

"Dr. Gruening Sees It Through"

BY EDWIN NORTH MCCLELLAN

HE CAME, he saw all, and left delighted with Hawaii and full of information about Our Islands. A pleasing personality, an intelligent, impartial and indefatigable investigator, and unusually competent to assimilate the information secured and match it with adequate conclusions. His information and advice to the Secretary of the Interior regarding Hawaii's problems and their solutions will be sound. Equally sound will be his information and advice concerning the other Islands of the American Pacific. Dr. Ernest Gruening is our subject. He received his degree of medicine from Harvard and today is Chief of Division of Territories and Island Possessions, Department of the Interior. He arrived at Honolulu, September 23, 1937, aboard the *Lurline* and departed on the same ship, December 4. With him were Mrs. Gruening and their sons—Peter and Huntington.

Dr. Gruening penetrated every strata of Hawaii. He met us all—low and high, employee and employer, capital and labor, Government officials of all our governments of all grades—never has a federal government representative made as thorough inspection of us and our affairs.

Not content to just enjoy our hospitality and scenery, and



Governor Poindexter and Dr. Gruening at Palmyra Island

go through the motions, he patiently listened to our Statehood aspirations, watched the sugar and pineapple workers in the fields, mills, canneries, and other places. He talked with them—in Spanish with the Filipinos. He made himself understood by all classes of Hawaii.

He looked into the dwellings in which the wealth-creating laborers of Hawaii are domiciled; saw the CCC boys in



DR. GRUENING (right-rear) AND DICK BLACK AT HOWLAND ISLAND



Swains Island

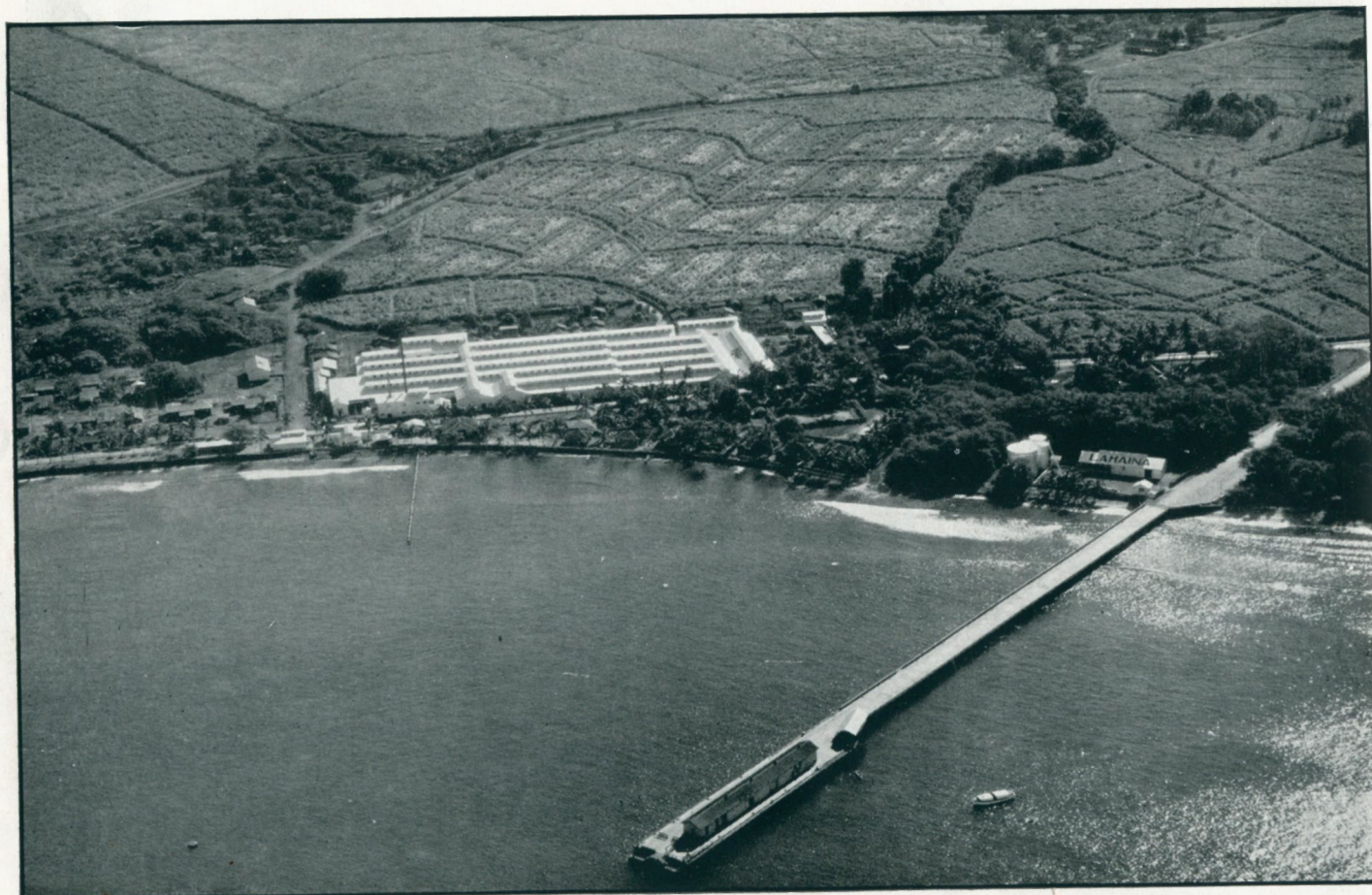
their camps and in the field; viewed Kona Coffee and offered sympathetic aid; visited taro patches whence cometh our taro flour and poi; looked at the papaia trees and fruit that creates Hawaiian wealth; secured information concerning dual-citizenship, expatriation, and language schools, at its source; learned about Oriental ancestry and its effect on government.

He visited our Big Five Islands and learned there of the problems of Hawaii—land tenure and land utilization, diversified agriculture and industry, public utilities, taxation system, public works, general financial structure, public instruction, law enforcement, economic system, rehabilitation of Hawaiians through the homes commission and the problems of the homesteaders, and many other factors, that go to make up Hawaii.

Dr. Gruening carefully refrained from commenting upon any government subject beyond his jurisdiction. He left with us, however, many interesting suggestions and hopes. Among others, he advocated the extension of Hawaii National Park to include the Napali Coast and Waimea Canyon on Kauai or the creation of a separate national monument to include those areas. This, of course, is not new. He praised our schools and stated that the training in citizenship and the inculcation of American ideals—so vital to the future welfare of the Islands—were being advanced apace in the schools. On his arrival in San Francisco he was quoted as saying: "I found Hawaii in eminently satisfactory shape. Economic and social standards are higher than on the Mainland as a whole. I was particularly impressed by the splendid educational system."

On board the Coast Guard Cutter *Roger B. Taney*, the Doctor visited the three American Line or Equatorial Islands—Howland, Baker and Jarvis. The administration of these three islands comes directly under him in the Interior Department. While visiting American Samoa he denied that plans has been created provided for replacing the present naval administration by one of the Interior Department.

Dr. Gruening sailed away from us delighted with Hawaii and having completely fulfilled his mission which, upon his arrival, he had defined: "The purpose of my visit here, apart from the need of becoming more closely familiar with the Territory and its problems, is to report to my superior officer, the Secretary of the Interior, how the government is functioning, what the needs of the Territory are, and in what way the federal government may assist."



MAUI—VISITED BY DR. GRUENING—PINEAPPLE FIELDS AT LAHAINA—Official U. S. Navy Photo