his new position a wealth of experience and knowledge of the Micronesian mores, customs and laws.

During his career as Attorney General Dr. Shoecraft played a major role in resolving several complicated land problems. One of the most important matters handled during his tenure was the payment of nearly $1 million awarded by the Congress of the United States to the people of Rongelap Atoll, Marshall Islands, as compassionate compensation for injuries resulting from fallout in the thermonuclear test conducted at Bikini in 1954.

"Dr. Shoecraft has served the Government of the Trust Territory and the United States in an outstanding manner and is exceedingly well qualified for the Chief Justice position," Secretary Udall said.

He is a graduate of Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio, and received an LL.B degree and a degree of Juris Doctor from Ohio State University. Prior to his service with the Trust Territory, Dr. Shoecraft engaged in the private practice of law and was Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Greene County, Ohio. He served in the Air Force from February 1942 until April 1947.

Dr. Shoecraft is a member of the American Bar Association, the Ohio State, Greene County and Guam Bar associations. He is a member also of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and is a 32nd Degree Mason.

He is married to the former Miss Georgia Wills of Xenia, Ohio. They celebrated their 25th wedding anniversay on November 13th.

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