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State of the University message by Jay Barton on October 28, 1980 in Fairbanks, Alaska

Andrea Helm, president of the Fairbanks Faculty Association, welcomes everyone and talks about the format of the meeting.

Jay Barton talked about coming to Alaska for the first time during his interview trip. He now knows a great deal about Alaska after a year and a half as president. He talked about his basic message for the day. He said the health of the university is excellent, but they are facing serious problems. He is addressing the faculty. He said as faculty members they can make the distinctions between black and white and come up with something that is gray. It demands conversations on both sides. This is part of what it takes to make a university a university. He hoped they can talk about things and pull their concerns.

Lots of good things have happened to the university. He talked about the faith of the university being restored. There's a new sense of hope on the campuses, in the legislature and in the communities of Alaska. The enrollment for this fall was a record on almost all of the campuses. It was four percent in Fairbanks, a little less in Juneau and up to 18% in Anchorage. There's a great demand for the services. People want to come to the University of Alaska. Full-time students have increased. The dorms are almost all filled at UAF. Other things at UAF have been the elevation to a Sea Grant College. He believes they can support the fisheries industry in Alaska. It is something to be proud of. In the past month there was a record for computer sessions on the network. It is the longest network in the country. It covers more distances than any other. National recognition has been achieved for telecommunications work. He talked about increasing accessibility for learning throughout Alaska. Many people on the Fairbanks campus will be involved with this.

He talked about the attitude toward Alaska changing. People are interested in what is going on at the university. The number of applications for positions has increased. The reputation is reaching the lower 48. People are recognizing the unusual nature of education in Alaska. There is an increasing numbers of students interested in higher education. This is unlike most of the states in the lower 48. Alaska is below the national norms for high school graduation. The university needs to share part of this challenge.

The legislature generously approved university programs and approved a great deal of money. This is contrary to trends Outside. The attitude is no accident. It is due to the kind of support that the faculty has given the university and representations in the legislature. There are strong ties forged with citizens in the state and with the legislature. The planning program was put together by Dean Bill Phillips. It will help keep priorities together for 1982-83. They are putting together a blueprint to form a great university in a great land. The planning process needs much more consciousness that it is a process. Strategic planning is a way of informed decision making. He asked the faculty to take part in the

process. He talked about defining the goals and objectives of the units. Eventually the goals and objectives are made realistic. The whole planning system has to be academically oriented. They want to build an educational institution to serve Alaska. They need to develop budgets that address the relationships between objectives and assumptions with regent policy at the university level. All of the internal reallocations did produce a plan for 1982 that will be taken to the legislature that reflects the hopes and aspirations of the university. He hopes the faculty continues their interest in the planning process.

He said one of the key priorities and guide is to again bring the university to the service of the state and building a strong economy and the richest culture. They need to build an institution that fills the needs of the citizens of Alaska. He talked about an article that talked about the big shift in student majors. Schools of business, engineering and strong career oriented programs are of interest to students. It is true at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He talked about education needing broad resources and the turning away from the humanities. He believed that people need to learn human values as well. He noted that UA music and art departments are crowded with students. UA contributes to the state by thinking and teaching. UA offers the strongest possible and largest nucleus of trained, knowledgeable people in the state. It is the intellectual resource of Alaska. He talked about the land grant concept. This institution is in no better position to influence the state of Alaska. UA is people dependent even in a high technology situation.

The budget going to the legislature has an eighteen and a half percent increase over the previous year. He discussed inflation. He summarizes the budget approved by the regents. He justifies the eighteen and a half percent increase they are requesting. It is responsive to the need to train and educate the citizens of Alaska. He talks about the various programs. The 1982 plan focuses on the support of economic development of renewable and nonrenewable resources through research and extension activities. Research and development studies are still needed. The plan is also responsive to the needs of Alaskans for increased accessibility such as extension services for various locations. The plan requests funds to improve coordination and management services including computer services development. They have asked for a capital budget for direct appropriations, repairs of facilities, and additions and new facilities. The plan is open for amendment. He talked about the election and the bond issues and how it will affect capital requests. He said the building of a great university requires the efforts of all of us. He quotes Thomas Jefferson.

Jay Barton talked about the legislation wanting to plan for higher education. He talked about legislators wanting to be re-elected and having to do something for his or her region and partisan politics. He suggested that allocation of resources should be determined by people that have a statewide responsibility. He talked about the Board of Regents doing this. Every regent carries a statewide mandate to make decisions for the state as a whole. He would like to see education decision making returned to the university. The planning process needs to be so it good it reflects the common best judgment. The second need is the legislature in turn should place responsibility on the regents to appropriate. The issue is to improve the quality of decision making for education. He said that is the extent of his comments and welcomes questions.

A question about the aspirations of the faculty in planning. Jay Barton talks about planning at the faculty level. He talked about the use of a planning council.

A question about the improved relationship of the legislature and the university and the cost involved. Some responsibilities have been taken away by the legislature. Jay Barton said he is worried about it, too. He said the legislature isn't all that different than those in the lower forty-eight. He talked about management of the university by the legislature in the past. He believes they are backing away from that. He does want the legislature interested in the university. He talked about the allocation of funds at the chancellor level.

A question about the doubt of the position of the vice-president for academic affairs and institutional planning. He talked about Dr. Trombley. He also questioned the role of the chancellor. Jay Barton said the vice-president position was structured to develop and monitor the academic programs of the university. He said there is a need for institutional planning and it was attached to the vice-president position. It should be academically driven. He said he hopes to replace the position with similar direction. He wants someone in the position that the faculty is comfortable with. He proposes an extensive search. It is a difficult position to fill and he discussed the position. He has modified it somewhat to develop it as a team position. He commented on the function of the chancellor position.

A question about the presence of a statewide position is intimidating to the campus. Jay Barton talked about the problem in general. He said it does create some kind of tension such as space allocation. He didn't see improvement by moving the office off campus. There is approval for a statewide building by the regents.

A question about reinstating the office of the vice-president for research statewide. Jay Barton said he has been asked by the legislature to review the way research is managed in the university system. He has discussed this with the chancellors and the vice-presidents. He doesn't believe it should be moved back to a statewide position. He talked about holding forums to discuss faculty research and what it is facing. He hopes to have John Slaughter to meet with everyone and discuss where NSF wants to go in the next few years. He talked about Howard Cutler.

A question about removing the university from politics and regionalization and wondered about reapportionment and how that will affect things. Jay Barton said to prevent regionalization the legislators shouldn't be making the votes for Anchorage or Fairbanks. He said there should be statewide decision making from a statewide board.

A question about the role of the Fairbanks campus in the future. Jay Barton said he doesn't think it will change. It is the flagship campus of the state. The Board of Regents is looking at the scope and roles of the campuses. He doesn't think it will be to the detriment of the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Claus Naske commented about the support of the whole system. Jay Barton said the Board of Regents is worried about this. He believes there is a legitimate and necessary role of the legislature in planning for the university. He doesn't think the system is overgrown but agrees that it is expensive. He said there

may be a better way to bring education to this state. He talked about the benefits of telecommunications in education.