

Cost of alcoholism is great

To the Editor:

The cost of alcohol-related problems for 1975, according to a study made for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was an estimated \$42.75 billion.

From 1975 to 1980 the Consumer Price Index rose 60.5 percent and by applying this increase to the cost figures of 1975 the American Business Men's Research Foundation determined that for 1980, the use of alcohol cost Americans \$68,617,579,000.

Dividing the total cost by the population of 220,000,000 gives me a national average of \$312 cost per person. Bringing it closer, \$312 multiplied by 400,400 — the population

of Alaska — produces a cost to Alaska of \$124,924,800. And that is not all. The Alaska State Office of Alcoholism considers Alaska's share of the national cost to be 65 percent more which brings the total to an average cost to each Alaskan of \$514.80; \$1,441.00 for the average family of 2.8.

The population of the North Star Borough — 53,983 multiplied by \$514.80 — cost per person, equals \$27,790,448.40. The cost to Fairbanks, with a population of 25,641, is \$13,199,981.80. It is my belief that these amounts are the approximate annual cost to us — the people — incurred by the sale and use of alcoholic beverages. No price tag can

be placed on the loss of life.

Quoting from a publication of the American Business Men's Foundation "It should be obvious that American consumers pay for these costs in one way or another. If tax monies are not spent for alcohol problem prevention and treatment programs, then the cost is reflected in higher prices paid for all goods and services."

The prevention of alcohol problems — health, social criminal and economic begins with a reduction in the ratio between the number of liquor outlets and the number of people they supply.

Sincerely,

Claude E. Swaim
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Objects to Zobel, Supreme Court

To the Editor:

Zobel quoted the Fourteenth Amendment as basis for charging discrimination in permanent fund law.

It seems Zobel's case was before and with fraternity brothers all the way. Sec. 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment also addresses election of judicial officers.

In Alaska the people are discriminated against because judicial officers are appointed from particular license and not by vote of the people.

This discriminatory procedure seems to create a terrible conflict of interest that could be the cause of the 50 percent reversal at the Supreme Court level.

Since the Permanent Fund was an award and not a denial of any right it seems that open elected judges would not have conflict of interest and would have found no violation of Article XIV. Justice Rehnquist,

the lone dissenter stated that, "This court has long held that state economic regulations are presumptively valid, and violate the Fourteenth Amendment only in the rarest of circumstances."

This information seems to suggest that had the challengers been ordinary citizens, the outcome may have been quite different.

Each of us must judge our laws to be law abiding citizens. Now you be the judge — Read Article XIV, U.S. Constitution, then the Justices' opinions in "The Anchorage Times" June 14. In so doing you should be thoroughly convinced that open election of judicial officials would be in keeping with Sec. 2, Article XIV and quiet the conflict of interest and discrimination of present procedures at the same time.

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