

88-49-23

Irene Nicolita, David Grant, attending a potlatch

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

Series: Potlatch tapes

1975

On March 22<sup>nd</sup> the Fairbanks Native Association held their annual potlatch. First the Association of Interior Eskimos perform. An unidentified person said the first song they will sing is A Lullaby song. He gave the background of the song. An old lady always wanted to go out and search for lobster and crab. One morning she left her home. On her into her to get the crabs and lobsters she heard a noise. She looked around and saw a little basket floating in the water. She waded out into the water and brought the basket to shore. Inside was a little infant. She began to nurse the baby. This is the lullaby song.

Jeff Kennedy said self-determination for Native Americans is usually a phrase for administrative procedures, but rarely for individual's attitudes toward themselves. The director of "Indian is" seminars in Washington State, David Grant, came to the Tanana Chiefs Conference in Fairbanks. He told delegates that Native Americans can make of themselves whatever they will themselves to be. After his David Grant's speech Jeff Richardson, from Tundra times and Jeff Kennedy interviewed him. David said he is here in response to an invitation from Tanana Chiefs Conference. He has been excited about being up in Fairbanks. It is a crucial time for Alaska Natives and he would like to be a part of it. This is his first time in Alaska. The other Alaska Natives he has met have been from urban areas. He said the people he has met have impressed him. There is some powerful leadership surfacing here and across the country. He said they are just beginning to understand what has gone on in the past. They haven't been OK with the past treatment, but they have been conditioned to think that they aren't OK. The entire situation in Alaska is typical of treatment. It is similar to the challenges that Native people are facing across the continent. The one thing that he gets from Alaska more than other places is the conflict that it demonstrates. The ecological impact [of the pipeline] that it is going to have and the impact it will have on the traditional way [of life] versus the acquisition of material things. The size of the pipeline it makes it seem so definite. The situation with tankers in waters off the coastal tribes of Washington is similar. The pipeline is a bigger issue. Jeff Kennedy asked David Grant to compare the situations of Alaska Natives with Native Americans of other states. David Grant said the one thing that he sees is the overnight development of budgets and the responsibility that comes with working with a lot of money. He said that he is reminded of the Southwest. He said the traditions are not too far off in the present. He has been told that there is a lot of conflict in relationship to the traditional way of life versus progress in the new way of life. He talked about his role as director of Indian Is. He teaches leadership seminars nationally. His concern is as he is in Indian communities is to get people to look at themselves. He said the challenge is knowing yourself and what helps and hinders you to grow. He teaches different seminars from one to three days. He gets people to look at conditioning. He said they aren't born with these feelings such as inferiority or superiority complex. We are conditioned through information and example. Their reality is developed after they are born. He challenges Indian people all over the country

to take a look at who they have been listening to. What reality do they carry in their minds based on other people's opinions? He said a lot of people do that but no one takes the additional step to tell them how to change – how to undo that conditioning. He said the seminar he teaches is geared to helping people to do what they want to do with their lives. That means seeing things differently. The challenge today is to realize that he doesn't have to be what he is. He tells people that they can make a decision to accept past information and continue to be who they are or to take a look at the process of being something else if they choose to be. There are very definite practical steps and tools for people to do that. For example to be careful about what you accept to be true about yourself. Don't accept it if you don't want to be it. He said there is a lot of information about practical ways to start being and feeling and living the kind of life you want to live. Jeff asked Grant if differences among peoples because of race and cultures are real and valid differences. Grant said to him they are real. Being an Indian is a different experience in terms of concepts and values. It's a way of life.

Public service announcement about snowmobile related injuries and precautions while riding snowmobiles.

Music from the Nenana dances and the Tanana dancers at the Fairbanks Native Association potlatch.

Public service announcement about adolescence.

Ann Nocolai and Irene Nicolia from Tanana have a conversation at the Fairbanks Native Association potlatch. Ann asked Irene about school. Irene said she will be graduating from Tanana High School. She participated in the beauty contest and the Eskimo Indian Olympics in late July. She was second runner up in the beauty contest. She said she applied to Sheldon Jackson in Sitka. She talked about majoring in general education. She attended the Upward Bound program the past summer. She may return to the university because it is close to home.

Public service announcement about renting versus buying a home.

Navajo dancers perform at the Fairbanks Native Association potlatch.

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.