

# EBEN HOPSON WINS DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION

In the end, out of a field of five, it was two of the state's well-known native leaders who vied for the Democratic nomination for a candidate to face incumbent Don Young in November's race for Alaska's sole seat in the U.S. House.

With all but five of the last bush precincts and absentee ballots from the Aug. 24 primary counted, Eskimo Eben Hopson, mayor of the North Slope Borough, leads Athabascan Don Wright by a count of 5,603 to 4,473. Hopson, who is currently undergoing treatment in Seattle for throat cancer, had to campaign via television ads, while Wright declined interviews and did not

campaign to any noticeable degree.

Hopson's radiation therapy is expected to last another month and he has said he is committed to carrying out the prescribed treatments for as long as necessary. As to whether or not this will impair his campaign for the general election, one of Hopson's physicians reported that he is doing well and should be able to participate.

Alaska Democratic Committee Central discounted speculation that they would ask him to drop out of the general election, according to state chairman Gordon Evans. "The Democratic Central Committee is 100 per cent behind Eben's

candidacy and is looking forward to supporting him in the general election," said Evans.

In a telegram sent by Hopson last week to the committee, he said, "While it remains necessary for me to remain under treatment here until Sept. 20, I will be able to use my time well in Seattle to plan my campaign and develop the issues. I plan to campaign hard around the state after Sept. 28. Although the GOP did well in the primary's light turnout I feel 1976 will be a Democratic year in Alaska as well as throughout the nation."

Previously executive director of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Hopson, 53, has also

been a member of the territorial House and the State Senate before coming the vocal and visible leader of Barrow's large Eskimo community. Don Wright, 46, is currently owner of a contracting firm and former president of the Alaska Federation of Natives. He was an unsuccessful candidate for U.S. Senate, U.S. House and the Democratic gubernatorial nomination.

The Eskimo mayor will be Don Young's third native opponent since the special election which put him in office to replace Nick Begich in 1973. Begich disappeared in an airplane accident with Rep. Hale

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MAYOR EBEN HOPSON

# HOPSON

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Boggs of Louisiana. That year Young faced Democrat Emil Notti and then, in 1974, Willie Hensley of Kotzebue. To date, no native has ever held a statewide office in Congress.

Young ran unopposed in last week's primary and with a budget six times that of the other Democrats put together he polled 60 per cent of the total vote tallied in the House race for a lead of approximately 20,000 votes. Total voter turnout for the state was a dismal 27 per cent.