

Candidates for Congressman Begich's Seat Campaign...

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ment that Nick made. Now I would like to see it implemented as he wanted those implemented, in an orderly fashion. I want that progress to work as we want it to work, not as other people might like to distort it."

She saw as two priorities for her campaign lifting the land freeze and completing the land selection. Of the land freeze lift, she said that, while she anticipated no problems, it would need to be directed.

Mrs. Begich, although a novice at running for office, isn't necessarily as politically naive as people might expect.

"It was very much a part of our life. From the time an idea came into Nick's head on what type of a bill he wanted to put in, I went through the whole process, from the time it went into committee to the hearings to who do I contact to get this on the floor."

"You don't live around Nick Begich without knowing about politics, there's just no way."

Mrs. Begich, who says that she wants to establish an identity as a person in her own right, is traveling around the state to do just that. She has reached Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau, Ketchikan and Sitka and said that she would love to get into the bush if time allowed it.

The time element is a vital one, as whoever the candidate turns out to be will have less than three months to campaign, considerably less time than is usual. And time is an important factor in several ways. For Mrs. Begich, her family is one of her main concerns.

Some questions have been raised about a woman with six children, ranging in ages from fifteen to four, running for Congress. But she has no such reservations.

"My children have been my prime mover. If it were up to them, I would automatically have assumed that seat. If there had been any hesitancy at all, I just would have been out," she noted.

She said that she was enjoying campaigning very much, and that the organization was still intact. And she said that a conversation with the U.S. Speaker of the House indicated that Begich's seats on public works and interior committees would be available to her if she is elected.

That, of course, depends on how strong the other contenders are. One of these is Chancy Croft, state senator from Anchorage. Croft also was in town to talk about the race.

His qualifications, he said, include being in the state house in 1968, serving in the 1969-70 legislature and the Senate in 1970 and serving on several committees. A member of the House finance committee, he also served on the labor and management judiciary and the audit committees. And he was chairman of the pipeline impact committee.

Needs for bush areas are high in his priorities. Another bill he, along with State Senators John Sackett and Willie Hensley, authored is the Village Safe Water Act. Patterned after the federal act, it was allocated three million dollars.

"There was another million dollars in the bond issue this year. Unfortunately, that money hasn't been spent yet, but it is available for what many people consider one of the most pressing problems in rural Alaska," he said.

One decision facing Croft that Mrs. Begich isn't burdened with is whether or not to resign his seat to campaign. "I don't



DON YOUNG



PEGGE BEGICH



CHANCY CROFT

think I'll have to resign my seat the way things are shaping up at this point," he said. He plans to withhold a decision until he sees what committee assignments he gets, how the Senate is organized and how quickly things proceed.

His federal experience has mainly been in dealing with various agencies and serving as chairman of the board for Alaska Legal Services for three years, but "I haven't had in terms of legislative experience at the national level, no," he said.

Croft sees this election as not only unusual, but also a unique opportunity for Alaskans. "Normally, when you run for offices, either in the primary or the general," he said, "there are a lot of other candidates that are competing for the voter's attention."

Besides the state-wide candidates, there are usually congressional and senatorial races to deal with, he noted. And there are often gubernatorial and municipal races as well. But this time, there are no others impending.

"I think it's a great opportunity for the voters to become very, very familiar with the candidates, their positions on various issues, their goals, their ideas and how they plan to proceed," said Croft. He suggested a series of debates before various groups of Natives, educators, conservationists and others.

Both he and Mrs. Begich appear to agree that this campaign will be heavily media-oriented, again because of the time shortage. But he has allowed some time for more personal involvement. This trip to Fairbanks was his fourth and had been to Ketchikan once and Juneau twice.

"I plan before the convention which I assume will be the middle of January at the earliest, to cover several other areas and then probably back to Fairbanks and Juneau again," he said.

Alaska has too often in the past been ignored, Croft said. But now the problem is different because "we may still suffer from a lack of understanding, but not a lack of attention." And the fact that Alaska has one congressman compared to a state like New York, with 41 representatives, increases the job's difficulties.

"Instead of concentrating on one specific area, this state's congressman must touch all bases. His priorities in that regard are pretty well dictated by circumstances or by Alaska's goals," stated Croft.

One problem concerning Croft and others is the possible cutback in BIA services. "The figures I've seen to date indicate that, on a per capita basis, the BIA spends something like \$100

per capita in Alaska and over \$800 for Indians outside. And yet while Alaska has some 12-15 per cent of the total native population in the United States, we only get about eight per cent of the BIA operating funds."

Also concerned about the BIA and other Alaskan problems is Emil Notti, head of the Alaska Native Foundation. Notti, a tentative contender for the post in the past few months has not announced his candidacy, but expects to before long. He is also head of the State Central Committee, which recently was told by Judge Burke that it may not pick the Democratic candidate.

"It (the ruling) didn't surprise me too much. The appeal was filed Dec. 7. Now that we're faced with a 21-day time limit, there simply won't be time for that. We have to have a name to the governor by Jan. 18."

He said that someone who understands rural problems and tries to make sure the Natives will get fair treatment as citizens is needed to represent Alaska in Congress. About the BIA, he said cutbacks were a real and serious threat, and that "it's going to take an awful lot of work on the part of a congressman to maintain the level of services."

Notti, who ran for lieutenant governor in 1970, is the Democratic Party state chairman. He testified for about four years before the House and Senate on the Land Claims Act. And he twice co-chaired Nick Begich's House campaigns. Further comment was unavailable at Press time.

The only Republican candidate is Don Young, who lost to Begich in the Nov. 7 general election. Young, from Fort Yukon, has been elected before from the Interior. And he said, in an interview Tuesday, that he understands many of the opportunities as well as the problems for the bush.

"Utilization of Alaska's resources for the best use of the people" was high on his list of state preferences. "If we don't do this naturally, the human factor will suffer," he said.

He expressed serious concern for Alaskans having the right to control their own lives without Outside interference. One example was the recently-passed Marine Mammal Protection Act, which he termed "an act of emotion" rather than reason. And he stressed the need for the pipeline to be built.

Young was sharply critical of the delays in the election, saying "they should have had this thing done a long time ago. It was very poorly handled."

Actively campaigning over a wide area, Young expects to

keep doing so until the election and anticipates no conflicts with his legislative duties. "I'm looking forward to using the congressional seat only for the senators race in six years. I'll stay there as long as the people want me there," he concluded.

No democratic candidate has

been chosen yet. And the election isn't for another two months. But in the meantime, Alaskan politics is considerably more active than it usually is at this time of year.

Willie Hensley, state senator from Kotzebue, has expressed an interest in the post, "but of course it would only be if Emil Notti wasn't still interested in going after the nomination," he said.

Of his experience, he stated, "I have had six years of dealing with the Congress. As a matter of fact, some of the committees that have most to do with Alaska."

He served on the finance and resources committees, the pipeline impact committee and with Health, Education and Welfare. And he said "keeping the state afloat" financially would be his primary responsibility if he were in Congress.

"There's something about Democrats they're kind of like Natives, they do their fighting out in public. You know how the Republicans seem to keep it behind doors," he said of the intra-party battles the Democrats have had over the election.

Harry Truman Dies...

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volved with problems and decisions that affected the whole world, he never lost his Missouri farmer plainness of thought and speech. His nickname of "Give-'em-hell Harry" was well earned, and he became famous for such things as his "The Buck Stops Here" plaque on his desk and his statement, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

He was never afraid to say what he was thinking to or about anyone or anything. He called the White House "the finest prison in the world" and added, "No man, if he knows what it is all about, would want to be president. It is the most terrible job in the world as well as the most honorable."

He termed civil rights workers "northern busybodies" who should "stay at home and clean up their own back yard." And he said that Dewey, whom he defeated in the 1948 election, simply didn't tell people the truth.

But in spite of his bluntness — or perhaps because of it — he earned the respect and admiration of millions of people. He had a reputation for decisiveness and courage that appealed to many, especially the middle Americans who shared a background with the man.

His domestic policies were in line with this background. His postwar program for Congress called for full employment, increased minimum wages, private and public housing programs and a national health program. He also supported aid to education, job rights for blacks, higher farm prices and continuation of wartime economic controls.

He also did a great deal for Alaska, starting with being the first president to support its statehood. He also, according to former Sen. Ernest Gruening, helped the territory in a number of other ways. He credited Truman with ordering the first survey of conflicting and overlapping land withdrawals in the territory.

In addition, he said that Truman also helped improve territorial air service during the 1950's and helped spur on some badly needed highway appropriations for Alaska.

Truman's death Tuesday was

mourned by people all over the world, including political and government leaders. Both his friends and enemies praised him as a common man who was an honor to his office.

Former President Lyndon B. Johnson issued a statement from Austin, Tex. that said, "A 20th century giant is gone. Few men of any times ever shaped world as did the man from Independence."

"His decisive leadership in the crucial years of his presidency was an example in courage. He did not hesitate to make difficult decision he felt were right," said Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-SC. Thurmond deserted the Democratic party in 1948 to run against Truman as a Dixiecrat.

And President Nixon also said, "In launching the Marshall Plan, he began the most far-sighted and most generous act of international rebuilding ever undertaken. With his characteristically decisive action in Korea, he made possible the defense of peace and freedom in Asia."

Wednesday's funeral was kept simple and natural as the family wanted it. Only 250 people, most of them friends and relatives, attended services in the library. Truman's body lay in state for 21 hours as an average 1,500 to 2,000 people an hour filed past the coffin. An Army spokesman estimated the line to be at least a mile long at one point.

Mrs. Truman, tired from the strain of her husband's three-weeks of terminal illness, did not attend the services. Instead, their daughter Margaret, her husband Clifton Daniel of the New York Times and their four sons stood before the catafalque in the library lobby. The ceremony lasted 20 minutes from start to finish.

Earlier, townspeople had lined the streets and bridges by the thousands as the body was carried in a motorcade through Independence to the library. As the coffin was carried in, 36 Air Force planes flew by and a 21-gun salute was fired.

Foreign officials and other individuals will commemorate Truman's death Jan. 5 in a service at Washington's National Cathedral.