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Notes: Original on 7-inch reel. Master copy on CD.

The recording starts with a man's voice that is talking about research into the state constitutions that helped states that were doing constitutional reviews. Now they have a new index digest and a compilation of new and past state constitutions and colonial charters. The League [of ??] also put out a manual for new state constitution with series of papers on constitutional revision, and a series on state constitutional studies out of which one of the best ones is Victor Fisher's Alaska's Constitutional Convention.

2:00 Many people have spread the word [of what?]. People in the audience don't need to be modest about what they have done for Alaska and also for the country. The trouble with many state constitutions is that they have been written for the past, unlike Alaska's constitution. Thomas Jefferson said that an old constitutional law shouldn't be held onto, suggesting that all the laws should be revised every 20 years.

Alaskans put one better on Jefferson, deciding that there should be a vote on the calling of convention every 10 years. The speaker thought that that was too much and suggested 20 years, but Alaskans thought that things change faster in modern world. [Break in the recording.]

3:48 [Speaking continues mid-sentence.] The speaker talks about amendment to constitutions that should focus on fundamentals. Constitution is not an attempt to solve problems or a substitute for government, although in other states too, legislators submit amendments to the people because that's a way for "passing the buck to the people." [More about amendments that need to be thoughtful and future oriented. End of speech, applause.]

6:33 As an introduction to following speaker, a man talks about George Rodger's books from 1960s, including The Future of Alaska, that looked into economic consequences of statehood. He's writing about his own ideas for the future of Alaska where Alaska wouldn't grow in size but people would grow in harmony

between each other so that race lines wouldn't be known and people could be independent.

Senator Willie William Hensley has been an active leader in Alaska as well as an active Native leader. He went to Kotzebue day school and later to University of Alaska before receiving his degree in political science and economics from George Washington University. He has studied law in New Mexico Law School and at UCLA. He has been member of the state House of Representatives since 1966-1970 and the head of the health, education and welfare committee and a member of the pipeline impact and resources and judiciary committees. He was also a state senator from 1970-1974 and a chairman of Rural Affairs Commission, and various other committees. He's been a president to AFN [Alaska Federation of Natives] in 1972-1974, worked in NANA Corporation, and as a chairman of the board of directors for the new Bank of Alaska.

11:11 The speaker honors him for a bill that he coauthored at the senate in 1971 which was the Alaska Historic Preservation Act. The speaker says Hensley will talk with the title "Issues in Alaska's Future." [Applause.]

William Hensley thanks Dr. Fredrick [sp?]. [Stretching break.] Willie starts by thanking Fischer for putting on the constitutional review. When the Alaska Constitutional Convention happened, Willie was too young to be aware of it. He was just leaving Kotzebue to go to high school in Mississippi and Tennessee and he didn't pay attention to Alaska's politics.

14:50 Willie says he has known 24 of the people who served on the constitutional convention and with some, like with Helen Fischer and Mr. [Yule F.] Kilcher, he has served in legislature. He thanks the people who participated in the constitutional convention and is curious on how they think the constitution was implemented in practice and if it has done its job.

Change in Alaska has been remarkably swift during Willie and others' lifetime. They have moved from the era of dog teams and sod houses to moon landing and supersonic flights.

Alaska has always been subject to external influences and that is the main reason for the fight for statehood. They took a territory that was mishandled and grew it into a state.

17:15 Willie muses about the constitutional convention that wrote the constitution of Alaska.

Alaska has been a romantic frontier to many, but for Alaskans themselves, it was a matter of survival in harsh land. Now the mystery is peeling away as the population has doubled and tourism flourishes. More than once the entire congress has devoted time for Alaska's issues, and now the resource extraction is in unprecedented scale.

19:22 Alaska's strings have been pulled from St. Petersburg or Washington and the constitution writers were aware of the outside influence. They did well in writing a constitution that would pass in the Congress. Still, many decisions about Alaska are made in Washington and other places.

One of the important changes that have happened in Alaska is that there has been a rise in healthy participation in politics by Native Alaskans who were barely present during the statehood fight. Their participation has resulted in a congressional act that changed Alaska's land ownership pattern throughout the state.

22:01 Willie lists examples on how Congress still regulates life in Alaska, ranging from land use to resource extraction and community planning. Willie wonders if Congress will be able to administer to federal holdings in a way that still meets Alaska's demands. State of Alaska has diminishing influence over many issues.

Alaska is losing its mystery and growing up.

24:00 Alaska will continue being affected by federal power, but the state is reaching a point where it can influence how people live. That is a change too. Alaskans are familiar with days when territorial government was confined to urban communities and local government in rural areas was either traditional or without resources.

A future issue for Alaska is how the state will use its mineral resources.

Willie lists governors of Alaska and says that their budgets have been growing. The budgetary challenges are major. Billions of dollars are being generated in tax revenues and Alaska's future depends on how the funds will be used. Many types of communities, individual wealth, and the nature of economic system in Alaska are affected by approach Alaskans decide to take to use of public funds. Issue of permanent funds is currently before the electorate.

26:36 Another major issue in Alaska is the question of land, and all Alaskans are affected by the policies that state establishes for use and disposition of state owned land. The era of disposal of land by the state in order to survive is over and new strategies for use of state lands should be developed.

The rate of disposition and allowable uses will have a major bearing on development of new communities, economic activity, state income, diversity of industry, and consequently, the type of society.

State and federal land government policies will be in key role in Alaska in next 20 years. A major threshold was reached in 1971 with the congressional enactment of Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. That was a milestone that buttoned up winning of the West.

28:15 Alaska's rural residents are still impoverished and jobless and have diminishing means for continuing hunting and fishing economies and the claims settlement act has provided an avenue for economic power.

The settlement isn't a panacea for problems with rural Alaska and the state has to continue addressing problems that are presented by unorganized boroughs. Alaska has to determine the powers and responsibilities that will be conveyed to them. Willie thinks that concepts that are applied to now existing boroughs shouldn't be rewritten just because of drilling of oil wells.

Relationship between the state and municipalities will become more important in the future.

30:05 Willie wonders if the state will use lots of power if local [unclear] go against state's interest and if state will side with industry to prevent unwanted developments which would increase population, pollution and local government costs.

[Break in the recording.]

Willie continues that the viability of Alaska's governmental framework that was created in 1956 depends on the ability of political leaders to continue with the concept that all government power is with the people. Alaskans are closer to their government than most Americans, but government responsibility requires constant communication.

In future, Alaska will develop with multinational corporations, Native corporations, labor unions, and foreign economic interest, but thanks to people who created the Constitution, Alaska has the framework of resiliency and strength to face the issues.

32:32 The challenge of the future is to retain the independence of judgment and a vision of Alaska's future that takes into an account the idea that Alaska's wealth is not in its resources, but that the state should help people pursue individual freedom and to maximize their capabilities.

The speaker thanks the audience. [Applause.]

The chairman thanks Hensley and welcomes questions in place of time that was originally allocated to George Rogers. [Unclear, then laughter.]

34:16 [Unclear question.] The chairman says that since they don't have a microphone in the audience, he will try to restate the questions. A man's voice [Rogers?] says that he can't give a satisfactory answer and that some of the amendments don't seem very important. One unfortunate change is concerning the change of the chief justice of Supreme Court. He didn't note any other bothersome changes and the amendment to methods of electing the borough assembly was necessary.

The speaker says he had indicated in a report from 1959, that he didn't think that there was a requirement in the original constitution that cities should be represented by one or more members of their council. Cities had the most population and they would need to have rather small councils.

37:12 The speaker talks about buying intelligence [consultants?]. Alaska would have enough money to pay for that. Small local governments can't afford the kind of technical knowledge that would help them in competition with state and private interest. The speaker hopes that Alaska will use their fiscal dividend to give state and local policy the highest IQ possible. That will help Alaska in competition with federal government and corporations.

40:53 Senator Kilcher says something unclear about the dividend. He continues that Alaskans own the oil and shouldn't be content with small percentages of the profit. They can make any deal with any party concerning the oil. Alaska politicians' main duty is to look to Alaska's interest. [More unclear talking followed by applause.]

46:12 John Hellenthal says something unclear.

A woman's voice talks about how United States amendment that comes to state should be mandatorily voted on by the residents of the state. A man's voice says that according to the lady, legislature shouldn't be acting for the people who should vote directly. [Unclear talking.]

48:16 A man's voice comments that the lady is asking for an amendment to United States Constitution. The woman's voice says that an amendment to the constitution is unconstitutional.

A man's voice says that that question should be continued at the panel where attorney general and others will be. He asks for more questions.

Another man's voice talks about the importance of being able to make revisions. That might be a message for their following days' seminars.

[Discussing following days' schedule. End of the recording.]