

STIFF SWATS ON WRISTS OF ANPEC AND TT

Some politicians and groups are now recovering from the political battle of August 25 primary election and are licking their wounds. The Alaska Federation of Natives' political arm, the Alaska Native Political Education Committee (ANPEC), is no exception. And so is the Tundra Times for that matter. Both took smart licks for endorsing Larry Carr for governor. In doing so, however, they carried out their convictions right to the polls but found that their efforts fell far short of their expectations.

Disappointed? Yes. Beaten down? A good bit but not all the way. As long as they are licking their wounds, there is an excellent chance that they will recover full health and be raring to go in no time at all.

ANPEC is a very new organization—an infant as yet hardly out of its swaddling clothes. It has its potential—a strong one—but to make it work, there has to be a lot of good old legwork to go with it. The stiff swats on the wrists were a great big lessons in themselves. The group and ourselves will have to spend a great deal of time sharpening our political weapons. The members of ANPEC and ourselves entered into the battleground where no quarters are given, and this reality will have to be faced for what it is—a professional field. They and we have a lot homework to do.

We also found out something else. There is a powerful number of votes out in the rural areas. We found that a candidate well known to the native people in all native regions can be a formidable opponent for any candidate. This was proven by the great showing Emil Notti made in his effort for nomination for the Secretary of State. Notti captured something like 70 per cent or more of the native vote. If he had entered the race sooner, and if he had campaigned more, it would have been more than possible that he would be a nominee now for the office he sought. Emil Notti just got in too late

and didn't have time for a properly conducted campaign. This is something that should be remembered in future political activities by the native people. We know now that early planning is a necessary pre-requisite if natives are to come close to being successful on the political field.

The primary election of August 25 was a strange one. Larry Carr did not hedge on his views on native land claims. Other candidates more or less skirted around the issue. ANPEC members, of course, and the Tundra Times have been fighting hard for the solution to land claims. The surprising margin of defeat for Carr can perhaps be attributed to backlash in part due to his stand on claims and part to ANPEC and Tundra Times. The backlash element, it can also be said, was due to faulty manner of dispensation by general public media of the claims issue to the general public. The state government has also been derelict in its duty to inform fairly.

At any rate, the powerful native vote is still there. It took Emil Notti to crystalize its potent existence even though he lost his nomination try. ANPEC could do well to woo this ballot strength and perhaps work along with the native voters. It could feel out political climate in the native regions. It could also do a lot of public relations work in urban areas, let alone the rural areas.

Although the endorsement failed badly as far as Carr was concerned, it did definitely aided in Notti's fine showing and helped to pile up votes for Willie Hensley who was nominated for state senate. In all, it gave us a huge lesson on what to do and what not to do. It gave us means, if they are pursued properly, to approach political aims with more insight. This can mean satisfying results in the future in political outcomes for the native people.