You no doubt realize that all mental health lands are subject to competitive leasing for oil and gas, and we utilized our selection entitlement in cases where previously withdrawn land which appears valuable for oil and gas development suddenly became available for state selection.

That statement by Mr. Holdsworth ought to dispel any notion that the million acres of land being held in a single unit and will be used one day as a concentration camp. But I doubt it. I predict that this baseless, incomprehensible allegation will continue to be made year after year, just as common sense has now made it.

Sincerely yours,

E. L. Bartlett.

Mr. E. L. Bartlett, Mr. President, about 6 years ago the Alaska Psychiatric Institute was dedicated, and on September 26, 1962, I told the Senate of that event and reviewed the background of the Alaska Mental Health Act. Because it tells in detail the history of passage of that measure and because I hope it will lay to rest at long last the fabrications and charges surrounding the bill, I ask unanimous consent that my address to the Senate be made part of the Record.

There being no objection, the address was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

NEW HOSPITAL OPENS IN ALASKA

E. L. Bartlett, Mr. President, Sunday, September 9, was a beautiful day in Anchorage, Alaska. The sky was clear. The sun was warm. The mountains stood out in bold relief. Nature was in an autumnal mood.

On the afternoon of that day the Alaska Psychiatric Institute was dedicated. This is the newest, most modern hospital in the world for the care of the mentally ill. It will begin to receive patients next month. Designed to care for 225 people at the outset, the institute is so planned that it may be expanded.

I traveled almost 9,000 miles in order to be at the dedication ceremony. I flew from Washington, D.C., to Anchorage and back over the weekend only so that I might be present for the dedicatory exercises. For everyone present it was a thrilling occasion. For some few of us it was even more meaningful. For three of us there on that day this was the culmination of an effort which began over a decade ago. For a fourth, this represented attainment of a goal which, for a time, seemed impossibly distant.

Winfred Overholser, M.D., the great psychiatrist who has been superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Hospital here in Washington, D.C., for a quarter of a century, was present. Jack Holdeman, M.D., Assistant Surgeon General of the United States was there. I had the good fortune to be present. And Marjorie Shaw, Ph. D., who made such a significant contribution to the passage of the act which made possible the building of the Institute, honored us by her presence. It was Dr. Overholser who, in 1949, headed a committee which subsequently reported the need for Alaska mental health legislation. This was a forerunner of the draft bill which became law.

In those days Dr. Holdeman headed up Public Health Service work in Alaska. Then and later he worked hard for passage of adequate mental health legislation.

The Alaska Psychiatric Institute was constructed because the Congress of the United States and the executive branch of the Government saw an imperative need for it and responded to that need generously and helpfully.

The then Territory of Alaska was and had been throughout its existence strangely situated in respect to the treatment of the mentally ill. For reasons not entirely clear,
August 3, 1966

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

18019

the territorial government had been prohibited from passing any legislation on this subject. The Federal Government cared for those who had been hospitalized at a contract institution in the State of Oregon. Modern opinion was strongly against this contract system, and only one State in the Union continued to use it. And then only to a very limited extent. The Alaska Mental Health Act was signed into law by President Eisenhower on July 28, 1956. It proposed some far-reaching changes, all of which have become effective since then or are in the process of becoming effective. Throughout Alaska's territorial government until then, persons in poor mental health had been arrested as common criminals, tried before juries in the U.S. Courts of the Territories, and, if found guilty, had been sent to this hospital far away from their homes. There was no psychiatric care in Alaska.

Public Law 890 of the 84th Congress charged all of this. In the first instance, the territorial legislature was and, as has been noted, for the first time authorized to legislate on the subject of mental health. In the second place, the Congress recognizing that a heavy financial load would be abruptly placed upon the territorial government for the first time, authorized a grant to Alaska, through the Surgeon General of the United States, aggregating $6 million over a period of years.

Next, the Congress made available $6,500,000 as the Federal contribution toward the construction of the hospital which was dedicated September 9.

Finally—and this is what started all the trouble with the State of Alaska, which, so rich in governmental capacity was land poor in the midst of the greatest land area in any U.S. political unit—was granted a million acres from the U.S. public domain. The purpose of this was so that the territorial government might obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.

Undoubtedly, the act would have died in the Senate had not the members of its Interior and Insular Affairs Committee been men of judgment, of conviction, and of courage. For it would have been easier. I know very well, for them to have allowed the bill to gather dust in the committee files than to act upon it. All the trouble started when a paper in California editorially alleged that this was a wicked bill, a bill designed for sinister purposes. It asserted that the million-acre land grant was a device to obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.

Undoubtedly, the act would have died in the Senate had not the members of its Interior and Insular Affairs Committee been men of judgment, of conviction, and of courage. For it would have been easier. I know very well, for them to have allowed the bill to gather dust in the committee files than to act upon it. All the trouble started when a paper in California editorially alleged that this was a wicked bill, a bill designed for sinister purposes. It asserted that the million-acre land grant was a device to obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.

Undoubtedly, the act would have died in the Senate had not the members of its Interior and Insular Affairs Committee been men of judgment, of conviction, and of courage. For it would have been easier. I know very well, for them to have allowed the bill to gather dust in the committee files than to act upon it. All the trouble started when a paper in California editorially alleged that this was a wicked bill, a bill designed for sinister purposes. It asserted that the million-acre land grant was a device to obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.

Undoubtedly, the act would have died in the Senate had not the members of its Interior and Insular Affairs Committee been men of judgment, of conviction, and of courage. For it would have been easier. I know very well, for them to have allowed the bill to gather dust in the committee files than to act upon it. All the trouble started when a paper in California editorially alleged that this was a wicked bill, a bill designed for sinister purposes. It asserted that the million-acre land grant was a device to obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.

Undoubtedly, the act would have died in the Senate had not the members of its Interior and Insular Affairs Committee been men of judgment, of conviction, and of courage. For it would have been easier. I know very well, for them to have allowed the bill to gather dust in the committee files than to act upon it. All the trouble started when a paper in California editorially alleged that this was a wicked bill, a bill designed for sinister purposes. It asserted that the million-acre land grant was a device to obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.

Undoubtedly, the act would have died in the Senate had not the members of its Interior and Insular Affairs Committee been men of judgment, of conviction, and of courage. For it would have been easier. I know very well, for them to have allowed the bill to gather dust in the committee files than to act upon it. All the trouble started when a paper in California editorially alleged that this was a wicked bill, a bill designed for sinister purposes. It asserted that the million-acre land grant was a device to obtain additional revenue through sale or lease of this land. I cannot say that the bill sailed through the House of Representatives. Objections were made there to its form and its philosophy. However, those objections were finally overcome and the bill was passed by the House. It was after this that the bow descended. And what a blow. Once before in the Senate, the act became the focal point of a heated controversy. A tempest arose. The legislation was widely assailed. At that time I was Delegate to the House of Representatives from the territory of Alaska and I recall ever so well one Senator telling me that upon the subject of Alaska mental health legislation he had received more correspondence than on any other since the land-lease bill was before the Senate. This was typical.