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Cover: Mt. McKinley as seen from  
Constitution Hall, University of Alaska,  
site of Alaska's Constitutional Convention.



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## Foreword

Although the contrasts between the hot summer of 1787 in Philadelphia and the cold winter of 1955-1956 in Fairbanks are obvious, there are similarities which make the Alaska Constitutional Convention of special significance in the saga of American constitution making. Both were characterized by a determination and a dedication to prepare a document of lasting importance, not just one of immediate expedience. The remoteness of Fairbanks was unique for a Twentieth Century conclave, and its sheer distance from the congested urban scene provided a perspective difficult to achieve in present day metropolitan civilization.

The actors in the Alaska Convention were much more inclined than is usually the case even with the most responsible public servants to reflect on what they were doing and how they were doing it. Consequently, as soon as the Alaska voters had approved their first constitution, those who had been involved in developing Alaska's state constitution began a series of efforts to provide assistance for future constitution draftsmen and revisors. There was a call for the preparation of materials which would have supplemented the background information prepared for the delegates and for analytical reports on the conduct of the conventions.

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