

NOTTI KICKS OFF CAMPAIGN

Candidate Pledges To Fight Cutbacks

By JACQUELINE GLASGOW
Staff Writer

Opening the "Interior Alaskans for Notti" headquarters Monday, January 29, Emil Notti named former state senator Ed Merdes his Fairbanks campaign chairman in that city.

Beginning what he called a short campaign, only five weeks from election, Notti plunged into the central issues separating him from his Republican opponent, Don Young of Ft. Yukon.

A former Chairman of the State's Democratic Party, Notti strongly supports his party's goals and sees party alliance as a decisive factor in the election.

"The main issue of the campaign," said Notti in an exclusive interview with the Tundra Times, "is who best represent Alaska's interests in Congress over the next couple of years."

"Congress is controlled by the Democratic party. It controls the floor business, appropriations, committee assignments, and committee business. I think Nick Begich showed what a freshman Congressman can do if he has the cooperation and interest of the leadership of Congress."

Notti is banking on his four years of lobbying experience in the Capitol when he led the fight for a Native Land Claims Settlement. "I know how business moves through Congress. I know them, and they know me."

Notti commented on the recent cut-backs by the Nixon administration. Among the programs vetoed by the President, he cited flood control projects, work programs, airport development, mining and research centers, Indian housing, centers and homes for the elderly of America, highways, and water pollution.

"These are people programs," he said, "all important to Alaska. The President is trying to cool down the economy at the expense of the working man. I don't think that's the way to



CANDIDATE ON THE GO — Emil Notti, the Democratic choice for the Congressional seat, mingles with voters at the opening of his Fairbanks campaign headquarters.

Photo by FRANK MURPHY

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Native Or Non - Native Is Not The Question

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deal with inflation."

Notti feels that Alaskans have not yet felt the full impact of the President's cuts. "Alaska lost \$16 million in Title IV funds alone. The whole Alaskan economy will be hit. Without the cooperation of the majority party in Congress, Alaska is going to get hurt."

Notti suggested that the best solution to the present situation is to restore some of that money in federal programs, and he maintains this will only be done by moving legislation through a Democratic Congress.

Refusing to be cast as the "native" candidate, Notti asserts that he is the Democratic candidate. "The question is my ability," he said. "If I'm elected, I'll be elected by the people of Alaska. As a Congressman, I'll be duty-bound to represent everybody in Alaska. What's important is if I can do things for Alaska, not whether I'm Native or non-Native."

Notti no longer sees the Native Land Claims as a major issue. "I think the emphasis has shifted from between Native and State, to between State and federal." There are

now 45 million acres of overlap according to Notti, in state and federal land interests.

A decision for or against the pipeline he also sees as a thing of the past. "I think we can no longer say, if it is built, but when it is built. A lot of Alaska's economy is dependent on when the pipeline moves. The main area of concern at this time is minimizing the impact on the environment."

Notti places high on his list of priorities the fishing industry of Alaska. "The Law of the Seas Commission which will meet in Geneva will focus a great deal of attention on fisheries," he said.

"Alaska has most of the coastline of the United States and the continental shelf. It is important that Alaska's voice be heard in the next commission meeting."

Notti favors maintaining the abstention line. "If we give up the abstention line," he stated, "we will find foreign fishermen in the Gulf of Alaska."

Notti is hopeful that the international meeting will support control of anadromous fish, those which return to

fresh-water rivers from salt seas for spawning, such as salmon and steelhead.

"It is not fair for the state of Alaska to foot the bill for research, control, protection, and hatcheries, and have these fish caught on the high seas." Notti's position is that anadromous fish belong to the country of origin.

On another international issue, Notti commented briefly on the proposed formation of an Arctic Community announced by President Nixon and Russia's Bresnev.

"If Nixon intends to pursue an Arctic Policy, Alaska would have to play a major role. There is no other Arctic under U.S. control other than Alaska. I would hate to see bureaucrats who know nothing about Alaska start dealing on the world scene without strong Alaska influence. I would insist that Alaska be heard."

Emil Notti is confident he is the man to see that Alaska is heard in Washington, D.C., whether the issue is pipeline, Native Land Claims, fisheries, or Arctic community.