

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

## MISLEADING HEADLINES ABOUT NATIVES ARE 'FOR THE BIRDS'

If you read the following headline *'Natives granted hunting rights to ducks, geese. Judge rules Indians, Eskimos can take birds for food any time,'* you would naturally expect to see an increase in the number of Alaska Natives out hunting birds all over the state, right?

That headline came out in the *Anchorage Daily News* last week with a story describing a ruling made by U.S. District Court Judge James A. von der Heydt in a case filed by the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Federation and the Outdoor Council. That headline could have read *'Judge rules against anti-Subsistence groups,'* but it didn't.

Judge von der Heydt's January 27 ruling, in itself was a good one, but what was significant about it was the fact that the cooperative plan being used by the Association of Village Council Presidents, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and two California Sportmen's groups was deemed 'successful' in the court decision.

How to best protect declining fish and game resources and who should be allowed to use them for food are two matters at the heart of the Subsistence issue right now in Alaska. And the general public, at least those who read newspapers, should be informed, not incited, about the issue.

Using misleading headlines about Natives may help build circulation numbers, but the practice does nothing to bring about understanding in the business of Subsistence politics. It is sad that those who presently manage Anchorage's morning newspaper, who incidentally sometimes portray themselves as 'good corporate citizens' are not more sensitive to the effect some headlines can have.

## ANCHORAGE POLICE ARE TOO DEFENSIVE ABOUT TRADER'S DEATH

Francis Trader, a 40-year old man from Emmonak, died in Anchorage after laying in a downtown alley all night. At least four calls for emergency assistance were made by various citizens to the Anchorage Police, and three of those calls were not answered.

According to an Associated Press story, Deputy Chief Ron Otte, APD, said: 'I'm getting real tired of responding to individual articles and individual quotes,' and he complained that a good portion of his day was spent on this [Trader] matter. That same story stated that 'some police say they are being blamed unfairly for Trader's death.'

There were a number of circumstances which led up to Trader's death, and most of them are questionable. The security police were called to remove him from the Welfare Office the night before he died; the Community Service Patrol was not open because of budget cuts, the Brother Francis Shelter was not open at the time one officer allegedly talked with Trader advising him to go to the Shelter, and the calls made to the Anchorage Police were mysteriously not answered.

No one in Anchorage should rest comfortably until we know that steps are being taken by Mayor Knowles, the Assembly, and Chief of Police Brian Porter to correct whatever deficiencies exist in the system. We need a 'sensitive' rather than defensive police department in Anchorage.