

Submitted to the Fairbanks Daily News Miner

Saturday Oct. 12th, 2002

Amanda Bowman wrote a piece for the FDNM today which appears on the front page under the headline: "Murkowski:open debate" This is a "latest developments" piece which centers on the controversy about the Oct. 17th closed "debate" between Frank and Fran which I have vociferously denounced because of its being closed and keeping out the full slate of candidates. The article of course tries to make it look like Murkowski is a good gentle uncle in his willingness, nay, eagerness to let the other candidates participate. Well, his campaign certainly handles this situation better than Fran's: " A spokesman for the Umer campaign said she doesn't mind taking on Murkowski alone, as long as all six candidates are invited to some of the venues....She realizes that most Alaskan voters want to hear where the two major candidates stand on the issues, " said Umer spokesman Jason Moore.

Abba Han once characterized the Palestinians as " Never missing an opportunity to miss an opportunity." So it seems with Fran's campaign.

But the article goes on to note:

" An employee at the University of Alaska Fairbanks ( gee I wonder who that might be...I'm just an 'employee' you see, acknowledging that I am a professor would actually raise the credibility of my point.) where the debate will be held, had publicly complained about the closed debate( again, this is a biased phrasing of what I actually did. I went to the News-Miner as a LAST RESORT, not to COMPLAIN), and Robert Hannon, news producer at KAC ( I never thought about the oddness of that title before...), went before the UAF Faculty Senate to explain why the debate is between the front-runners only. The senate was not considering any action ( not exactly true); the meeting was just for information Hannon said.

"They were satisfied that KAC, as a responsible news organization, had to make editorial decisions ( A contention of complete bullshit).

The rest of the article is less revealing and mostly filler, but I feel compelled to point out the gross negligence of the fact that no one ever asked me for my point of view in this issue. They just refer to me anonymously. Since this news article wouldn't have even happened if I hadn't been alert, you'd think I at least would be included in a summary of it. I thank all the folks who questioned the situation and acted to keep this alive. Clearly critical action mattered here. But those who control the press, control what people perceive.

Steady on, mates. We must keep questioning authority, and it is very clear that some presence of all parties is warranted on the 17th. The door is opening; please walk through it. And don't let the bastards wear you down.

Rich Seifert