

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

# Publisher's Notes

## TIME TO GET INVOLVED

It may seem somewhat absurd to call on Alaska Natives to get involved in elections because elections of one sort or another have become almost a way of life for many of us. With all of our regional and village corporations, non-profit associations, IRA Councils, city councils, schools boards, etc. we are continuously involved, it seems.

Getting involved in the political system of our country is as important to each of us as is our participation in our corporate affairs. If each of use could devote the same level of interest and energy to voting in the upcoming primary and general elections that we do to corporate elections, the Native Vote could become a formidable force for any party to deal with. The "Bush" vote blocked the initiative to repeal the State's Subsistence laws, and that was a prime example of what could be done when Alaska Natives commit themselves to using our political system.

A lot of us are satisfied with simply registering and voting when the time comes, and some of us are content to leave that responsibility in someone else's hands, rationalizing that our votes don't count anyway. Some of us are burned out with so many elections and maybe even disgusted with the "politicking," that is part and parcel of the System. A lot of times, it is difficult to try to understand what one party stands for more than the other. Alaska Natives cannot afford to be apathetic, and whether we feel like it or not we have to work at becoming more involved in the political system.

The process for each of us should start at the local level, whether you're a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent. Not all of us have the time to go to precinct and district meetings or state conventions, and few of us have the resources to go to National conventions; that is true. But, we can take some time to talk to those who are fortunate enough to have the time to participate in those events. We can encourage those who have committed themselves to be our leaders in either the Democratic or Republican parties, because there are, right now, so few Alaska Natives in either party.

During the next five months, voters all over the country will be going to the polls, and we hope Alaska Natives will be joining them in great numbers. When the results of the final voting begin coming in in November, we can take pride in having elected the best people to represent us in Congress, in the State Legislature, in our local assemblies, and on our school boards.

If you're uncertain about the process for getting involved and you live in Anaktuvuk Pass or in Tenakee Springs, ask someone in your community for the information and take the time to get involved.

## FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLIFE

The 18th Annual Festival of American Folklife on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. is underway, and a good number of Alaska Natives are participating in that prestigious event sponsored by the Smithsonian institute and the National Park Service.

We share in Governor Sheffield's excitement "about the potentials available for Alaska to put it's best foot forward in the Nation's capital this summer at this highly popular event." Our best wishes to the 200 Alaska participants in the Festival.