

# CROFT HAS BUSH PLATFORM

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Chancy Croft told the Tundra Times this week that Native concerns will figure heavily in his political platform, and he cited several specific issues in which he felt his views were compatible with most rural Alaskans.

Croft said that among the rural issues his administration would address are:

- North slope haul road: the haul road should be opened, however, with significant restrictions to protect subsistence hunting and fishing and minimize cultural impact.

- Rural schools: Croft said he was instrumental in the adoption of the oil taxation package which provided substantial financing for rural school construction, that he was a strong supporter of the 1976 bond issue for school construction, and that he would oppose any attempt to overturn the Molly Hootch case which provides for rural school construction.

- Subsistence: Croft told the Tundra Times, "As Governor, I will use the authority of my office to protect subsistence hunting and fishing rights. I will create a Division of Subsistence within the Department of Fish and Game and appoint a director who understands the need for subsistence protection."

- Bush air service and safety: Croft said the Alaska Transportation Commission is weak and ineffective in considering the air service needs of the bush. He would entertain some type of subsidy arrangement, such as is provided to the marine highway system or already exists for air facilities, to provide safe, economical and reliable air transportation for rural Alaskans. He stated, "The Governor should use the authority of his office to permit new negotiations in the Wien strike."

- Point Thomson oil lease sale: The Anchorage Democrat believes the sale needs to be delayed until some means of accommodating village concerns can be achieved.

- Aid to village corporations: Croft said he will continue to support land and business management assistance to village corporations. He noted Hammond reduced such assistance approved by the legislature by four-fifths.

- Management philosophy: the candidate said he would institute "performance audits" to overcome the "common management problem" he said plagued the Hammond Administration, that problem being that "the Governor is always told no problems exist," and that Native representation would be provided in his cabinet.

- Local hire: Croft favors rewriting the existing law to provide for local hire, as well as more fully utilizing existing statutes such as the Alaska plan.

- Cost-effective services for rural Alaska: Croft stated that non-profit corporations, such as Native non-profits, can be cost-effective service delivery systems and that he would encourage policies to permit such contracting for state services and activities. He said Alaska Legal Services was an example of how a non-profit corporation may deliver services to the public at less cost than the state agencies are able to do themselves.

The Democratic candidate is beginning an active campaign for rural votes this week. Among his key advisors on rural issues are Rep. Nels Anderson of Dillingham, Sen. Frank Ferguson of Kotzebue and Republican State Senator John Sackett of Galena.

Both Croft and Governor Hammond relied heavily on rural support to win their parties' nominations in the primary election, and are expected to continue active campaigns in rural Alaska to seek bush support in the general election.

The election, which was certified by Lieutenant Governor

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# ● Croft tells platform

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Lowell Thomas, Jr. Monday, is threatened with a court challenge by former Republican Governor Walter Hickel and Democratic primary candidate Ed Merdes over alleged improprieties in an attempt to gain a re-run of the primary. An investigation by Alaska State Troopers

has failed to substantiate any of the allegations.

Meanwhile, the Alaska Public Offices Commission has asked the state attorney general to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate an allegedly illegal campaign contribution to Hickel from an Anchorage car dealer.