

68TH CONGRESS,
1ST SESSION.

S 2786

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 10, 1924.

Mr. MCLEAN (by request) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Territories and Insular Possessions.

A BILL

to provide a civil government for the Virgin Islands, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the provisions of this Act shall apply to the West Indian Islands acquired from Denmark by the United States, the said Islands being known as the Virgin Islands, and waters of those islands; and the name Virgin Islands as used in this Act shall be held to include all the said islands and waters.

SEC. 2. That no law shall be enacted in the Virgin Islands which shall deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, or deny to any person therein the equal protection of the laws.

That in all criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy the right to have the assistance of counsel for his defense, to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to have a copy thereof, to have a speedy and public trial, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, and to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor.

That no person shall be held to answer for a criminal offense without due process of law, and no person for the same offense shall be twice put in jeopardy of punishment, nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to give evidence against himself; nor shall any person sit as judge or magistrate in any case in which he has engaged as attorney or prosecutor.

That all persons shall before conviction be bailable by sufficient sureties, except for capital offenses when the proof is evident or the presumption great.

That no law impairing the obligation of contracts shall be enacted.

That no person shall be imprisoned or shall suffer forced labor for debt.

That the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in case of rebellion, insurrection, or invasion of public safety may require it, in either of which events the same may be suspended by the President, or by the Governor, whenever during su-

period the necessity for such suspension may exist.

That no ex post facto law or bill of attainder shall be enacted.

Private property shall not be taken or damaged for public use except upon payment of just compensation ascertained in the manner provided by law.

Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to limit the power of the council to enact laws for the protection of the lives, health, or safety of employees.

That no law granting a title of nobility shall be enacted, and no person holding any office of profit or trust under the government of the Virgin Islands shall, without the consent of the Congress of the United States, accept any present, emolument, office, or title of any kind whatever, from any king, queen, prince, or foreign State, or any officer thereof.

That excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishment inflicted.

That the right to be secure against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated.

That no warrant for arrest or search shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.

That slavery shall not exist in the Virgin Islands.

That involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall not exist in the Virgin Islands.

That no laws shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the Government for the redress of grievances.

That no law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, and that the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship without discrimination or preference shall forever be allowed, and that no political or religious test other than an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the Virgin Islands shall be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the government of the Virgin Islands.

The contracting of polygamous or plural marriages hereafter is prohibited.

That no money shall be paid out of the Treasury except in pursuance of an appropriation by law and on warrant drawn by the proper officer in pursuance thereof.

That the rule of taxation in the Virgin Islands shall be uniform.

That all money derived from any tax levied or assessed for a special purpose shall be treated as a special fund in the Treasury and paid out for such purpose only, except upon the approval of the President of the United States.

That the employment of children under the age of fourteen years in any

occupation injurious to health or morals or hazardous to life or limb is hereby prohibited.

(To be continued.)

LOCAL

The U. S. S. Ranger and two other small steam units arrived here yesterday afternoon. The Ranger is moored off the Gallows Bay section of the town and the others to the west.

The first instalment of the Bill introduced into the Senate by Senator McLean at the instance of interested parties here will be found in this issue, a copy of the bill having been kindly furnished this paper by the local Government.

In this issue there is furnished a report concerning a court procedure of yesterday which will be found very interesting. The sentencing of people without due process of law is so obviously dangerous a condition that no comment upon it is necessary to awaken activity to preclude it by appropriate means at the disposition of those in higher authority.

DISTRICT COURT ISSUES WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS.

First Issued Since The Transfer.

At a special sitting of the District Court yesterday, convened by His Honor Judge McKean, a writ of habeas corpus was issued on petition of one Frank Gibbons through his attorney D. Hamilton Jackson. The hearing took place at 2 p. m. when the Sheriff produced the petitioner in Court to have the cause of his restraint examined into. Upon the hearing it was shown that Gibbons was not sentenced by due process of law and was therefore ordered discharged from custody. The session lasted two hours.

Mr. Editor,

Dear Sir,

Please permit me space in your valuable paper just to let you know a little of my experience from St. Croix to Culebra I wish to thank His Excellency Governor Williams for his kindness in giving such a great treat to the members of St. Croix Colonial Council, also our Despatching Secretary Mr. Barrett for his part.

Now we come to the sights the greatest one in all my life time—The battle-ships, also subchasers and sub-marines. As far as I can remember, I counted about 189 in the Culebra big sea port; some of the biggest ships afloat. And all kinds of games were seen on the shore at Culebra; I saw on board the Battle-ship New Mexico, a base ball game being played right aboard the ship.