

Washington Report

**Senator
ERNEST
BRUENING**



Senator Bartlett and I have urged the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Public Works to appropriate the full \$8.2 million which the Army Corps of Engineers needs during Fiscal Year 1969 for Alaska flood control, navigation and related projects.

The amount we are asking for is \$2,427,000 above the Administration's budget request. Of course it won't be easy to get this extra money because funds badly needed for all domestic programs are being poured into the quicksand of Vietnam. As a matter of fact, the \$2.4 million in extra funds we are requesting is approximately the amount our country spends each hour on the Vietnam war.

If the Paris peace talks are successful, and I pray they will be, we again will have the resources to build our own economy. In the meantime, I think adequate appropriations for public works projects in Alaska are still justified.

The wealth and strength of our State are in our natural resources, and these must be fully developed. Since we are such a young State, we lag far behind the others in the type of development which public works funds make possible.

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Once again this year I will have the pleasure of speaking at a number of high school commencements. This opportunity to meet with the young people of our State has always been a special joy for me.

I congratulate all of the boys and girls who will be graduating this year. There is

nothing I would like more than for all of them to go on to college and then stay in Alaska to help us with the exciting task of building our State.

I enjoyed meeting one of our fine high school seniors in my office recently. She was Patricia Ann Thomas of Juneau, the winner of the Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow contest. Patricia Ann won a \$1500 scholarship and a tour to Washington, D.C. and Williamsburg, Virginia.

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The United States Department of Interior seems to be determined to continue its domination of the Alaskan Natives.

That is the only conclusion I can draw from Secretary Udall's high-handed rejection of the bill S. 2906, which would have finally settled the Native land claims problem.

The bill was drafted by a Task Force appointed by Governor Walter J. Hickel, composed of representatives of various Native groups. The sessions of the Task Force were attended by representatives of the Interior Department.

We held complete hearings on this bill in Anchorage, and the Secretary offered no objections at that time. The proposal was based on a suggestion made by the Secretary, and we had counted on him to support it. The Alaska legislature even passed a law to supplement S. 2906. Now, apparently, the Secretary wants us to start all over again. This is bound to mean an unfortunate and needless delay.