

Hopson Bows Out—

Egan and Hopson

By MARGIE BAUMAN

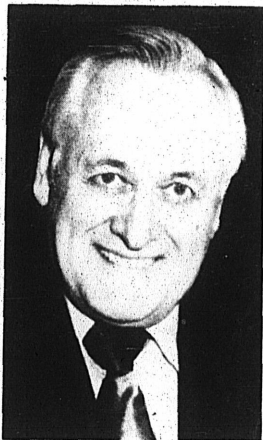
FAIRBANKS — Alaska Gov.

William Egan says an apparent lack of communications led his long-time ally Eben Hopson to strike out against him in the Democratic gubernatorial primary.

Egan said he never did have any difference of opinion or argument with the North Slope Borough Mayor, who has now dropped as a candidate in the primary and pledged his support to Egan.

The governor told the Tundra Times Thursday that he had much admiration for the work Mayor Hopson and his associates in the North Slope Borough have done and that he's happy now to have Hopson's support.

"Whether this came about as a result of not enough communications I don't know, but any time a person on your side whom you respect and admire has come out for the same position as you are aspiring to and then they change, I think it's



GOV. WILLIAM EGAN

going to be a plus in bringing things together," Egan said.

"... I had no argument with Eben Hopson," said the gover-

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Governor and Hopson Settle Differences . .

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nor, as he praised the "constructive programs" brought to the North Slope by Hopson's borough administration.

Whether or not there have been some mistakes in the way they've approached certain problems remains for residents of the North Slope to decide, Egan said.

His own campaign trail wasn't going to be all that easy this year, Egan said. "The general election this year, the campaign, is going to be a difficult one.

"It's going to be one I am certainly planning to win, but I have no qualms about knowing . . . it's going to be a hard fought battle," he said.

The governor did not weigh the probable effects of Hopson's support, except to say he

thought it would be a "plus" and he was pleased to have Hopson on his side again.

Egan and Hopson met for more than two hours last week to hash out their differences.

Almost everything we talked about fits right in the direction we're going and the programs we have and plan in the future," Egan said.

Among the points discussed were the developments of regional boroughs in rural Alaska, a single standard of justice for all people in Alaska, elimination of the State-Operated Schools system, and state cooperation with regional corporations in the development of a modern communications system for rural Alaska.

In his own statement to the

news media after dropping from the race, Hopson said he had run against Egan to draw his attention to serious differences of opinion over matters affecting the North Slope.

Hopson added that as a result of their meeting "the governor and I are together now as strongly as we ever were and I am going to resign from the race and ask all who would have voted for me to vote for Bill Egan to serve our state as governor for the next four years."

Hopson said this was going to be a Democratic year "and rural Alaska is going to be a better place in the future because of Bill Egan's re-election and forceful implementation of the new rural Alaska policy and program which we negotiated."

Hopson has been a strong proponent of local government as a guarantee to freedom and justice for the Alaskan bush.

"Justice for the people of the bush won't be secure until local government is secure in rural Alaska," Hopson told the Second Conference on Bush Justice in Minto, back in June.

"Justice is the product of the quality of understanding and compassion that only locally-controlled government can have for troubled people.

"It should be clear to everyone by now that the only government that you can trust to care about justice is locally-controlled government — government administered by people who have to look you in the eye; who have to live in the same town as you; who depend upon the same justice as you do," Hopson said.