

Editorial Comment—

Native Politics

Come to the Fore

Ever since Tundra Times started publishing back in October 1962, we have been telling our native people about the importance of politics. At that time, native politics was almost nonexistent. Politicians who came to villages with knick-knacks, candies, gums and pens were almost cinches to be elected. This was a painful experience to watch. Real meaning of politics in the bush was nonexistent. We dispaired of this situation.

In 1972, we are seeing something spectacularly different. Native politics is coming to the fore, and in a correct and sophisticated manner. It took a while but we had felt it would be coming along eventually. It is now a reality and it is exciting. It is giving our native people a new direction — a new tool for benefits that can be gained by good politics.

The new-found tool of benefits must still be nurtured and developed for the better in the future. Our native politicians must look for new friends in the political arenas sympathetic to their own politics. This is a desirable direction to take because of the definite possibility of shrinkage of influence as the Caucasian population of Alaska increases in comparison to the percentage of native population. This is a serious thing to keep in mind.

Perhaps such things as summer jobs reportedly being given to out-of-state people instead of Alaska residents should be watched. It might be a device to speed up the Caucasian population. Some of the out-of-staters are sure to like Alaska and decide to stay.

At any rate, native politics has developed to a surprising degree and it should be jealously guarded. It is a precious achievement destined to reap good benefits for our native people.