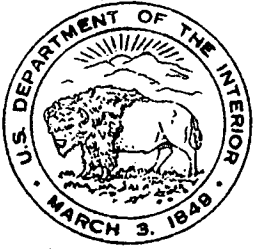


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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF TERRITORIES

For Release APRIL 22, 1960



INTERIOR DEPARTMENT AGAIN CALLS FOR REPRESENTATION OF TERRITORIES IN CONGRESS

The Department of the Interior has again urged enactment of legislation which would give Guam and the Virgin Islands the right to send nonvoting Territorial Deputies to represent them in Congress.

In a report to the Senate and House Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs on revised bills now pending which would grant such representation, the Department pointed out that President Eisenhower, in his 1960 budget message, had specifically urged such legislation, and said that the pending bills are "in full and precise accord with the President's recommendation."

"The granting to American areas other than States of nonvoting representation in the national House of Representatives," the report said, "is one of the oldest and finest traditions of our Nation. We believe that the Virgin Islands and Guam need and have earned this type of representation."

In an earlier report, on February 12, 1960, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton told Congress that advancing development in the Virgin Islands and Guam justifies giving them elected nonvoting representation in Congress, but objected to certain provisions of the proposed legislation as then drafted.

Under terms of the revised bills the two Deputies would be popularly elected in their own territories, would have seats in the U. S. House of Representatives and all floor privileges but could not vote on legislation. They would serve for two-year terms. The proposed title, Territorial Deputy, would be an innovation in American political practice, since past representatives of Territories in Congress have always been designated as Delegates, while the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is represented by a Resident Commissioner.

The new title for the proposed Guam and Virgin Islands spokesmen was deliberately chosen to make a sharp distinction from past practice, inasmuch as Guam and the Virgin Islands are not considered to be destined for ultimate Statehood. Neither has formally been "incorporated" as part of this Nation as a matter of law, and both are far smaller, in population and in area, than the smallest of the States.

The Interior Department report said the proposed new title was entirely acceptable.

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