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Lenard Silas, Tony Alexia, Frank Miller, Rose Hagen are interviewed by Levi Lott

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

Series: Potlatch tapes

1975

Program begins with a song by Phoebe Snow.

In January of this year a number of Native Alaskans came to Fairbanks for training on how to manage Alaska Native Corporations. Levi Lott asked Rose Hagen how she liked living in the dorms. Rose said after being married for twenty years it was a big change. She has been lonely. Levi asked the group if they are enjoying the stay in Fairbanks. One of the men said it is a new experience for him since he has never done anything like this before. Levi asked them about the credits they are earning at the college in Fairbanks. Rose said she has been pleased with the credits that she has earned. Levi asked what corporate management was. Rose said it is learning how to manage your corporation. An unidentified man said they are studying accounting and starting to learn about income taxes. In a few weeks they will get into land claims. Levi Lott asked about accounting. Rose said that is learning how to fill out income taxes, payroll and earnings from the village corporation. Levi asked if it will be useful. Rose said all she knew before was taking care of her checkbook and now she knows bookkeeping. Levi asked about land claims. Rose said she attended school with Bob Jinx and learned about land claims. The present course will be a brush up course. She said there are several things to know about land claims including selection of land, how much land you get for your village, what you are going to do with your lands and how you will earn money with your land. An unidentified man said he'll learn how the land will be given to them, how big an area they will get and how they will run the land and make money off of the land. Levi Lott asked about his hopes by taking the course and what they expect to achieve. An unidentified man said he hopes to it will make his village better and to be able to manage the money. Rose said by learning what she is learning here she will have more confidence in her job back home. Levi Lott asked if a lot of Natives know about the land claims. An unidentified man said he thought most of the Natives know about the land claims. People may not know what they are supposed to do about the claims. He is just learning. All of the people in his village don't know about it. Levi Lott asked if AFN and regional corporations could have done a better job informing the people about what Native land claims and corporate management are. Rose said they had such a short time to work on this. She thinks regional corporations have done a good job. Levi Lott asked about informing people in the Bush area. Rose said that is up to the people that go to training and tell their people what is going on. A lot of the people in the villages are working in the summer and not present when the meetings take place. An unidentified man said he has been enjoying his stay in Fairbanks. He talked about being around more people and they aren't going outdoors as often. Levi Lott asked about regional corporations doing more to inform people about Native land claims. The unidentified man said considering the time limit they have done a good job.

Music by Taj Majal.

Levi Lott asked what they will be doing after they study about land claims. An unidentified man said he expects his job to be easier now that he had understanding about the corporate structure, office work and paperwork that needs to be done for the corporation. He also thinks he will be able to talk to his people about planning for the future including planning businesses, proper paperwork, and patents for the land. Most important is knowing about encroachment upon Native lands such as corridors, railroads and highways. They will have to deal with federal and state plans and come to an agreement where it is beneficial to everybody. The next step is devise some sort of plan where they can develop resources at this time to improve the lives of his people. Levi Lott asked if he thought it will benefit the people to learn about grant writing. The unidentified person said yes the people in the villages don't know how to do it. He talked about starting projects this spring. He is certain that all the leaders know what grants are, but not too many local people know about them. The leaders have to apply for the grants. He thinks a grant would be good for a village because the employment is low. A good leader would apply to all the grants to increase projects which would employ people in the village. They are thinking about ideas and things to invest in, but they haven't arrived at good conclusions. They want to invest their money in something that will be successful. They will be discussing this in the spring. They talk about investing their money in the community such as building houses for rental income. They have investing their money into a community hall which will have office space and game rooms. They are trying to have a shower room and washeteria.

Levi Lott asked if people in the community know about investments. Rose Hagen said yes they do. They have discussed it ever since the Land Claims Act. Most everyone that has attending the meetings know what investment is.

Levi Lott asked about earning credits at the college and if there are any more plans for education and training. An unidentified person said they are very grateful for their training and hope they can do good things for their village. He plans on attending other trainings. Another person said he might just come back and complete college. He said it is his first experience with this type of training. He has attended other seminars in Huslia and it was more basic and general information about land selection. He would like more programs of this type. Rose Hagen said she hopes to return to the village and do the job that she was trained to do. She wasn't to prove that she has learned something.

Levi Lott asked if they would recommend similar training for other corporations. An unidentified person said it is a very good idea because not too many local people have a deep understanding of how to manage a corporation. He talked about the legal paperwork needed to deal with government agencies. Another person said the more young people to get into the program the better off the corporations will be. Rose Hagen said there are a lot of parents that are encouraging their high school children to take up these different courses. They are going to be the future leaders. What they have done so far has been slow, but it is best to teach the people in the villages. She said to keep pushing the younger generation to learn because they will be the leaders.

Levi Lott asked about high school dropouts having a chance to get some kind of education under the land claims act. An unidentified man said he thinks so. He said everyone is an individual and you can't force them to attend school, but you can encourage them. There should be some kind of incentive for them. Rose Hagen said there are several schools that Native children can go to such as Tanana Survival School. This school will teach students how to trap, make snowshoes, and make fishwheels. Other things for dropouts include on the job training.

Song by John Sebastian.

The moderator said Potlatch is produced in the KUAC studios in College in cooperation with KTOO Juneau, KOTC Kotzebue and KYUK Bethel under Title One of the Higher Education Act.