

KENNEDY'S PLAN FOR INDIANS WINS

Gets Senate Unit to Restore
\$4-Million to Fund

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 22—

Senator Edward M. Kennedy reentered the legislative fray today by successfully challenging the Senate Appropriations Committee on the issue of education for American Indians.

Outmaneuvered by Senator Kennedy, the committee agreed to restore nearly \$4-million for Indian education that it had cut out of an Interior Department appropriations bill.

It was the first time that Senator Kennedy had done legislative battle on the Senate floor since the accident last July on Chappaquiddick Island that resulted in the death of a former Capitol Hill secretary. Last week he floor-managed a National Science Foundation authorization bill, but the legislation was routinely approved without any opposition.

Ever since the accident, Senator Kennedy has tended to withdraw into himself, in the opinion of some of his colleagues, even to the point of avoiding conversation with some of his fellow Senators. His emotional withdrawal had reached the point that some of his closest friends in the Senate were beginning to worry not so much about his political future as his personal future.

But in recent days, Senator Kennedy has shown signs of a renewed political self-confidence. Last week, in his first political speech outside the Senate since the accident, he delivered a stinging attack on the Nixon Administration's Vietnam policy. His challenge today to the Appropriations Committee was interpreted by his colleagues as notice that he would resume a more active role on the Senate floor.

The challenge was carried out with the political aplomb that was shaping Senator Kennedy as an influential figure in the Senate before the accident.

In two hours this morning he rounded up 25 co-sponsors for his amendment to restore \$4,037,000 for Indian education

that the Appropriations Committee had removed from the request of the Interior Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs. As the debate proceeded, he announced additional co-sponsors to the point that it became apparent to members of the Appropriations Committee that he had the votes to overturn the committee's recommendations.

Senator Alan Bible of Nevada, Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior Department, who is floor manager of the bill, finally came over to Senator Kennedy and whispered, "It looks like you have the horses."

Following the subcommittee's bleak report on hearings as a desk, the two struck a deal on the Senate floor. Senator Bible agreed to accept the amendment if Senator Kennedy would reduce it by \$100,000. Senator Kennedy in turn agreed not to press for a roll-call vote, which would have embarrassed some Senators by forcing them to vote against the influential Appropriations Committee.

Whether the Kennedy amendment would survive the conference between House and Senate Appropriations committees was questionable. But at least he had made his point of championing the cause of American Indians, whose plight at one point he described as "a national failure of enormous proportions."

The Indian cause is one of the issues that Senator Kennedy inherited from his brother, the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and which before the accident he was pursuing with well-publicized field hearings by his Senate Labor Subcommittee on Indian Education. The subcommittee is scheduled to issue a report late next month.

With the Kennedy amendment adopted by vote, the Senate went on to approve the \$15-billion Interior Appropriations Bill requested by the Administration.

After discussing a \$4-million increase in Indian education for nearly three hours, the Senate, in 67 minutes, approved a bill authorizing \$385-million in operating and construction subsidies for the Merchant Marine — \$122-million more than proposed by the Administration. By a 53-to-18 vote, the Senate rejected an amendment by Senator John J. Williams, Republican of Delaware, proposing to reduce the construction subsidies from \$129-million to the \$15.9-million requested by the Administration.