

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

August 8, 1954

Memorandum for the President:

Subject: H. R. 3575 -- Hawaii statehood bill.

Position Now: This bill for Hawaiian statehood passed the House on March 10, 1953.

It was amended in the Senate to include statehood for Alaska and thus was passed on April 1, 1954. It went back to the House with a Senate request for a conference and is now on the Speaker's desk awaiting action.

Action Possible: To make effective the action of the Congress which by a two-thirds vote passed the bill granting statehood to Hawaii, and in order to support the program of the President as stated by him in two State of the Union messages to Congress, the House leadership could secure a rule---

- a) to permit the appointment of conferees so that the two houses could consider the measure immediately;
- b) to permit the House to vote on accepting the Senate amendment and then vote on the bill.

Recommended Action: That course a) be followed, namely, send the bill to conference immediately for the following reasons:

- a) Even if the bill as amended by the Senate were acceptable it would require certain changes in the time schedule which the bill sets up for Hawaii so that it can be really operative. As it is the dates stated have already been passed.
- b) Conference would permit possible adjustment of aspects of the legislation to conform more nearly to Administration policy particularly with regard to national security in Alaska.

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2.

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c) If the conferees agree to eliminate Alaska from the bill, and then the Senate refuses to accept this recommendation, responsibility for the failure of statehood for Hawaii at this session will rest on the Democrats. Success of the legislation will be to the credit of your administration.

Effect if Present Bill as Amended Passes:

a) Statehood for Hawaii now, which already has a constitution legally accepted by the people of Hawaii, would enable it to proceed with further steps toward assuming the responsibilities of statehood, including the election of representatives to Congress - the 84th - two in Senate and two in the House.

b) Alaska would still have to call a constitutional convention, accept the constitution when drafted and only then come before Congress for final acceptance. Conservatively estimated this may require two years. Thus Alaska would not be able to participate in national elections until 1956.

c) Statehood will not in any wise abridge the power of the Executive or the Commander-in-Chief in the interest of national security. Military zones can be established either in Territories or States subject only to the limitations imposed by the Congress. In World War II such zones were established in California and in Hawaii. Moreover, the Territorial legislature and later the State legislature can be requested, and no doubt would, to enact protective measures as The Chief Executive might deem to be necessary in the interest of national security.

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3.

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d) One of the major issues of the Alaskan problem is the opportunity, after statehood, for the people of the state to develop the natural resources there in order to establish and improve the economy of the area. The conferees may be able to propose a formula for this which will at the same time assure you that the security of that area can be adequately maintained without increased burdens.

Necessity for Immediate Action:

a) Unless conferees are named by the House on Monday (August 9) and they meet promptly with the Senate conferees there will be no possibility of action this session.

b) The Republican party is committed to statehood for Hawaii, and also for Alaska under an equitable enabling act which now, after two years, is pending and awaiting House action.

c) Unless action is completed on H. R. 3575 before the House adjourns statehood will have to wait, and start anew, in the next Congress. In that event it is unlikely that Hawaii will have representatives in the next Congress.