

Editorial—

The AFN Unity Must Be Guarded

The sizzling lawyer controversy in recent weeks, we believe, was a difficult practical lesson the Alaska Federation of Natives have yet encountered and absorbed. Although the statewide native federation, in our opinion, came out the battered winner, we believe the leadership within it should from now on keep a strict surveillance for new difficulties to arise from some unexpected corner. It might be a good idea for the leadership to fully expect this to happen so it can be met with good, effective counters. To be alert is to be forearmed. This will have to be a necessary preparedness before the organization can at last set down to do its routine work for the resolution of the great native problems and development of the needs of their people.

The lawyer controversy threatened to undermine whatever unity the federation had. Although the unity base tottered a bit for a while, the impact and threat of the problem also had a unifying effect which ultimately strengthened with the resulting fact that the AFN is now more unified than it had ever been before. This was a hard won achievement and it should be guarded well for the good of the native people. Losing it would result in a chaotic mess and the real losers would be the big mass of the native people of Alaska. Such a breakdown would be catastrophic to say the least.

The native leadership is aiming for the achievement of a meaningful future for their people. To pursue this with honor and diligence means the greatest good for those the native leaders seek to help. To attain the end results in this manner can be historic and honor for those who labor for its realization.

From here on in, the biggest necessity will have to be the guardianship of the achievement of unity within the AFN. This has been realized through much difficulty but having been done in such a manner should make it a stronger one than it had ever been before. It must be kept strong because there may yet be some efforts to undermine it. Surveillance for such an eventuality should be the watchword and no letup should be allowed.