

**Call number: 02-00-133-6 PT. 1**

**Face North: Emil Notti, Roger Lang**

**Date: 1971**

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**Date of summary's creation: 01/17/2013**

**Series: ATS-1 Educational Satellite Project Tapes**

**Notes: Original in 7-inch tape, master copy on CD. Produced by Roger McPherson.** THESE TAPES WERE PRODUCED AS A PART OF AN EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM NOW DEFUNCT AND WERE BROADCAST OVER THE RADIO FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

The recording seems to take place at a lunch talk or the like where the speaker [Identified as Emil Notti in the tape reel case], talks about the beginnings of Alaska Federation of Natives [AFN] and land claims.

In early 1967 when the idea of a statewide [Native] movement got started, Bennett who was an early Director of [Bureau of Indian Affairs?] in Alaska was giving a 90 day report to the Senate. In the report he gave an overview of the Indian situation in America and devoted about "that much" [Notti is probably showing with his hands] to Alaska. It said that based on the Treaty of Sessions and the Organic Act and the Statehood Act, the BIA was setting down to draw up a final solution for the land-claims problem. There was a lot of stir about the paternalism of the BIA and they [the Native groups] thought that Alaskans should have something to say about the solution that was "drawn up" in Washington D.C.

They wrote some letters in July and Tundra Times [Alaska Native newspaper, now defunct] wrote about it. They finally got a meeting in October. Some of the early efforts prior to that were when some national money was put into Alaska and Laverne Madigan [executive director for the Assn. on American Indian Affairs] came to Alaska. Nick Gray was one of the early movers as were Roy Purvis [sp?] and John Hope, who were in meetings in Fairbanks 1962. There was nothing to

unify the people until the land claims that helped establish the state-wide movement.

On October, 1966, they met with Mr. Lekanoff who served as a first chairman from October to April and wrote the bylaws. In that first meeting, which happened in the election year, there was a great fear [in the non-Native community?] that Native vote was going to be unified. So when they opened the meeting at 9am and results went to press at 10am, by noon there were headlines in newspapers that said "Natives split." They were trying to drive a wedge [between Native groups?] but it didn't work.

In 1967, the first land claims bill called S2020 came. Since that time they have had a number of bills, but Notti says he lost track after the 6<sup>th</sup>. "There were lots of ideas kicked around in those early bills." Notti remembers when [Secretary of the Interior, Stewart] Udall came to Alaska and thought of a 10% royalty from the off-shore oil. 10% scared everybody. He meant 10% of the Federal Share, which is 12.5% but they [the AFN?] was pushing for 2%, which was really more than the 10% but didn't sound as great.

3:59 The speaker says he thinks that the AFN got going in October 1968, in Fairbanks. Prior to that meeting, whenever they went to Congress the Congress would ask what AFN is, who they represent and how they are elected. Before they started testifying they always had to explain how they had elections. Udall was impressed when he walked into their meeting in Fairbanks and there were about 600 people present and from that point on they were in good negotiating position. After that meeting, in October of 1968, they worked practically daily on Udall. AFN thought he should set aside 40 million acres of land or the whole state, which he did, which was even better.

One of the AFN highlights was a speech in February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1967 when Governor [Walter Joseph] Hickel had his speech on all 4 radio stations. He said that just because somebody's grandparents chased a moose across the country does it give them right to the land and that was his first position on the land claims. His attorney general at the time was Donald Burgh [sp?maybe Bergh?] and the speaker assumes he had something to do with Hickel's stance on the land claims.

They had an exciting meeting in 1967 that was just like an old movie scene with two lawyers arguing back and forth in a very emotional and heated meeting. Also, the state's position was that the land freeze was going to drive the state into bankruptcy and that it was irresponsible for Washington people to stop Alaska's development. It was a reprisal for Alaska to go Republican and elect Nixon.

Another attorney, Ed Boyco gave Hickel advice so that Hickel was of the opinion that the state would be bankrupted in 2 years, but that prediction didn't come to pass either. The state filed a lawsuit against Udall to lift the land freeze and there was an incidence known as the confirmation fight. Governor Hickel got off the plane one morning in Seattle and said to the reporters that what Udall can do, he can undo with a stroke of a pen, meaning the land freeze. The board of AFN sent the 4 of them back to Washington to hold the freeze. They spent there 2 weeks and were accused of all kinds of things, but after Hickel agreed to keep the land freeze and not give out any airports, homesteads or anything before going in front of the Interior Committee, they endorsed Hickel. That was a significant accomplishment.

8:34 At one meeting the speaker and John were being lectured by one of their own attorneys. They got some threats about how they were going to finance the land claims efforts and how John would like the Tlingit and Haida money being tied up for 10 years. They were going back [to Washington?] and a couple of hours before the flight left the speaker got a call from Governor's Representative in Anchorage who was half-drunk and used harsh language against the Native people. The speaker thanked him for speaking his mind and hung up. "And those are just some of the things that happened in that fight."

He remembers how prominent people used to come to him and ask him if he really thought he could get a state-wide movement started and tell him that Tlingits aren't going to work with Eskimos and that Athabascans fought the Eskimos and aren't going to work together. The speaker just said he thinks they will work together, especially in crisis. ANB [Alaska Native Brotherhood] was formed under crisis and they worked together, financed lots of their own trips and so on. Notti thinks that they are in a crisis even though they might not

recognize it. The decisions that are made now will not show in years but the course has to be planned carefully in next couple of years.

11:57 When he went from the Yukon to a boarding school when he was 11 years old, it was because of BIA. There were no high schools in his area. As they plan for their youngsters' future, nobody can guarantee that BIA and the health services are going to be there in 10 years. That's why it's important to plan to guarantee those things for their children. Alaska is changing and the biggest changes are coming because of the settlement of land claims issues. The pipeline is going to be built, which will create some 9-10,000 direct jobs with 30,000 jobs for services that will be generated by the pipeline construction. U.S. is going through a high unemployment and they can expect Alaska to change rapidly.

Nothing in U.S. history tells the speaker that Alaska Natives are going to be treated any differently than Indians in Oklahoma or North Dakota. That's why it's vital to ensure that their children will have the tools to fend for themselves. Things are good right now: they have 20% of the vote and politicians listen to them and come to their meetings. [Break in the recording.]

14:23 Another speaker [Roger Lang, as identified by the recording case] starts his speech by saying he is honored to address the Convention about the Native Alaskan land-claims bill. He thinks that a part of history in Tlingit and Haida involvement should start out with how the battle within AFN structure and in the Executive Committee came out so that they were finally represented wherever Tlingit or Haida interests were presented.

There were some issues with the budget this afternoon, concerning the \$23,000 dollar bill that was travel and for [unclear] for executive members. Since [the time] they joined the AFN they didn't collect travel or [unclear] from the organization, but pay their own delegates' way to AFN board meetings. That's also true for their lobbying effort in Washington D. C.

Roger was asked a question about the \$250,000 dollars that they guaranteed to the AFN. He knew that their cost in lobbying effort was \$23,000 dollars. They sent

their full executive committee to the final sessions in the house where their interests were vital.

When one starts lobbying for Native needs, one starts with premises that one doesn't have any friends, that there's no justice, and that there's no equity [equality?]. They are fighting for minority members' needs and when one fights those kinds of fights, there are two ways to do it: either one riots and raises a lot of hell or one stays within the law and does it properly. Roger says he doesn't know if he's proud of AFN and the Tlingit and Haidas, but they have never strayed from the law that someone else wrote for them.

17:01 Roger continues that the lobbying effort was beautiful to watch and beautiful to be a part of. When it came to the crunchy part where they were told that they need to compromise before a deadline or they could forget about the bill until April, they decided not to compromise any more. They went into an Executive Session in Washington D.C and someone pointed out that they are fighting for a cause and have been compromising a lot and that maybe they shouldn't compromise anymore.

They wanted no less than 40 million [acres], not less than a billion dollars and not less than 2%. It was amazing to watch not one [unclear] vote from people who were putting their names on line. "No bill" was the threat of not complying, but they stayed.

They also found out that there are other efforts that came into the bill on last minute. They voted on Thursday and on Monday there was a brand new bill that was very simple, one page long, and it stated that no region in the State of Alaska would survive with the monetary picture that was presented in the bill. If one couldn't survive on their money, they had to survive with their resources that were in their land. Eventually somebody was going to own the Native land, too, and there were no timber-rights for Southeast. They had some timber-rights, but they were cut and controlled by somebody else.

19:34 Just because John Burritt [sp?] gets up at 7am and walks up into the office at 8am when no sane senator or congressman is around, he finds a copy of the

proposed bill. By 10am they had all their friends – Lloyd Meads [sp? Meade?], Patsy Mink, and Senator Bibble [sp?] who turned into a friend once he lost his fight for land conservation – starting a fight over the bill because it hadn't had any Native input in it. They visited Alaska Delegation at 9am and said bad words back and forth to each other. The bill was a product of a meeting between 4 elected officials from the State of Alaska including 2 congressmen, a senator and a governor. They couldn't find the author of the bill as none of the 4 elected people owned up to writing it.

The ancient prejudice that comes out in lobbying for Indians is an amazing thing to watch. The ancient prejudices between Indian groups are amazing too. When writing the bill, there were some beautiful fights within AFN. There were fights to offset the Tlingit-Haida –Settlement by 7 million dollars. That was an AFN fight. Also there was a fight over two formulas on how the money would be divided once it got [unclear]. One was called “the Land Loss Formula” that would allow person to get money [?] for lost acreage of land and another was “Population Formula” that once the bill would pass, it would include people and not just acreage or resources.

22:06 There also was a battle for inclusion of Tlingit and Haida Indians into the land claims bill. Some people didn't even think they belong there, but the leadership of Emil Notti, who was then preceding over AFN, made them a vital part of the organization. Some other things that needed to be said were “really hairy.” The most interesting one was when the Arctic Slope walked out on them once. Roger happened to be representing Tlingit and Haida in the meeting when they came back and they spent 4 days in an executive session that week. There have been some wonderful fights to build a land-claims bill that means something.

Perhaps history will show that it was worth fighting and that the Alaska Natives were winners. Flori [sp? Florie?] talked about 5 or 10 year plans and those are nice. People are going to vote for regional and village corporations, but there are going to be 15 regional corporations in Southeast Alaska. They are already talking about starting a bank which will be its own corporation. Flori also talked about

political corporations and how eventually there will be a Southeast housing association. There's going to be an economic development corporation. In fact, there is one already. Those people who are from villages have to learn about tax loopholes and about existing IRA Corporations that need to be used beyond village and local development corporations. When the bill says there will be a corporation, there's going to be many corporations so that one corporation meeting a year will require more people than there are "in this room".

25:31 Those who sat in Juneau in Special Convention in 1968 when they took \$7 million dollars to continue the fight have paid the price. Some people have called them fools for taking \$7 million dollars when they could have got \$80 million. It's now insignificant because they are talking about \$968 million dollars and 2% over royalties on their resources. They haven't yet talked about money that shall be interchanged with regions to develop their corporations and resources. They haven't talked about sharing the wealth that the North Slope will develop with their oil and that's the most exciting thing about land claims. The bill is only a method that comes from Washington and the Natives have to be better than that or they will control Native peoples' destinies with that bill.

Roger says he doesn't know if it's possible, but some day he'd like to pile up every law, policy and idea that was ever compounded in Washinton D.C., that was deciding the lives of Indians. He has an idea that since BIA is second oldest bureaucracy in the USA they couldn't pile that paper "in this room". All those papers are about how to run Native lands as is the Land Claims bill. It's a means to control one's destiny.

They shouldn't confine their thoughts or imaginations to what the bill says. When they talk about village corporations, Native people can think better than that. Same with other corporations. Roger thanks the audience. [End of the recording.]