

Federal Aid Aimed At Long Range Help In State Centennial

Federal government participation in the Alaska Centennial Celebration should be directed primarily toward long-range economic development of the State.

That was the principal conclusion reached by Acting Secretary of Commerce Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr., and in a staff study prepared by the Department of Commerce.

The study was carried out under authority granted by a law passed in the last session of Congress. While the staff suggested possible projects for federal government participation, it stated it did not have authority to recommend specific plans.

It was also contended that the nature and extent of federal participation should be left up to Congress with the executive branch acting only in an advisory capacity.

In letters to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, Acting Secretary Roosevelt listed scholarships for higher education, ceremonials and exhibits as other possible areas for federal participation. He said that the federal government could take part only in projects of national significance.

The staff study listed a series of projects which might qualify under the stipulation of aiding economic development. Generally speaking, the projects involve construction of manufacturing plants, storage facilities or public buildings which could be used as exhibition halls during the celebration.

However, the study did state that the celebration itself would air eco-

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conomic development by attracting tourists during the centennial. Projects to improve tourist attractions and facilities after 1967 should be considered. It was pointed out that 200,000 visitors to the celebration would mean more than \$37 million to Alaska's income.

In 1964, more than 75,000 visitors spent upwards of \$12 million in the State. The study said that growth in tourism, in part sparked by the celebration, should climb to 650,000 visitors and \$223 million by 1980. Those figures would justify "modest" federal participation in exhibits and ceremonials to help attract visitors, the report states.

The study stressed the need for sound local and state planning and financial support.

It is not known yet if the voluminous report with exhibits will be printed as a congressional document, and so copies are not yet available for general distribution.