

POLITICS: OFF AND RUNNING

Sassara and Josephson Launching Campaigns

☆☆☆☆☆ Sassara Seeks Sec'y of State

Charles J. (Chuck) Sassara, Jr. is one politician who plans to go to the people not only during his campaign but also after the election—that is, if the people choose to elect him as their next Secretary of State.

Currently the House Majority Leader, Sassara was in Fairbanks Friday discussing his plans for the upcoming election.

In traveling around the state, he said he has come to feel that the state government is too remote from the people.

And, he continued, "I feel that the Secretary of State can be used as a liason between the government and the people," to correct this situation.

As Secretary of State, the Democrat from Anchorage explained that he would spend 99 per cent of his time on the road talking to the people and finding out what they think has to be done.

The ideas offered would then

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☆☆☆☆☆ U.S. Senate Seat Josephson Aim

Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate, Joe Josephson described himself as "consistent and progressive" on the native land claims issue and promised to "have lots to say about the erratic nature of his Republican opponent while in Fairbanks last week.

The opponent referred to is Sen. Ted Stevens, who was appointed to the post following the death of E.L. Bartlett.

Informally discussing his campaign plans in the Tundra Times office, Josephson said that he did not want to be too hard on Stevens since the possibility of a settlement on the land claims issue was drawing near.

"I realize that there is a process of compromise that must take place in the legislative process," he added, "and I do not want to drive him into the hands of the opposition."

The most recent position supported by Stevens called for a

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\$500 million cash settlement, \$500 million more derived from a 2 per cent royalty on state and federal oil lands, and legal title to 10 to 12 million acres with surface rights to about 35 million acres.

According to Stevens, he abandoned this position recently after requested to do so by the Alaska Federation of Natives. The AFN wanted legal title to 40 million acres rather than 10 or 12.

Josephson has supported the AFN on the land claims issue.

Their proposal will put land back into the state, the attorney from Anchorage said, and should be viewed as an investment in Alaska.

Currently serving as a State Senator, Josephson said he plans to challenge not only the record of his Republican opponent, but also the record of the Nixon administration.

The five-year veteran of the Alaska State Legislature explained that he was starting his campaign early in an effort to generate groups of supporters throughout the state.

He mentioned plans to conduct a poll of "how Alaskans feel on a lot of issues."

"I don't know yet," he said, whether it will be carried to the villages or not."

One issue discussed briefly was that of the high unemployment rate of Alaskans.

The number of unemployed people in the state, he said, remains constant even though more jobs are created by new industries, because the jobs are created for outsiders.

"I do not like the quota system, but am beginning to think that this might be the only way of doing it."

Possibly the developer could be required to hire a certain number of local people, he added.

A former aide to the late E.L. Bartlett in 1959 and 1960, Josephson is taking steps to secure financial support from Democrats outside Alaska.

Tom McCoy of Washington, who worked with the presidential campaign of Eugene McCarthy, was in Fairbanks with Josephson explaining that he hoped to find financial and professional assistance for the candidate.

To maintain control of the Senate, Josephson said, Democrats must win seats like this one in Alaska.

Compared to the efforts in other states, this campaign will not require great expenditures of money but, if successful, will yield the same strength as any seat in the Senate. Thus, it is a good investment for the Democratic party, McCoy said.

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be carried back to the governor.

However, as a liason, he added that he would also explain the government's position to the people thus providing a two-way communication link.

A forceful speaker, Sassara stressed, "People in Alaska are unique. They are doers and want to be involved in state government."

But, he said, the last few years the state government has shut them out and has done whatever it thinks right, regardless of what the people think.

At the present, the charter-boat operator has no opposition, but, when it comes, he expects it to be "stiff."

Asked about his chances throughout the state, he seemed to feel that he could be elected in Anchorage without great expenditures in the area. He also felt that his support in Fairbanks would be fairly strong.

However, in his estimation, the key to election would rest not in the state's two largest cities, but with the natives.

"I think that they will be voting and will be selective. I want their support."

When asked about the danger of a backlash from those who oppose the native position, Sassara made it quite clear that he thought the support of the Alaska Federation of Natives would be worth any risk of a backlash.

If such were to happen, he explained, "I would merely take the issue to the people."

The state representative has made no bones about his support

for a generous land claims settlement for the natives.

He has in the past urged all Alaskans to push for such a settlement and has said that the state government should be giving the natives its full support.

"My record in supporting the natives, has been as good as anyone's," he stressed.

And, he seemed to feel that, as a result of his record and philosophy, his support in the bush area would be strong.

A pilot and owner of an airplane, Sassara noted that he has, in the past, been able to do a lot of traveling out to the villages.

Since he plans to do even more in the coming months, whether commercially or privately, he said he found it necessary to start his campaign early.

In Anchorage and Fairbanks, a candidate can depend somewhat on television and radio to reach the people, but in the bush, personal contacts are primarily the only means of contacting the voters, he noted.

"It is hard to say this early what the issues will be," the candidate said.

However, he mentioned that the problems of education in the native villages will be one topic of discussion for him.

Other issues to be raised by him will be the need for a better ferry system in southeastern Alaska and problems encountered by native fishing co-ops.

Mayor of Fairbanks "Red" Boucher has been named as a possible opponent of Sassara in the August primary.