

Emil Notti, The Un-Native

In recent years, Alaska Native people have come to the foreground of political action in this growing and progressive state. They have much cause to be proud of their heritage, their accomplishments, and their contributions.

It has been said that Emil Notti, candidate in the special election for the seat left vacant by the tragic disappearance of Congressman Nick Begich, was to be lauded for being the first Alaska Native to run for national office.

The measure of Emil Notti goes beyond that definition. Much of what Emil is and what Emil stands for is closely associated with the Native movement in Alaska. But Emil has transcended the label of "The Native Candidate."

Emil stood his ground on issues that went beyond the borders of Alaska. He spoke with conviction on matters of national interest and international interest. Notti supporters came in all shapes and sizes. There were Alaskan Natives among them but there were many Un-Natives also.

The single most important result of yesterday's election is that a candidate in Alaska can no longer be identified by a tag or a label. There have been and there will be more and more Alaskan Natives participating in government. They will participate as equal citizens of the state, they will speak for and listen to all the segments of the electorate . . . White, Black, and Native.

Alaska is a state of much cultural diversity, as is the whole of America. One could as easily have called Notti "The Italian Candidate" from his immigrant pioneer father, Joseph Notti, who came to the Alaskan gold field from his "native" Italy. But Emil Notti is no longer half-Italian or half-Athabascan. He is total American, and as such speaks for a wide range of people, among them the Alaska Native people, no longer a splintered and separated group but part and parcel of the mainstream of American life.

For that accomplishment, we take this opportunity to congratulate Emil Notti, the UN-NATIVE.