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March 31, 1955

L. JACK MARTIN
CARDED

Dear Senator Jackson:

As indicated by your March nineteenth letter, the admission of the Territory of Alaska to statehood, the principle of which I have in the past publicly supported, has a number of troublesome aspects. Among these is the problem to which your letter principally refers -- that of providing adequately for our national defense needs.

XOF 133

You are aware, of course, of the tremendous strategic importance of this region to our nation's defense. Our military programs and plans oriented to this region and to the threat facing us there are premised upon full freedom of Federal action both for defense and for peacetime policing action.

Conversion of the Territory to a State cannot but raise difficult questions respecting the relationship of the military to the newly constituted State authority. Neither the nation nor Alaska could afford any impairment of the freedom of movement and of action by our forces in large areas of this critical region. In the present state of world affairs, I believe that it would be imprudent to effect so fundamental a readjustment unless a formula can be devised and approved by the Congress which will adequately meet these defense needs.

XOF 147-D

XOF 99

I am in doubt that any form of legislation can wholly remove my apprehensions about granting statehood immediately. However, a proposal seeking to accommodate the many complex considerations entering into the statehood question has been made by

CROSS CARD FOR STAFF SECRETARY

Interior McKay, and should legislation of this type be approved by the Congress, I assure your subcommittee that I shall give it earnest consideration. x OF 4

A letter similar to yours has come to me from Representative Miller and I have made the same reply to him. filed OF 147-D-1

Sincerely,

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

The Honorable Henry M. Jackson
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

mn