

RESOURCES 97

still have to be administered by our Department and, thus, the fragmentation of functions would probably be an even more difficult coordination problem than at the present time.

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SHOULD NOT BE PUT IN HEW

Now, with regard to the second aspect in this bill that affects our Department, there is a more difficult problem, and that is the one for the transfer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to our Department. This is a problem which I know you have given a lot of thought to, and it has been discussed in the Federal Government for a long period of time. I have no doubt in saying that the transfer of the public health function that was formerly vested in the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the Public Health Service some years ago has resulted in a material improvement in the health of the American Indian, and I would have to say, in all honesty, that if the education function in the Bureau of Indian Affairs were transferred to the Office of Education, I think it would likewise result in an improvement in the education of the American Indian.

discussions with the representatives of the Indians, they have indicated that they are quite opposed to the transfer of these functions to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Senator RIBICOFF. Education too?

INDIANS FEAR CHANGE IN POLICY WOULD RESULT

Mr. COHEN. Yes, sir. It is my understanding, on the basis of Secretary Gardner's meeting with various Indian groups in Kansas City in February, that while they do not take a position of the sort of being specifically against the movement of one function, they look upon any movement or change as having a long impact in changing the whole philosophy of the Federal Government's responsibility with respect to Indians.

So, I would say that you have a very difficult problem in that the main constituents that you are interested in dealing with are, at least vigorously, I would say, opposed to it. It would certainly be an important factor, and requires further consultation with them before any such change in part or in whole is made.

Senator RIBICOFF. I am just curious.

The Indians probably admit, do they not, that having transferred