

## ***Editorial Comment—***

# **The Heated Contest On Capitol Move**

The people of Alaska, at the moment, are feverishly slinging pros and cons on the subject of moving the seat of the state government in Juneau to some location in central Alaska and it is getting louder by the minute. No subject in recent times has received such vociferous attention in all the State of Alaska as is the capitol move, including the Native citizens of our state.

At this stage of this statewide game, the Tundra Times is leaning toward opposing the proposal because, we think, the thing is premature because the state has entered, and will be entering into knotty problems in the immediate future. These are: the embroilment of the Native people in organizing to handle the proceeds of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act; the considerable impact of the Alaska oil pipeline; the potentially troublesome influx of thousands of people into the state because of the pipeline activity; and the need to evaluate the flow of revenue from the Alaska oil pipeline that will, in fact, be going on for several years in the future.

These are no small problems that will need full and immediate attention by the powers that be in the State of Alaska. If all these unmet problems are compounded by the capitol move, efforts to solve them might be short-circuited and less thorough results might be realized that could continue to haunt the state operations in the days to come because the jobs have been done in a slipshod manner.

We are not altogether opposed to the eventual move of the capitol but what worries us at this time is the seeming suddenness and intense desire to move when even though the subject is not exactly new. Timing of the effort seems bent on collision with the existing problems that will need immediate attention and if this comes to pass, the moving of the capitol itself might become a victim of a slipshod effort. If the capitol has to move, it will need a most thorough study, perhaps by the responsible Alaskans themselves who know their state so much more than people from elsewhere.

There are, of course, many other problems the movers will have to evaluate one of which is the uprooting of the capitol in Juneau itself. The impact of this eventuality is certain to be a most traumatic experience to the Juneau area people and this involves thousands of them. Such considerations involving those people need to be delved into, again in a most thorough manner.

There are problems indeed and one of them, apparently, being the hiring situation of Alaskan workers on the pipeline. Although we have no real proof of it, there is also quite a bit of grumbling on the partiality shown toward the White workers on the line. If such a thing does exist indeed, something must be done so the working conditions can be a bit more cordial so the progress of the pipeline work can go on a more even level.

As far as the capitol move is concerned, let us do a lot more evaluation while keeping a wary eye on the existing problems we are now meeting.