

Tundra Times Interviews Hopson

By Mary Beth Smetzer

A small man with a big job is an appropos description today, or 10 or 20 years ago for Eben Hopson, Alaska's Democratic nominee for Congress.

Hopson is the third Native candidate in succession to run for the congressional seat held by incumbent

Don Young. He was preceded in his bid for the seat by Emil Notti in 1972 and Willie Hensley in 1974.

The 53-year-old Barrow Native brings to the candidacy a wealth of experience in local and state government and Native organization.

Only able to attend school until the eighth grade, Eben has never let the lack of a formal education stand in his way. Ambitious and resourceful he has always been known as an active participant.

Eben and his wife of 34 years, Rebecca, have raised a

family of 12 children and are grandparents of four.

On the campaign trail last week in Fairbanks, Eben was able to spend an hour giving his views on various issues to the Tundra Times.

Q: How are you feeling?

A: I feel pretty good physically. One of the side effects was I lost quite a number of pounds in the process. I am gaining it all back now. As soon as I gain about 14 more pounds I'll be my old self again. My throat is still a little sluggish at times. My doctors

also tell me that this is also one of the temporary side effects of radiation treatment. But as far as my personal feelings are I am satisfied that when my doctors told me at the time of my release from the hospital that they gave me a clean bill of health I have no reason to suspect otherwise.

Q: At one time it was rumored that the state Democratic party was asking you to withdraw because of poor health. Do you have their full support now?

A: At the time prior to their meeting when I was told that they were going to meet, I spoke with the chairman of the Democratic party and central committee. The rumor that flew at that time wasn't really a fact that the Democratic party was considering a replacement. They did some work to support the candidate. However, when the rumor started, the central committee of the party wasn't even seriously considering a replacement. However, when the rumor started, they wanted to call me and get a statement of my health prior to making any position. But the rumor flew even before they called me to get a statement about the condition of my health. The Democratic party has contributed some money to the extent that money was available at their disposal. I have their support.

Q: Do you still feel that your health is going to be an issue in the campaign?

A: Not as far as I am concerned. Unless some remarks are made in respect to my health by the incumbent. Of course you have to understand that 90% of the time when I get interviewed by the press, radio and television people that's the first

question they ask and I think rightly so. I included a statement when I was getting a release from the hospital. It was the doctors' statement that they gave me a clean bill of health. And, I also said that perhaps contrary to some remarks my opponents had made in the past I expected to die of old age and not of cancer.

Q: What is your reaction to the fact that organized labor has not endorsed yourself or your opponent?

A: I was disappointed at first with respect to the AFL-CIO not making any endorsement. All during my 30 years in public service I not only have been a friend of labor I have been one of the strongest advocates of labor all during my public life. But I chose not to pursue the matter. I know from past experience that they did come out and support two Native candidates before my candidacy. But I am also happy that individually the organizations that form AFL-CIO did finally endorse my candidacy. That's the Trades Council. That's about 19 unions altogether in the state.

Q: Do you feel that you are going to be stronger in the bush areas than in the urban areas? Do you think it is going to work against you to be stronger in the rural areas?

A: I think to win this election I need over-all support. I am not counting on the bush vote to carry me through. I am not counting on the urban vote of Anchorage and Fairbanks to carry me through. I need the support of all Alaskans if I am going to win this election.

Q: Where are you going to be concentrating your campaign these next few weeks before

the election?

A: I am going to do some work here in the Fairbanks area 'til Saturday night. I am going to Anchorage then and I am going to try to cover the lower Yukon area of Bethel, and perhaps Homer and Seward and the Kodiak area before next week.

But I must get back up to Barrow for the 21st. I am having my only fund-raising activity on the 21st and I have to get back up there for the day at least.

Q: Do you have any plans for after the 21st?

A: I am going to come right back through here. I was down in Juneau but because of the Alaska Airlines I didn't get a chance to visit, like I should have, Ketchikan, Wrangell and Petersburg. I told my managers to be kind of flexible during the last week prior to the election in the event the strike is settled and transportation is available. I want to go back to Southeastern.

Q: What's your position on the natural gas pipeline?

A: My initial position was that I was for the all-Alaska route which is the position of the organization called OMAR. I have been a member of that organization right from its beginning, and I continued my position that I would push for the all-Alaska route.

Lately, you recall that this Northwest pipeline is the third option which surfaced which proposes to construct the gas line through Fairbanks and then on through the Alaskan highway — Alcan Highway which would end up in the Midwest somewhere. For the moment, I am going to hold my cards until

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Set Down Policies ...

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claims which we, the Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts of Alaska, or any tribe or group thereof, may have against the United States. The jurisdiction of the United States Court of Claims should be for the purpose of determining which lands of the Natives of Alaska are still owned by them so that the Natives of Alaska may be granted full control and ownership and may develop such lands in an orderly manner.

2. That the Secretary of the Interior, by executive withdrawal, exempt all disputed areas from economic encroachment. This executive order will allow agreements between affected Native groups and potential developers to permit continuing development of the land and its resources.

3. The Statewide Native Conference desires to have the land problems settled and further desires to have the development of Alaska continue.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That all commissions created by the Court of Claims to determine ownership, hold such hearings in the areas affected to obtain the maximum testimony.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That the Committee on Lands of the First Statewide Native Conference present their bill to the body for acceptance or rejection as a fundamental basis for legislation and that in the event the Convention accepts the bill copies be sent to all village councils, associations, the Congressional delegation, Secretary of the Interior, and all other interested persons.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That any lands released from government withdrawal the first priority for claiming be given to the Native people of that area under the Native Allotment Act.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That, all unorganized groups or villages meet with the several lawyers or lawyers of their choice immediately following today's business to draw up formal protest claims, for immediate filing.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That our Congressional delegation first send to the Executive officers of the Statewide Native Conference any proposed legislation prior to its introduction for our comments.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That the State be required to keep a record of all Native children by tribe or group so that their claims by aboriginal right will not be lost and that such records be available to the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That the Bureau of Indian Affairs render every assistance to the Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut people in preparing the tribal rolls beginning immediately following the filing of a claim.

After careful consideration, the Committee on Lands makes the following recommendations:

That the Statewide Native Conference object to the Senate endorsement to HR 5392 as unfair and unjust and that our officers forthwith send our objections to the proper authorities.



Sometimes folks like to meet the family of a candidate, so we'd like to introduce you to the Hackneys. In the back row, Art and Glenn Alan, both born in Alaska, both working in Fairbanks. In the front row the lively ones, Mary and Ruth, granddaughters, and we're plenty proud of them. We're Glenn and Esther. And you say, 'what are you trying to tell me?' Well, we're rooted in Fairbanks. I work for a living just as you do, face the same problems you face. I think I can represent you in the State Senate, honestly. Please vote on Nov. 2nd, I'd appreciate your vote.

Glenn

GLENN HACKNEY STATE SENATE

(Pd. for by the Hackney for Senate Committee, G. Walton, Chairman, 3505 Airport Way, Fairbanks)