

Village Electric Co-op Gets \$797,454

An unexpected change in teachers contracts has given rise to new disagreements between Stan Friese, Superintendent of State Operated Schools and District One Education Association, representing the rural teachers of SOS.

Roberta Alward, president of the teachers' group, picked up a sample copy of the contract from Mr. Friese's office late Monday, and discovered the change.

The teachers and Mr. Friese have been embroiled in negotiations from last August through April and at one point the teachers filed a suit to settle their differences.

Negotiations were resumed and the suit was subsequently dropped, although DOEA continued to ask for Mr. Friese's resignation. Nevertheless, they thought the contractual differences had been settled with the Board "in good faith".

The new contract, however, contains a significant change in the wording of portion 7, and the teachers feel the clause, as it now reads, is illegal and detrimental to the teachers.

The disputed phrase deals

with non-retention of a teacher at the expiration of a contract. Under the previous contract, the teacher has the option to request a hearing before the Commissioner of Education.

Friese's rewording changes this to read: "Before such contract shall be terminated, teachers shall be given the opportunity to request a hearing before the SUPERINTENDENT." In other words, before Friese, rather than the Commissioner.

According to Mrs. Alward, "The teachers are really up in the air." over the latest policy.

Mrs. Alward questioned Mr. Friese as to when the new contract was printed. "He said in February. I asked him why he had not informed the Association of changes in the contract, and he had no answer."

In Alaska, Mrs. Alward explained the actual contract goes out only to new teachers. A teacher with tenure receives only a slip listing salary and so forth.

Therefore, had she not checked the contract for the Association, no tenure teachers would have seen it and by signing the slip, would, in effect, have been signing the new contract. New teachers would have been

unaware of the implications.

"The teachers are in no mood to stand for any more," said Mrs. Alward, and intend to take their grievances to the Commissioner in Juneau.