

Editorial—

Wm. Egan Paving Way For Mutual Effort

The native community in all regions of Alaska is heartened by the public statements of governor elect William A. Egan of his apparently well meant plans to meet with native leadership and confer on matters of native land claims. The intent, we are positive, will be most welcomed by the native leaders because it has been deemed important that mutual effort by Alaska's native people and the state be made so that the claims issue, considered a most pressing problem for the state, be approached in that manner by the parties concerned. This approach, frankly and openly utilized, should help to clear up much of the misunderstanding that has existed between the native community and the state. The establishment of a good level of understanding should serve as a good springboard for mutual effort to solve a great problem the solution of which, if it is equitable and fair, should serve as a great boost for Alaska and all its citizens.

Egan's willingness to have dialogue and to work with the native leadership also raises hopes for continued working levels on mutual basis in the future. Alaska's native people, after the land claims solution has been imposed, will continue to need fair consideration from the state perhaps on a technical basis so that the resources released by the land settlement can be best utilized for the benefit of not only the native people and indirectly, all the Alaska citizenry as well. Although the natives will, no doubt, insist on administering their own affairs with decisions of their own, they will need technical assistance some of which can perhaps be obtained from the state.

We hail William Egan's positive approach to Alaska's problems especially his willingness to work along with the native leadership on the claims issue. We view it as an important approach. We hope it will become a continued state policy even after the claims are settled. That's the way it should be because there will always be a substantial native population in the state in years and years to come.