

Editorial—

The Need to Avoid Political Pitfalls

The political awakening and its evidence among our native people has become quite clear within the last few years in Alaska. It is, indeed, a fine thing to behold. It is a harbinger of things to come but, if it is to be, it must be nursed along like an infant that it is, nurtured, coddled and disciplined by turns until it flowers into maturity. We must look to it for its talents and develop those talents so it will work for us with skill and resoluteness if it is to serve us well. We must develop it so it can recognize selfish motives. It should not be a stepping stone for self development for power. Instead, its power should develop our leadership.

Political applications are complex and sometimes cruelly misleading. Many people who wield its mechanisms are skilled. Many of them are masters of

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'I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend your right to say it.' Voltaire

POLITICAL PITFALLS . . .

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psychology and their maneuvers in the field of politics can sway the people in any political entity. These are the skilled tacticians who know the science of politics and who are ready to pounce on those who are politically naive, or those who are new to politics, and pull the wool over their eyes so they can use them for their own ends. The master politicians' seemingly painless maneuvers can become painful in the end to the politically naive.

Politics rule the world, the nations, states, their cities, towns and villages. No one can escape its influences and no one will in the future. We have to live with it through every day of our lives. Since this is so, we must learn the best way to get along with it and try hard to learn its complex mechanisms. Good knowledge of it can gain for us the best way to use it to benefit us—better yet, a thorough knowledge of it. By knowing what it can do will help us to avoid the pitfalls that it can bring.

Politics has diverse qualities. It can be tricky. It can backfire. Its victims can be snatched from the pinnacles of achievement to oblivion. It can destroy those who would use it for their own selfish ends. It can give false directions and by devious ways end up at an unexpected destination. These pitfalls should be heeded always. To become a party to them can mean unpleasant consequences to persons involved.

Politics, however, has good sides to it. Its wise use can be honorable, farsighted and beneficial to those who would respect its better potentials. It can develop good things—useful things in our villages, towns and cities. The proper and careful utilization of it is a stepping stone to greatness. This must mean that those persons who would wield its use should have the values of humanity in view as one of the first necessary guidelines in the service of their communities. This should be clearly and sincerely understood by our native political aspirants. It can become an inspiration to serve their people well in the future.