

HENSLEY WINS NOMINATION



SEN. HENSLEY WILL OPPOSE CONGRESSMAN YOUNG

Eskimo Legislator Defeats J. Havelock, Loser Offers Support

By MARGIE BAUMAN

State Sen. Willie Hensley has emerged the victor in a tight Democratic primary to face incumbent Republican Congressman Don Young in a campaign strongly critical of Young's record.

Hensley's victory was clinched Tuesday when his opponent in the Democratic primary, former attorney general John Havelock, conceded the race and threw his support to Hensley.

With votes still coming in, Hensley led Havelock by nearly 300 votes.

Hensley had actually called the victory Friday night but was awaiting Havelock's announcement Tuesday. Hensley, who knew in advance of the announcement, said he was welcoming Havelock's support in the general election.

Hensley said the general election would be a "clean campaign, but I want to show the public the truth of his (Young's) record. The Kotzebue Democrat has attacked Young as a "Nixon Republican" and anti-labor congressman, whose record in labor is "abysmal."

In an interview with the Tundra Times via telephone from

Juneau Monday night, Hensley said he felt Young had proven "totally unimaginative," often simply co-sponsoring the popular proposals of other members of the House.

"A single Congressman can't make or break inflation, but a person has to try," Hensley said. "You can't simply ignore the issue."

Other than his attack on Young, Hensley will push in his campaign to show that the problems of Alaskans who live in isolated villages and the cities are basically the same, be they housing, water sources, health care or other social and economic issues.

By this method, Hensley and his campaign workers hope to overcome anti-Native backlash expected to show up in the campaign and become the first

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Alaska Native to serve as an elected representative to a congressional post from Alaska.

"The challenge of the future is to diversify our economy," Hensley also noted.

"We can't continue to be a one-industry state. We've got to look into renewable resources . . . and this is going to take some real leadership," he said.

Hensley said he wished to challenge his Republican opponent to debate any time, any place the issues of the campaign. "I think the people deserve it,"



JOHN HAVELOCK

he said.

Facing Young in the general election will be clearly easier in a way for the Eskimo legislator from Kotzebue, because, he says, this race offers a clear choice.

On the other hand, it's not going to be easy.

"I am the underdog and it's going to take a hell of a turnout to win," Hensley said.

Still, he's come a long, long way.

Sitting in Anchorage with a friend, watching the results come in last Tuesday night, Hensley commented that he had begun his campaign knowing, "I had no money, no organization and a lot of people had never heard of me."

Running a low-keyed campaign and going door-to-door as time permitted, Hensley was satisfied with the over-all results in urban areas, with the exception of Southeast. The turnout in the rural areas he felt was poor and he said he hoped the number voting in rural areas would increase substantially for the general election. "People are out doing things this time of the year; it's just a bad time for the primary," he said.

In Anchorage, meanwhile, Hensley's campaign manager Karen Hedland, was optimistic about the choice of the Democratic party.

"When we first started out," she noted, "half the people had never heard of Willie Hensley."

"But those who meet Willie personally are sold on him. If he could meet everyone personally, he'd win by a landslide," she said.

"People are impressed with his sincerity, his knowlegibility. They realize he knows his way around Washington," she said.

"There wasn't that much of a difference between Willie and John Havelock politically, but between Willie and Don Young, there's a clear choice," she said.

With the votes still coming in Friday night and Hensley ahead by a scant some 200 votes, the Hensley camp decided to declare a victory because "We had to get this show on the road," Hedland said.

Now, several days later, with a pledge of support from Havelock and votes still coming in from more than 20 villages, Hedland says she's ready for the new fight and so is the candidate.

The primary election left Hensley tired "and the indecision left him a little uptight, but he's still raring to go," she said.