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Pioneers of Alaska Convention Pt. 1 on October 13-16, 1960, in Seward, Alaska

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Notes: Original on 7 inch reel, copy on CD

The recording starts with Harry Hughes stating the location and dates of the recording/convention. The convention is being held at the civic auditorium. There have been planes landing every day. Three planes landed yesterday and four planes landed the day before. A number of people drove in on the highways. Registration is almost completed and the ceremony is to start at 10 am this morning. The recording continues with talking in the background for quite some time.

At 2:40 on the recording the convention begins. A man welcomes all of the brothers and sisters of the Pioneers of Alaska. The man says he is prepared to open the 44th convention of the Grand Igloo of the Pioneers. Before he does anything else he wants to introduce Governor Egan. The man says the Boy Scouts of America will advance the colors. He asks the Boy Scouts of America at this time to advance the colors of the state and the country. The pledge of allegiance is chanted. He says Saul is very anxious to talk. Saul steps to the microphone and everyone claps. He says people usually call him Silent Saul. He feels pretty good about the turn out for the convention. He would like first to introduce President of Igloo 9, the host of the convention, Stewart Shay. He acknowledges Governor Egan and also acting President Lester Gore. He welcomes everyone to the 44th convention.

Introduced at 8:50 is the Mayor of Seward, Alex Petrovich. Petrovich would like to pass onto the crowd from the people of the community, their heartfelt admiration for the people as pioneers. He said when he was a kid he would run into the house and his mother would accuse him of fighting. He thinks the pioneers have done something really tremendous. He said he would to close with the thought that it is our duty to make somebody happy, every day, every week, and every month. The crowd claps.

At 12:35 of the recording Governor and Pioneer William Egan is introduced. Egan thanks Pauly and Grant President Gore and Mayor Petrovich. He says he is doubly glad to be in Seward today. He was extremely sorry not to get to Seward on time on the fourth of July. Last month he talked to Sitka before the State Labor Convention when he mentioned old Pioneer customs. Right here in Seward he almost left Alaska. In the early days of Matanuska, a whole train of construction workers were ticketed outside. He was locked up in one of the coaches they had a ride on the rail bed from Palmer to Seward. He says the Pioneers have never been a political organization. Membership has been everywhere in Alaska. The pioneers of Alaska have a great inspiring tradition and the selflessness that comes with shared experience and shared hardship. Instead of living in the past, the pioneers have continued to be a dynamic vital forward looking organization. Pioneers are good and glorious. He is especially pleased to be in the presence of so many pioneers. Alaska is making the transition of full maturity. The transition

in 20 months has been remarkable. Responsibility has been met and improvements of government services have been impressive. He acknowledges all of the citizens of Alaska regardless of political affiliation. Harmful people are attempting to divide the people with bitterness by setting area against area. Unity is very important. The strength lies in the unity. Division can only weaken the state and undue excellence that has been accomplished. Unity has been true because there are few Alaskans and they have been removed from others. He was born on Prince William Sound and worked for the old road commission on the Richardson Trail. He also went to school and worked in the cannery. As a youngster he used to fly over the area. He discusses his son bringing home a motor scooter. If he was exclusively regionally then the south central part of Alaska is home to him. He has taken a solemn oath to act to the best of his ability for the total interest of the Alaska. He is doing the job to the best of his ability. Alaska has need for hospitals and schools. He says first things are first in order to keep taxation within reasonable limits. Relative needs must be weighed and things that are most essential must be done first. He says Alaska has fractions far greater than most and requires promotional work. He discusses the Fairbanks and Anchorage International Airports and how much traffic there is. He says he must go on a political tangent at this point in time for the best interest of all Alaskans. The eyes of the world are upon Alaska. He talks about Alaskan gains of 12 million dollars a year.

He discusses the construction of road links in rural areas. Puget Sound, British Columbia successes are discussed and compared to what Alaska is trying to do. Bonding method of financing and how Alaska is almost alone in having no debt is discussed. Egan says not being in debt is not necessarily a good thing. Development encouragement, opportunity, and living conditions in relation to bonds are discussed. Areas did not always fare as well as the Bristol Bay area did in the area of fishing. He says legislative provisions must be used to help people. The Department of Natural Resources has moved ahead with its program of land selection. 5.25 million acres have been selected after careful consideration. Kennedy approval has been only on 200,000 acres. He discusses his request to the Secretary of the Interior that he makes available for state selection the 8.5 million acre area of northeastern Alaska. After biological and mineral studies are done the state will act to assure management of the area in keeping with the goals of maximum benefit of all Alaskans as stated in the constitution. He doesn't feel that that end would be achieved under the current federal authority's interpretation of law. He says he will close by stating one recent action which he feels has long been needed in fairness and equity to state employees. The State Personnel Act adopted by the last legislature, for the first time there have been spelled out in black and white the rights and obligations of state employees. He says confidently that Alaska is moving ahead. The pioneers made take great pride in having provided the instrument of the future as previous pioneers have. The speech ends and there is clapping.

At 41:30 Egan is thanked and Lester mentions two past Pioneer presidents, Robert D'armond of Ketchikan and Otto Copper of Cordova. The grand officers of the session are acting Grand President Lester Gore from Ketchikan, Second Grand Vice President Carl Locksfeld from Anchorage, Chaplain James Jorgenson from Fairbanks, the Grand Secretary Theo Mckenna from Fairbanks, Grand Recorder Linda Schaeffer from Fairbanks, Grand Sergeant of Arms Captain Bernard from Cordova, Grand Trustee is Robert Corn from Cordova and Max Mccilby from Ketchikan. The president of the igloos who are present for the convention are Paul Grimen from Fairbanks, JW Eleveritz from Juneau, Stewart Shayes

from Seward, Paul Locksfeld of Anchorage, and Jerry Cocklin of Cordova. The auxiliary presidents present are Francis Locklee of Anchorage, Mary Ferry of Fairbanks, Mary Stock of Anchorage, and Francis Jones of Seward. That covers the introduction of the dignitaries and officers and it is time to get the convention moving. Right now he is going to call upon the president Stewart Shayer to present active grand president with a token.

At 44:00 of the recording Stewart Shayer steps to the microphone. He says it is time for Lester Gore to assume the duties of Grand President of the Igloo. On behalf of Igloo Number 9 he would like to present the token. There is clapping. Lester Gore says he hasn't earned it yet but he is going to keep it anyway. He acknowledges the governor and the mayor. He wants to announce that all officers are in their chairs with the exception of the Grand historian Dr. Chase. Dr. Chase was not able to come and he wishes to say that he has the former governor George Parks as delegate from Juneau. Lester asks George Parks to assume the chair of Grand Historian.

At 47:40 of the recording former governor George Parks is introduced. There is a prayer by the grand chaplain. Grand First Vice President says the first order is the election of the Grand President. He wishes to retire from the chair and call upon Carl Lockself and the Second Grand Vice President. The death of the beloved Grand President Arthur Lutro is discussed. There is no provision that was prepared for a time when the Grand President would die so Grand First Vice President says he would like to declare brother Lutro as the junior past Grand President. He will now accept nominations for Grand President to reside in the 44th convention of the Grand [inaudible]. There are nominations for Lester Gore as Grand President. The recording ends.