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Narration for Alaska Federation of Natives Convention

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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.

A man's voice [President of AFN, Willie Hensley] asks the board members to return to the front and calls for a spokesman from each of the regions to come to the microphone and discuss their decisions and feelings of the group. He feels that some groups have an idea on how AFN should be organized and some have leanings towards a particular alternative while some others would like to have more information. He starts with Southeast and calls Mr. Borbridge of Sealaska. [Break in the recording.]

Another man's voice addresses Mr. President and reports that of the board members of Sealaska Corporation, they have 12 of their 15 members present. After discussion, they vote to support a concept in which there are 12 regional memberships and each of those would be elected by the regional corporation. There might be a need for consideration of social economic programs and for political activities. The feeling was that the overriding priorities are to develop the type of organization that can effectively start moving into legislative liaison activity.

Willie Hensley thanks Mr. [John] Borbridge and says that in discussing the progress of each of the regions, some of them had definite feelings on the debt

itself. He asks if Mr. Borbidge wants to discuss that too, that would be proper, or he can wait until Treasurer's report.

3:04 Willie Hensley asks if there are any regions that don't feel like they have a moral obligation to assist with the debt. In his opinion, there are several groups that have had substantial faith in Alaska Native people, that is the Tyonek people, Yakama, and Tlingit and Haida who funded the effort, but also promised to pay some of the other debt. Willie says that there's a moral obligation for all of the people who benefit from the settlement to assist in paying off debts. In his opinion, it's a small debt considering that it's for 6 years of operation. He says that if all goes well, maybe \$400,000 of the debt will be returned through adjudication of the court of claims. In reality, the debt may only be around \$300,000 dollars and in Willie's opinion that isn't a very substantial debt when one considers the benefit of having land claims settled.

5:18 Mr. Borbish continues that their board of directors think that Southeastern Corporation stands ready to assume their proper share of the debt. Two things should be resolved in the meeting at hand: they need to decide on the structure and to move towards retiring the debt.

Chugach [Corporation] is called on the microphone, but then Hensley says that they'd like to clarify their positions more. Then Ahtna is called and they come to the podium.

The spokesperson of Ahtna Corporation says they chose the "alternative 1", but they haven't decided on different things of it. The political activity of it could be arranged later, but they could choose it now and work on the details later. [Break in the recording.]

Hensley thanks Mr. [Herb] Smeltzer and calls people from Cook's Inlet. A man's voice says something quiet and Hensley says to the microphone they favor alternative 1, but that they haven't made the decision. He asks the Aleut Corporation representative to come forth, but says that they are apparently still talking. Harvey Simonsson from Bristol Bay Native Corporation. [Break in the

recording.] Simonsson says something quiet and Hensley says they indicate a preference for no. 2 and they agree to pay their share of the debt.

7:48 Hensley ask Philip Guy from Callista Corporation to present their report. Philip Guy addresses Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen and says that their group went through alternatives and selected the alternative 1. After further discussion, they wanted that option A's two clauses should be combined at [unclear] only and that if it's possible, the chairman or the officers of AFN Inc should be elected by a convention. They have an intent to ask an attorney which officers could be elected during an annual meeting or a convention. Where liabilities and obligations of AFN are concerned, their group feels that repayment should be done following the formula in the land claims act, partially on land loss and population [formulas].

A lot of leaders recall that during a pursuit of the settlement their organization has wanted land and monetary distribution on population basis, but the Congress in it's wisdom wanted it to be done partially in land loss basis and partially based on population. During AFN conventions, voting should be on population basis. When the AFN board is concerned, voting should be on one vote per member – basis.

At 10:31 Hensley calls for Bering Strait Regional Corporation. A man's voice begins telling that their group met as many of them did, and their regional corporation joined AFN. Also, they choose an alternative to president [and vice president?] since sometimes they have duties at home and can't come to meetings. They are not that free. They want to pay the debt on per-capita basis and in support of AFN they feel that it should be a specified amount per each regional corporation. They are going to have a full board meeting where they bring everything up for discussion. [Break in the recording.]

Hensley thanks Mr. Olson and asks NANA [Northwest Alaska Native Association] Regional Corporation and Mr. Newlan [sp? possibly Newland?] to step forth. Mr. Newlan says that NANA Regional Corporation agreed to pay the AFN debt on per capita basis and alternate no. 1 was chosen as the one they want. He also says

that they didn't want to bind their representatives on AFN board, but their representatives are to be chosen by the board to sit on the AFN.

13:03 Hensley calls for Tanana Chief's Conference – Doyon area's representative Mr. Melvin Charlie. Charlie says that at this time they don't have a [unclear] and President John Sackett will be there at 6pm. They feel like it's premature for them to make a decision without their president being there. They realize that debt has to be paid back and says they will assume a part of the responsibility. The general consensus of Doyon Ltd. Representatives is that they are leaning towards alternative 1 or 2. [Break in the recording.]

Hensley says that Arctic Slope is not present, but he will report, having met with them, that they have not acted out. He doesn't feel like they had a particular problem with having to pay their share of the debt. Hensley asks if he has missed a region. [Break in the recording.]

Then he says that the impression he gets is that all of the regions are in favor of paying the debt, and that everybody recognizes that the sooner it's paid off, the less they have to pay interest and they can build from there. He has the impression through discussions about structure, that support to 12-region structure is substantial, having 7 regions behind it. One was for option no. 2 which was a regional association proposition, and one was for Ken Bass's option.

[Music with a guitar and a singer.]

[End of the recording.]