

Washington D. C. April : Representatives from Indian states were outvoted by Eastern Republicans Friday in their efforts to boost the eight million dollar fund for educating Indians contained in the current Interior Department appropriation bill.

The coalition of Democrats and western Republicans was not sufficiently strong to defeat the Republican economy bloc which had cut budget figures 47 percent for this department for 1948.

On Thursday, Representatives Murdock of Arizona (Democrat) and Albert of Oklahoma (Democrat) spoke out in general debate against the proposed cut for Indian education and hospitalization.

On Friday, which was the longest session of the Congress this year, the various western groups undertook to restore numerous items in the bill.

On reading of the bill on Friday, Representative Albert introduced an amendment to boost funds for educating Indians to \$11,865,000. He was supported in his move by Congressmen Stigler, Morris, and Monroney of Oklahoma, and other Representatives from Indian states. The amendment was defeated by a vote of 124 to 91. Thereupon, Representative Mundt, Republican, South Dakota, moved to increase the figure to 10 million dollars. The Mundt amendment was rejected 116 to 99. According to representatives from the Office of Indian Affairs these cuts in the budget figures will, on the basis of present estimates, if the House Bill is enacted into law, result in the closing of about one-half of Oklahoma's 12 Indian boarding schools and greatly curtail the activities of the others.

In addition to this, it will eliminate items for federal aid to school districts serving Indian pupils in various western states. In the case of Oklahoma, it will deprive such districts of a total of about \$365,000 by way of federal aid funds for the next school year.

There was no cut made in budget estimates for aid to mission schools.

Although a cut was made in funds for conservation of health, the appropriation for this item as it now stands, was increased to \$6,850,570. as compared to \$6,130,570. for last year. Albert objected to any reductions in this item on the ground that there is a terrific need for such hospitals and that these hospitals have never been operated at full capacity.

During the debate on the medical and welfare items, Albert, referring to the Indian Hospital and Sanatorium at Talihina said:

"I can see no justification whatever for any cut in medical appropriations. In my opinion this is economy carried to an unhealthy extreme; it is false economy. It is well known that there is a general shortage of hospitals. Under the circumstances it is tragic indeed that any space in this great hospital should lie vacant."

The Interior Department appropriation bill now goes to the Senate where, in view of the number of eastern Senators on the Senate Appropriations Committee, it is expected that some of the cuts made by the eastern-dominated House Committee will be restored.

###