

Editorial Comment—

Alaska Native People And the Business World

It looks as if the business world will cast its eyes toward the ventures and activities of Alaska's Native people from now on. Once this starts, it will seldom take those eyes off a fascinating new scene. Also, they will watch for any pitfalls and we hope they will not be given an opportunity to gaze upon this dubious sight.

Alaska Native people have been given a chance to tap into the business world stemming from the proceeds of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. This is indeed an opportunity of a lifetime many times over. Once this opportunity was at hand, many of our business-minded Native men and women wasted little time getting their feet wet. They seemed to have found the pool quite inviting and the resulting activities thereafter have amazed many an onlooker. The seeds of business acumen seemed to have taken root and in many cases the fruits of the efforts are in the offing as yet and the eyes of the onlookers will strain to see how these will come about. We will not be the exception.

When the claims settlement was achieved, there were many questions, "What will happen now? Will the Native people be able to handle the great task at hand? Just watch, they will blow it into the four winds. They have no education and that is going to be their downfall." And there had been many other dubious attitudes as to how the post claim era will turn out to be.

We have always contended that our Native folks will be able to meet the new challenges with a good deal of ability and we are sticking to that idea. We have pointed out that our folks have good amount of adaptability to any new situation and that this trait will turn out to be a good asset. We still think so and hopes spring eternal that this gift will prevail. This will have to aided with generous amounts of good old sense and generous amounts of goodwill from our own public. The backing from our people is one the greatest needs we can offer to those people who are in the leadership positions within the various business ventures.

The Native people have embarked into a new era of operation which cannot be anything else but an exciting one. Many of us will be engulfed in the very newness of it and many of us will be drawn to it with some cautious optimism but always with great hopes for fine successes. The new fields of activities will be deemed as efforts to benefit those of us living at the present time and for the benefit of those who will come after us.

— H.R.