

Gravel Voices Concern Over Amchitka Blast

U. S. Senator Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) expressed concern that Alaska's fisheries could be affected by nuclear testing on Amchitka Island.

Gravel, in a letter to Glenn T. Seaborg, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, said there were several questions raised over the safety of the fisheries resources in the event of submarine venting or shock from a nuclear explosion.

The Atomic Energy Commission is planning a series of underground atomic explosions starting this fall on the Aleutian Chain about 1,500 miles west and south of Anchorage, Alaska.

Gravel said he had received many letters from concerned fishermen since he introduced S.J.Res. 108, calling for an independent National Commission on Nuclear and Seismic safety.

"Their concern is twofold:" Gravel said. "First, they fear that a submarine shock would stun or kill upon impact many of the

(Continued on page 6)

Amchitka Blast

(Continued from page 1)

living organisms in the general area - and were that to happen during spawning or fish runs it would thus destroy portions of Alaska's prime natural resource.

"Secondly," Gravel told Seaborg, "they see the possibility of underwater marine contamination as a very real threat to entire fisheries."

Gravel compared the problem with recent experience in the United States over milk contamination during atmospheric testing.

"In my research" Gravel said, "I have found no definitive statement about the tolerance levels of radionuclide contamination which megaton level tests would emit were they to vent above or below the water level."

"These are extremely sensitive and important questions for Alaska fishermen," Gravel said.

He asked that Seaborg address himself to the questions and provide answers.