

Stevens charges BIA not building schools

During fiscal year 1978 budget hearings for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Ted Stevens, ranking Republican on the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, questioned Bureau handling of school construction projects in Alaska. Stevens remarked: "The Bureau has a backlog of about \$400 million for needed school construction, yet every year we receive a priority list, six months later the priorities change, and the Bureau submits reprogramming requests. We are still waiting for the Bureau to spend money appropriated for Alaska six years ago."

Stevens directed the B.I.A. to submit quarterly reports to the Committee on Obligation of Construction Funds to allow for greater Congressional oversight in this area. The senator also requested that he be supplied

with a report of the Bureau's capability to assist in six Alaskan schools which were transferred from B.I.A. to local control last July. The schools are: Kotzebue, Kiana, Emmonak Hopper Bay, Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, and Mountain Village. Stevens said: "In the long run, there will be a substantial savings to the Federal Government if the school transfer to local and state support is effective, and I feel that it would be a good investment to provide some funds to ease this transition period."

Other areas covered during the hearings, included replacement of the North Star III which provides supplies to coastal villages on an annual basis; phase II construction of a fish hatchery in Metlakatla; and erosion problems at Venetie and Emmonak.