

# How sincere?

For the first time in almost two years, the president of the United States did not win the big battle.

The president recently vetoed a Congressional spending bill which he called "budget busting." The bill wasn't "budget busting," but it simply didn't spend some \$14 billion where the president wanted it spent.

President Reagan wanted a great deal of money given to that great money-eating machine, the military. Congress presented him with a budget that was \$1 billion less than he proposed but spent \$2 billion less on the military than Reagan wanted and \$1 billion more on social programs than Reagan wanted.

Included in that Congressional budget were several appropriations important to Alaska such as BIA school improvement money, Chugach land settlement money and other items.

We are cheered that Congress finally stood up to the President and that a concerted effort was raised to take an independent stand.

We can't do much back patting to our Senatorial delegation, however.

We have in days past found many reasons to thank Senator Ted Stevens for his stand opposing the subsistence initiative but his vote on this budget matter troubles us.

Senator Stevens, prior to the vote had stated he would vote to protect the Alaskan appropriations and vote against the president. Frank Murkowski said little.

And the two senators did just that until it appeared that the veto would be overridden and Reagan would lose his battle.

Thus, one might infer from their actions that the senators supported social programs when they thought they would lose. But, when it appeared their vote would be crucial to the president, they chose to cast with the power structure — not the poor and needy.

The senators have many reasons to base their loyalty on the president but we can't help but wonder about their last minute vote change and how sincere their commitment to the social programs was all along.