

"I may not agree with what you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it" -VOLTAIRE

THE GRUESOME SIDE OF ANCHORAGE

There was a fatality in Anchorage last week that should have enraged the citizens of this city because it was so senseless and uncaring.

Francis Trader, a 40-year old man from Emmonak, died after having spent an unknown number of hours lying in an alley behind the State Welfare Office. A welfare worker discovered him there at 7:30 in the morning and tried in vain to get some help, but the Community Service Patrol office did not open until 10:00 a.m. The Police Department looked into the matter but didn't offer much assistance to the man.

Francis Trader was considered a "street person," and the police department's answer is "it's not a crime to be drunk in public." If Francis Trader had been assaulted, he would have been assisted by the officer who finally responded to the calls from the Welfare worker, but it was determined that he was not a victim of violence and so he was left alone.

Anchorage may have been named "All American City" twice and is presently a candidate for the Winter Olympics in 1992. This city may have many amenities that can be considered attractive to those who visit here, but it has a gruesome side too.

The Community Service Patrol cannot help those in need before 10 a.m. because of budget cutbacks, and the Brother Francis Shelter is not always open. The police department dispatchers do not always call the paramedics when they should, and the average citizen is not always willing to help a drunk person lying in an alley.

How many more of the hapless victims of our society will become fatalities in Anchorage this year? We would like to say that a full scale investigation is warranted by the death of Francis Trader, but we know that simply won't happen. We can only hope that the leaders of this city will take a good hard look at the gruesome side and do something about it.

YUPIIT NATION'S BID FOR SELF DETERMINATION

When congress begins dealing with the "1991" legislation next month, there will be more than one voice speaking to the issues from Alaska. The Yupiit Nation, a coalition of tribal governments from Southwest Alaska will be lobbying separately in Washington, D.C. and the results will be interesting.

For more than a year now, our congressional delegation has been telling us that we cannot afford controversy or dissension when trying to appeal to Congress for amendments to ANCSA so when the message is received back there that two voices will be addressing the need for legislation, what will be the response from Senators Stevens and Murkowski, and Congressman Young.

We hope our senators and lone congressman will recognize that the issues associated with ANCSA, 1991, and self determination are dear to the hearts of all Alaska Natives and that the underlying concern is the land. We have some confidence that before the legislation hits the floor of Congress, the differences will have been ironed out. There is much at stake for all of us, and we cannot afford to allow the perception that we are fighting amongst ourselves.