

Gravel Trying Hard for Interior Committee Slot

Senator-elect Mike Gravel attended a reception in his honor last Monday at the Fairbanks Inn. Scores of wellwishers and friends who played an important part in Gravel's election were present.

The people visited with the background of a huge 80-pound cake fashioned in the shape of the American flag and the Alaska state flag. Greater portion of the cake went to the Pioneer's Home and Hope Center in the city.

Gravel stated that he was working hard to get a committee assignment in the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.

"The committee is important to land claims, also for native education, mines and minerals, Bureau of Indian Affairs--the committee is important for Alaska," said Gravel.

Gravel is competing for the assignment against the newly Senate-elect Allen Cranston of

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WELLWISHERS—At a reception in his honor last Monday, Senator-elect Mike Gravel, second from right, is carrying on an animated conversation with friends and helpers in his recent campaign for United States Senate. Sam Kito, left, a Tlingit Indian, campaigned hard for

Gravel in Fairbanks, and second from left is Ralph Perdue, an Athabascan Fairbanks jeweler and a Republican who crossed party lines to campaign for the senator-elect, a Democrat. Far right is Mrs. Colleen Redman, a pleased constituent. —Photo by TIMES EDITOR

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California.

Asked about his convincing win in the general election, Gravel said the following:

"It is a real honor to be able to serve. At this point in history, there is so much that needs to be done—and to be part of this, is going to be a great adventure."

Ralph Perdue, local Indian jeweler and a staunch Republican, and who crossed party lines

to campaign for Mike Gravel said:

"I don't know how to express it but I think the native people have now a voice in Congress. Mike will be effective. He will take suggestions and by doing so, he will work on education, labor, in a manner that will be understood by the people."

"I stuck my neck out. Being a Republican, I had to bump a lot of heads but I survived. I feel, as one of the native leaders, we have to make decisions contrary to political beliefs to serve and be dedicated to the native people whom we think will benefit the most. I did it for their cause."

"A congressional member can only be effective when he listens to the native people's problems and acting on them in a manner that will be most beneficial to Alaska."

"The point of the whole thing is that the native people can select a person who will do the most for them in the problems they're faced with in our society."

Mike Rowan who campaigned

hard from the beginning for Gravel, said of the victory:

"I thought it was really a tremendous thing. Sen. Gruening pulled 14,000 votes and we still had 6,000 plurality—which turned out to be six or seven per cent—I thought it was very comfortable."

"Mike had things to say that Alaskans cared about. He talked about issues and people responded to them. They were good issues. They were about jobs, transportation, cost of living. They were acceptable to the large majority of Alaskans."

"He campaigned hard, too. He was continually on the go—and go. That counted a lot." Mike Gravel said he already has a house lined up in Washington with an option to buy. He said his wife, Rita, was very happy about the outcome of the election.

"The kids are happy also although they are a little regretful of leaving their friends in Anchorage. I don't think they fully understand the thing but they're very anticipatory," Gravel said.