



## Alaska's Reputation as Vast 'Icebox' Declared Exaggerated

Editor's note: Jim Breetveld was introduced to Alaska when he spent one and one-half years there with the 11th Air Force during World War II. He has since become an expert on the subject and is author of the book, "Getting To Know Alaska," published this year by Coward-McCann, New York.

By JIM BREETVELD  
(Written for United Press International)

One of the reasons Alaska was kept so long "one ice" as far as statehood was concerned is the widely-accepted misconception about the climate and nature of the land itself. Many Americans feel that Alaska is still a wild, frozen country that cannot be developed except through the rigors and heartbreak of primitive frontier living.

Nothing could be further from the truth. This big alleged "ice-box" is actually one of Mother Nature's treasure vaults. Its contents have been barely touched.

From 1940 to 1950, the population of Alaska increased by 77 per cent—to almost 215,000 people, and more are coming from all parts of the United States. The majority of Alaskans are comparative "cheechakos" (newcomers) to the "Great Land." What have they found in Alaska?

**Modern Hotels**  
They have found modern hotels and TV stations, busy military installations and skyscraper apartment houses, smart restaurants and movie palaces, well-equipped hospitals and up-to-date airports. They have discovered that the Alaskan winter is no more severe than that found in Kansas, Nebraska or the Dakotas. Three-quarters of Alaska lie in the north temperate zone, with the remainder north of the Arctic Circle. In the northern area temperatures often plunge to 60, 70, or 80 degrees below zero. Only the rugged Eskimo can survive in this region. But central and southern Alaska are much like Norway, Sweden and Finland.

In Ketchikan, Alaska's southernmost city, the average temperature is about the same as that of Baltimore, Md. Alaskans in this area enjoy a spring-like climate for most of the year. Last June the temperature in Fairbanks, in the very heart of Alaska, reached a sizzling 92 while New York had weather in the upper 70's.

The famous Matanuska Valley, about 30 miles east of Anchorage, is showing the world that crops can be raised in the Alaskan earth. The climate has been found to be ideal for dairying. Milk production in the Matanuska Valley is estimated to be almost twice the national average of the United States. The Matanuska farms, started in 1935 as part of a U.S. government experiment to transplant farmers from Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin, produced almost \$3 million worth of food products in 1957. Matanuska has a short growing season, about 100 days, but thanks to the long hours of sunlight during the summer days, the vegetables and fruits are giants worthy of Alaska. A 30-pound cabbage is not rare. The strawberries of the Matanuska Valley are the size of a man's fist.

## Federal Deficit \$2,813,388,661

Washington — UPI — The federal government ran up a deficit of \$2,813,388,661 in fiscal 1958.

This was announced today in a final report on the fiscal year that ended June 30.

The report by Secretary of Treasury Robert B. Anderson and Budget Director Maurice H. Stans showed both receipts and expenditures were less than estimated in the budget last January. But the biggest drop by far was in receipts. When President Eisenhower submitted his budget to Congress last January, he anticipated a 1958 deficit of only \$400 million.

Dampening effects of the recession, however, combined with a stepped up spending program for missiles, produced the bigger deficit.

Receipts were \$3,300,000,000 below the January estimate. The actual total of receipts was \$69,100,000,000 as against an estimate of \$72,400,000,000.

Expenditures were \$71,900,000,000, against the January estimate of \$72,800,000,000.

## Ike Nominates Health Assistant

Washington — UPI — President Eisenhower today nominated Bertha S. Adkins, assistant chairman of the Republican National Committee, to be undersecretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

If confirmed by the Senate, she would succeed John A. Perkins, who resigned March 1.

Long active in Republican politics, Miss Adkins has been GOP national committeewoman from Maryland since 1948. Since 1953, she has headed the women's division of the National Committee in addition to being assistant chairman.

Brig. Gen. Robert G. MacDonnell was nominated to be president and senior member of the California Debris Commission.

## Potential Farm Land

What has been done in Matanuska can be done in other parts of Alaska. There are some three million acres in Alaska that are rated potential farm land. In spite of the hopeful start agriculture has made in the territory, Alaskans import more than 90 per cent of their food, mostly from the U.S. The cost of freight is high, so the prices are rough. Alaskans pay 60 cents for a quart of milk, 90 cents for a dozen eggs, 55 cents a pound for tomatoes, 40 cents for a loaf of bread, and \$2.50 for a haircut.

Rents are high, too, whether you live in a green-lawned ranch house in the suburbs of Fairbanks or in the 12-story Mendenhall Apartment House in Juneau. Compensating for the high cost of living somewhat is the better rate of pay that prevails in most of Alaska. Carpenters and electricians get \$5 an hour, construction laborers and truck drivers pull down about \$4 an hour, and plumbers make \$6 an hour. An engineer or an office manager starts at \$1,000 a month.

**Population Growth Seen**  
Alaska's appointed Gov. Mike Stepovich has predicted that within 50 years the Alaska population will grow to about 30 million. If this happens then Alaska will be the biggest of the 49 states in every way.

But, first, the transportation problem has to be licked. The paved roads of Alaska add up to about 1,000 miles, less than the streets of Brooklyn, N. Y. Give Alaska more highways and railroads and the 49th state will emerge as the giant it is destined to be. Give Alaska the power it needs by harnessing its mighty rivers and you will witness industrial expansion that will thrill the world.

## WOMEN WILL BE WOMEN

Atlanta — UPI — Mrs. Ida D. Browning had given Mrs. Ethel Ferguson a lift in her car Sunday when the conversation turned to the subject of shoes. Mrs. Ferguson had just purchased a new pair. Mrs. Browning told police it was when she glanced down to admire her companion's footwear that her car smashed into a utility pole. The women were injured, neither seriously.

## Society Places 30 Children in County

Portland — In the past five years, 30 children have been placed in new adoptive homes in Jackson county by the Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon, according to Stuart R. Stimmel, state director.

During the same period, there were 19,086 days of care provided Jackson county children.

The Society recently placed the 100th child for adoption in 1958. It is the largest number of placements in this period of time in the Society's history and an increase of 33 per cent over the same period last year.

Although most children are placed in adoption in early infancy, Stimmel said the age range includes older children and family groups of brothers and sisters being placed together.

## NEW ENGLAND WINS

New York — UPI — Aggrieved New Englanders — piqued over the omission of New England clam chowder from the menu at the American Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair — can relax. Up to now, only Manhattan chowder has been served at the U.S. Pavilion restaurants, to the dismay of New Englanders. They protested that the Manhattan chowder, whose contents include tomatoes, green peppers but no milk or blended butter and flour, was not as representative of the U.S. as the New England chowder. Henceforth, the New England type will also be served.

Nebraska ranks lowest in the nation in the percentage (2.6) of financial support to schools from state funds. Nebraska schools receive 91.9 per cent of their revenue from property taxes.

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