

## **Editorial –**

# **Key Legislature**

As the beginning of the 1979 Legislative Session draws near, we would like to lend our thoughts to some important considerations in determining the leadership of this year's lawmaking body.

For the first time in recent memory, Rural House members stand a good chance in partaking in key leadership roles for the upcoming legislative term. The rural House delegation yields a powerful 7-vote block as democrats seek to structure their leadership. And, the House bush vote block is second in number only to the Anchorage delegation.

With reapportionment only a few years away, this could be one of the last opportunities for the bush leadership to hold such influential positions at the legislative level.

The caliber of those legislators representing the districts in the state where most Alaska Natives reside is superior in those qualities essential in making an effective lawmaker. And, we feel that many of those representing rural Alaska have the potential of making excellent leaders this legislative session.

In particular, Rep. Nels Anderson, who represents the Bristol Bay, western area of the state, is considered in an excellent position to play a key leadership role. Several other bush members are veteran legislators and are expected to become a strong part of the leadership team.

During this legislature, an opportunity exists for rural Alaska to fully participate in decisions involving major public policy issues. For too long, we have been at the wrong end of the decision-making process – merely observers on the side lines while others have decided our future. The current posture is hard-earned and well-deserved.