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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, STATE OF ALASKA

Conference on Alaska's Future Frontiers

Saturday, December 8, 1979

Sheraton Anchorage Hotel

Anchorage, Alaska

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Reported by: Laurel G. Barefield

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ALPHA GROUP PROCEEDINGS

(December 8, 1979)

Room 101F

THE MODERATOR: When the rest of our group gets here so we at least have a quorum, well, then we can address ourselves to preparing the appropriate resolution for the remaining topics that we have under consideration in this conference. We'll just start there.

In this energy area, I know nothing, virtually nothing, about hydrogen cells. But people that I've talked with that know something about it are very enthusiastic about it. I don't know if there is anybody in our group that has been exposed to it or not, but the --

MR. ACKERMAN: I know when you have hydrogen welding you've got a problem when the cell cracks on you. Besides that, I don't know.

THE MODERATOR: Solar energy has a substantial potential in western Alaska because we get substantial quantities of sunlight long, long hours of the day for six months of the year. And certainly in Northwestern Alaska, particularly at Wales on the Bering Strait, the wind blows there 95 percent of the time. That community is a sitting duck for redundancy wind generation throughout the

1 community, where when generators could be dumping heat into  
2 the homes and heating the homes with wind energy and at the  
3 same time keeping a battery plant charged to drive their  
4 electric lights.

5 Anybody else?

6 MR. ACKERMAN: I agree with you. I think it's really  
7 mandated to install some sort of alternative energy in  
8 every community. I think it's the best investment we could  
9 make into the future, and we've seen that in the Lower 48,  
10 these type of projects. I think also we need to look at  
11 our tide power. You know, we have terrific tides in the  
12 State, and we should have either a wind power, tide power  
13 or solar power or geothermal power or hydrogen-type  
14 situation everywhere. I don't think we need look at the  
15 economics. I think we have to look at the future, what the  
16 future benefit is going to be to our State.

17 THE MODERATOR: Looking at the economics shouldn't  
18 pose much of a problem. Motor gas -- the last word I got  
19 was \$2.90 a gallon in Paris. And up home it's already a  
20 dollar and a half a gallon. So we're going to be keeping  
21 up with the Joneses here overnight.

22 MR. ACKERMAN: Well, I think anything is going to  
23 improve the standard of living. And lower the cost and  
24 preserve our oil for other things is really essential at  
25 this time.

1 THE MODERATOR: With the substantial tides that we  
2 have, 36-foot tides and this region, Kachemak Bay -- and on  
3 the tidal generation is a sitting duck. It could be  
4 extremely successful.

5 MR. ACKERMAN: I think we have to look at the benefits  
6 of, you know, our tidal potential and our transportation at  
7 the same time in crossways that we're talking about so we  
8 tie the area together just a little bit. This is just  
9 really, you know, a dual benefit thing that we could  
10 achieve down here. And our tide power really hasn't been  
11 researched enough to where it doesn't have some of the  
12 large drawbacks of a hydro project.

13 THE MODERATOR: These wind generators and units that  
14 are available I regard as entirely too expensive, and I'm  
15 satisfied in my own mind that we should be able to buy  
16 component parts and assemble wind generation units  
17 substantially cheaper than we purchased them on the market.  
18 I'm thinking in terms of solid-state or brushless  
19 generators that can be manufactured by Reliance Electric  
20 Company or any other large electric matcher in substantial  
21 mass production quantities. And then the propellers for  
22 driving the mechanism are available through manufacturers  
23 of aircraft propellers. They're already set up with the  
24 plant to mass-produce those propellers.

25 The towers do not have to be highly sophisticated

1 towers at all. In fact, the more practical they are the  
 2 better. Towers can be built right in the small communities  
 3 out of empty gas drums welded together, and you don't have  
 4 to be a certified welder to weld those gas drums together  
 5 to make a pole.

6 And set those tarren on the inside and outside so  
 7 they won't deteriorate and use those for towers and just  
 8 merely mount the wind generator on the empty gas drum pole  
 9 for the wind generator tower. At the same time you can  
 10 develop a ladder that -- right on those drums that you can  
 11 climb up and down that gas drum pole to get access to your  
 12 wind generation unit for maintenance purposes.

13 THE MODERATOR: Good morning, Mr. Dahl.

14 MR. DAHL: Good morning. I apologize for my tardiness.

15 THE MODERATOR: Last night when we closed we were in  
 16 the area of considering submitting a resolution urging the  
 17 State to establish a comprehensive program regulating our  
 18 lakes.

19 Is that substantially correct, where we were when  
 20 we closed?

21 MS. BENNETT: I don't agree we were in the process of  
 22 establishing resolutions to the effect. I think they were  
 23 just introduced.

24 THE MODERATOR: But we're in the process of input.

25 MS. BENNETT: Talking about it, right.

1 THE MODERATOR: With a viewpoint to the resolution  
2 with the area -- addressing ourselves to the lakes of  
3 Alaska.

4 MS. BENNETT: Right.

5 THE MODERATOR: In order to protect the habitat and  
6 the environment. There are tremendous human pressures on  
7 the habitat in the environment in these lakes out across  
8 that sit in the flats up here in particular.

9 MS. BENNETT: I just don't see how we can regulate  
10 something like that. It just sounds -- you know, we've  
11 just been discussing earlier the difficulty with Fish and  
12 Game and that kind of thing. It's that kind of regulation.

13 THE MODERATOR: Oh, yes, but it must come. It must  
14 happen. And it has to be -- people have to be educated to  
15 realize that it's to their benefit to -- in the final  
16 analysis it's their benefit to discipline ourselves in the  
17 manner in which we conduct ourselves in this environment.

18 MS. BENNETT: I definitely agree with you there. We  
19 need to talk about education and discipline. That's  
20 definitely true. I'm just thinking about a State agency  
21 trying to regulate something like that. It's extremely  
22 difficult.

23 THE MODERATOR: It can be handled very well.

24 MR. ACKERMAN: I think this could be probably  
25 controversial and something we haven't discussed too much.

7  
1 We went through our Law and Justice. We haven't had a  
2 resolution on that. I think our Land and our Energy --  
3 particularly our Energy -- that we do need to develop a  
4 resolution.

5 MS. BENNETT: Yes.

6 MR. ACKERMAN: Probably we might defer this item to  
7 the last, you know, if we have time.

8 MR. DALL: I would like that.

9 MS. BENNETT: I agree with that.

10 THE MODERATOR: All right, fine. We've had our  
11 round-table discussion in the area of Law and Justice. We  
12 should be able to proceed to address ourselves to the  
13 development of a resolution in the Law and Justice area.

14 MR. ACKERMAN: I think, just to comment -- I'm not  
15 going to make a motion, but I think that, you know, from  
16 what we had that we can double our system. We have the  
17 physical plant, you know. There's no reason why we can't  
18 use it and we can't double-shift it. Of course, with that  
19 you'd have twice as many judges, we could hear twice as  
20 many cases. And there's no reason for our buildings to sit  
21 empty 16 hours a day. I think it's something we need to  
22 look at. Our second shift could take care of our civil  
23 matters. It can take care of our traffic violations and  
24 things like that. And I think it would be a tremendous  
25 benefit and service to the people. I think they could

1 better afford justice. But our civil case backload is just  
2 tremendous. I had an insurance claim that had to go to  
3 small claims court, and it took six months to the small  
4 claims court. This is a ridiculous situation. And the  
5 purpose of the small claims court was for, you know -- for  
6 a speedy resolution of some of these things. And I think  
7 we should look at that type of recommendation at this time.

8 THE MODERATOR: The heavy burden of civil cases in the  
9 State in the area of insurance claim controversy results in --  
10 my way of thinking -- a lot of that results in the fact  
11 that the State Department of Commerce, Insurance Division  
12 has been and is very weak. When I have insurance claims I  
13 automatically turn it over to an attorney that handles  
14 insurance cases. It's automatic. We don't go around with  
15 the adjustors. We just turn it over to our attorney and  
16 let them work with our attorney. We don't even fool with  
17 it. That's how bad it is because we've ended up having to  
18 take legal action so many times that now it's just become  
19 automatic. Fireman's Fund in Oregon controvert claims boom,  
20 boom, boom, on Workmen's Comp right and left. Very  
21 arbitrary and capricious in that area of endeavor. It's  
22 almost virtually automatic that they'll controvert claims.  
23 The Industrial Indemnity Company here in Alaska, when they  
24 have a Workmen's Comp claim -- they drag their feet on  
25 payment of the claim, even though the insurance is in force,

1 the premiums are paid, the whole shot.

2 We had an employee who got a broken leg, and it  
3 was a month before he got a Workmen's Comp check. He laid  
4 in the hospital down here in Anchorage, and his family's up  
5 home and nothing coming in. And I have to use this as a  
6 yardstick. The only claim we had had in 25 years. That's  
7 what happened.

8 Then the underwriter went over to the hospital,  
9 and here the guy is in a hospital bed and they waived a  
10 \$5,000 check under his nose for 100 percent settlement, and  
11 he took it. Where he could have been on compensation  
12 during his total recovery period at \$200 a week for a year  
13 and a half.

14 MR. ACKERMAN: I'd like to -- our union has instituted  
15 prepaid legal just for the reasons that you speak of, the  
16 trouble with the insurance and also the automobile  
17 violations.

18 THE MODERATOR: These are the sort of things, Mr.  
19 Ackerman, that cause the civil cases to pile up.

20 MR. ACKERMAN: Yes, that's right.

21 THE MODERATOR: Just an as an example.

22 MR. ACKERMAN: I agree with that, but now I think by  
23 double-shifting our physical facility, you know, increasing  
24 our judges and doubling our staff in using this facility  
25 twice as long, we can take care of this backlog and

1 possibly, if we can get rid of the backlog, we won't have  
2 so many of them. When we hit a time of -- you know, where  
3 we in our schools -- it's a common thing to double-shift  
4 our schools and use them when we can't build something fast  
5 enough to take care of the need. We double-shift it.

6 We should do the same with our courts, and  
7 possibly it will change the insurance company's attitudes  
8 towards this. And if we do this, maybe we won't have the  
9 case load in the future. I think at this time, since that  
10 is their attitude, that the best thing we can do is  
11 double-shift our physical plant and put on twice as many  
12 judges and staff and take care of these things.

13 And I think if we do it on a second shift, it's  
14 going to be a lot handier to the public. They're not going  
15 to have to take off time from work, and justice is going to  
16 be available. For the working man it's hard to take the  
17 time off to appear in court. It's also hard to serve on a  
18 jury.

19 THE MODERATOR: That's right.

20 MR. ACKERMAN: And your compensation for serving on a  
21 jury -- if you're stuck on a jury for 30 days, it's  
22 devastating. \$20 a day. You just can't --

23 THE MODERATOR: You end up on food stamps.

24 MR. ACKERMAN: That's a tough thing.

25 THE MODERATOR: That's right.

1 MR. ACKERMAN: You don't end up on food stamps. You  
2 just do without.

3 THE MODERATOR: You make some very valid points, Mr.  
4 Ackerman.

5 MR. LAHL: I'm working on a resolution that will cover  
6 those two. Would you discuss, while I'm doing it, the  
7 issue of improving efficiency of bush justice so that I can  
8 get some language? Would you try to recall the kind of  
9 discussion we had a couple days ago.

10 MR. ACKERMAN: I think the big thing in starting the  
11 Fish and Game -- that's where most of our problems are.  
12 And if we had, you know, procedures that didn't disqualify  
13 qualified Alaskans from doing this.... And if we had a  
14 people that had a vested interest in our game protection  
15 and management, we would have a lot better bush justice for  
16 a start. I think we all, when you look at the Fish and  
17 Game man, tell you to do something, you know, what you  
18 should be able to do. You've got a new law every year.  
19 Every year. I have no idea --

20 THE MODERATOR: That's right.

21 MR. ACKERMAN: What the communicating regulations are.  
22 I'd be afraid to go hunting now just because of what I've  
23 done in the past, you know, 20 or 30 years. I'd be afraid  
24 to go out and do -- whether I was in a right district or  
25 closed district. Moose season changes every year. It's

1 risky to do this.

2           And I think we need people that understand that  
3 we've had changes in our management, you know, and when  
4 you've done something for years and years, you learn  
5 something for twenty years, to unlearn it is something you  
6 don't do. It's second nature. You have to have people to  
7 understand this problem. And I think that the Alaska  
8 resident has a vested interest in our Fish and Game  
9 management, and I think he's the one that should be doing --  
10 he's the best qualified to do it.

11           THE MODERATOR: In the area of bush justice, number  
12 one, we need ongoing village policemen training, and they  
13 need to be better paid. We've had -- the quality of our  
14 village policemen, since it is a relatively new program --  
15 the quality of village policemen is very poor by and large.  
16 So, consequently, the populous -- the community recognizes  
17 that they're not disposed to cooperate and respect the  
18 village policemen in the community. This is the way I'm  
19 coming from.

20           How do you feel about it Georgianna?

21           MS. ANASOGAK: I agree with you. Currently our  
22 village policemen is funded under the CETA programs, and  
23 one of the CETA regulations state no employee can be  
24 employed more than one year.

25           Now, we have a perfectly qualified village

1 policeman -- ex-policeman. He's gone -- he was employed on  
2 the Police Department, Nome Police Department, for a number  
3 of years. Then gone to several village policemen training  
4 courses, and now he's not eligible to be a policeman  
5 because of the CETA regulations.

6 Mr. DAHL: Excuse me. He's not eligible to be a  
7 policeman using CETA money.

8 THE MODERATOR: Right.

9 MS. ANASOGAK: That's right. And then the village  
10 does not have enough money to pay him properly. I mean, to  
11 give him enough salary for him to take the job.

12 THE MODERATOR: Does White Mountain have a retail  
13 sales tax?

14 MS. ANASOGAK: I don't know. I'm not from White  
15 Mountain.

16 THE MODERATOR: No, no, I mean Koyuk.

17 MS. ANASOGAK: Yes.

18 THE MODERATOR: They have a retail sales tax. How  
19 much is it?

20 MS. ANASOGAK: It's 2 percent.

21 THE MODERATOR: They could go to 3, and that would  
22 help to pay for village services.

23 Mr. ACKERMAN: I'd like to talk about the CETA funds.  
24 These are federal funds, and they're not entirely federal  
25 funds. You have State participation. And I think that the

1 amount of paperwork that's involved in CETA funds and the  
2 Federal requirements that they put on that the State is  
3 better off directly funding the CETA program.

4 THE MODERATOR: Forget it.

5 MS. BENNETT: Can't forget it. It's put a lot of  
6 people to work in our area.

7 THE MODERATOR: Not the red tape. We can't forget the  
8 red tape because we can't cope with it in the village.  
9 That's why I say forget it.

10 MR. ACKERMAN: It's not only the villages. We have a  
11 large problem in the Fairbanks area with the CETA. Federal  
12 restrictions and the amount of paperwork that you do --

13 THE MODERATOR: It's monumental.

14 MR. ACKERMAN: I think the State should directly fund  
15 the CETA program. That would take care of the prior  
16 problem about being able to pay a policeman. You wouldn't  
17 necessarily have to have a year limit on the program. But  
18 where it's really affected us -- our program is -- we  
19 trained 300 Alaskans, turned them out as qualified  
20 pipefitters. We'll have 2,000 pipefitters working in the  
21 next year out of our area. And a large majority of the  
22 people that came in and upgraded our trades was with the  
23 CETA assistance. They wouldn't have been able to afford  
24 that they could sit down and go to school for four months,  
25 and that's the minimal amount of time to get a person on

1 the job. I mean, you barely get them enough to get safety  
 2 on the job. We have a four-year ongoing training program.  
 3 And CETA will get them on the job -- this will allow them  
 4 to be able to take off the time, you know, to update his  
 5 occupation. And we assume everything after that, and he  
 6 does, too. And he does, you know, for the next three years.

7 But getting CETA funds now is next to impossible.  
 8 It's next to impossible to qualify the issue we took in  
 9 872, our apprentice program. We really should be looking  
 10 at training many people in this pipeline, welder helpers  
 11 and things like that.

12 THE MODERATOR: Let's get back to this Law and Justice  
 13 thing, right directly into it, okay? We're running out of  
 14 time, Mr. Ackerman.

15 MR. DAHL: Mr. Moderator, I have a suggested  
 16 resolution.

17 THE MODERATOR: Go ahead.

18 MR. DAHL: One, that the Alaska court system be  
 19 expanded as follows: a, increase the number of judges in  
 20 order to expedite the civil and criminal calendar; b,  
 21 maximize the use of existing facilities beyond the normal  
 22 working day to improve the convenience to juries and civil  
 23 litigants; c, improve the magistrate system in villages  
 24 through better communication, using appropriate technology,  
 25 with the presiding judge. That's awkward. It should be a

1 better communication with a presiding judge using  
2 appropriate technology.

3 THE MODERATOR: Question. What does the body think  
4 about having initially fewer village magistrates but train  
5 them -- have them so they can travel as circuit riders and  
6 cover several villages in lieu of one village? Fewer of  
7 them but a better quality.

8 MR. DAHL: Mr. Chairman, I'm not prepared to make that  
9 recommendation. I think that given our time constraints  
10 what we're called to do as a group, what we're constrained  
11 to do, I think, because of time and energy is to give some  
12 broad guidelines to the legislature that will set some  
13 policies -- I hear what you're saying. I think this  
14 language would cover that. Let me read it again

15 THE MODERATOR: All right.

16 MR. DAHL: Improve the magistrate system in villages  
17 through better communication with the presiding judge using  
18 appropriate technology.

19 If the legislature wants to take that to mean:  
20 "Let's have a traveling magistrate that goes from Sheldon's  
21 Point to Lockanuk to Onilak," they could do that. They  
22 wouldn't be kept from doing that by the language of this  
23 resolution. If they want to maintain the present system of  
24 having a local person residing in the village acting as  
25 village magistrate, they could do that also. But that's a

1 decision that takes a good bit more discussion than we have  
2 time to handle right now.

3 MR. ACKERMAN: Mr. --

4 THE MODERATOR: I'll go. I'm amenable.

5 MR. DAHL: Number two, let me just say one -- let me  
6 finish the resolution and then I'll move it's adoption for  
7 discussion. Two, provide increased funds to villages for  
8 police training and support.

9 THE MODERATOR: Would that be in the area of revenue  
10 sharing?

11 MR. ACKERMAN: Not necessarily.

12 THE MODERATOR: It could be.

13 MR. DAHL: It could be in the area of revenue sharing  
14 as this lady was talking. It occurred to me that one of  
15 the problems that we have with municipalities -- with  
16 smaller municipalities is they have to hire policemen. It  
17 seems to me that there may be a better way to do that. And  
18 that is to have a -- to have the State participate in some  
19 way with the villages, either through actual administrative  
20 control or through training or through providing funds for  
21 salaries and so forth with the villages to provide not a  
22 trooper but a village policeman in that village. Maybe  
23 that provides too much control with the State criminal  
24 justice system.

25 THE MODERATOR: Well, our --

1 MR. DANL: Our present system is a disaster.

2 THE MODERATOR: Our village policemen work very well  
3 with the troopers. I think it's a team effort. And I  
4 believe the village policemen program can be strengthened  
5 by an increase in that area of the revenue sharing program.  
6 Revenue sharing -- the formula should be rewritten. It  
7 should be upgraded to keep abreast of inflation.

8 MR. ACKERMAN: Mr. Chairman?

9 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Ackerman.

10 MR. ACKERMAN: I think -- you know, there is talk all  
11 over the State, and there is in our area particularly with  
12 Jack Crandall. Maybe these federal funds cost us too much  
13 money and they are too restrictive. The cost of the  
14 administration of the CETA funds is -- you know, it's just  
15 enormous in the amount of people it takes to do it and  
16 amount of paperwork you have.

17 So I think if the State were to look at directly  
18 funding the CETA itself we could get out underneath from  
19 these bureaucracies. Maybe we're not going to get so much  
20 federal funds, but if we do get it and have the people  
21 familiar with the structure -- they know about the  
22 procedure -- and everyone's aware of the need there of the  
23 CETA program, and the State has to look at picking this  
24 thing up themselves.

25 THE MODERATOR: That's true.

1           MR. ACKERMAN: We're not going to be getting the  
2 federal funds we've been getting.

3           THE MODERATOR: These federal fund matching programs  
4 are so abundant that, if you had the ability to get through  
5 the red tape, you could match yourselves broke.

6           MR. ACKERMAN: Well, I think the CETA is really a fine  
7 program. I'd say it's expanded the opportunities.  
8 People would never have had the opportunity if it hadn't  
9 been for the CETA programs.

10          THE MODERATOR: That's right.

11          MR. ACKERMAN: It is a good program. Basically, it  
12 was, but there's been so many more restrictions, Federal  
13 revisions and so much more paper put onto it that the State  
14 has to look at funding it directly themselves, I think.  
15 And by that we wouldn't have a year restriction on the  
16 policemen. You know, because a lot of times you go in, and  
17 if you're in business and you get a CETA employee, you've  
18 brought the employee in, you've trained him, you've  
19 increased your business, you've increased your income, and  
20 you might get to the point that you go ahead and, you know,  
21 assume it yourself if you're a small business and you've  
22 increased it. You've got it started yourself and you need  
23 an employee and everything. But municipal services  
24 operating under the CETA grant -- you know, you're just not  
25 doing that. So you have an ongoing need. And a one-year

1 restriction is too restrictive.

2 THE MODERATOR: We've taken some CETA people in our  
3 businesses, but there's too much red tape.

4 MR. DAHL: Mr. Chairman, let me modify, given the  
5 discussion, No. 2 of this resolution, then, to reflect what's  
6 happening. I feel a considerable time pressure, and we've  
7 got a lot to do.

8 Provide increased funds to villages for police  
9 training and support, considering state participation in  
10 the management and support of the CETA program.

11 MR. ACKERMAN: Oh, I think that's fantastic.

12 MS. BENNETT: Would you mind reading it just once more?

13 MR. DAHL: I'll read the whole thing.

14 MS. BENNETT: Well, I was really concerned with that  
15 last one. I want to hear it once more.

16 MR. DAHL: Provide increased funds to villages for  
17 police training and support, considering State  
18 participation in the management and support of the CETA  
19 program.

20 THE MODERATOR: 100 percent funding of the CETA  
21 program. Full funding.

22 MR. ACKERMAN: Well, I --

23 MR. DAHL: Are you moving to amend my resolution, Mr.  
24 Chairman?

25 MR. ACKERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to point out one

1 thing. All of our dialogue, you know, is a part of the  
2 resolution when this is going to be considered, and I don't  
3 think it necessarily has to be in the resolution as long as  
4 we've said it. And I think we're getting it on the floor  
5 at our conference that the resolution that is present is  
6 appropriate. It speaks to it. We have a dialogue to back  
7 it up that knows what we're talking about.

8 MR. DAHL: Is that a second?

9 MR. ACKERMAN: Yes, definitely.

10 THE MODERATOR: Proceed, Mr. Dahl.

11 MR. DAHL: Question.

12 THE MODERATOR: Do I hear a motion?

13 MR. DAHL: Motion is made.

14 THE MODERATOR: Second?

15 MR. ACKERMAN: Yes.

16 THE MODERATOR: Those in favor indicate by saying aye.

17 (Indicating.)

18 Aye.

19 THE MODERATOR: Those opposed.

20 (No response.)

21 THE MODERATOR: Let the record show a unanimous vote  
22 by the entire Alpha Committee.

23 MR. DAHL: Learning masses.

24 THE MODERATOR: Okay. We've taken care of -- we're in  
25 order through Education, Transportation, Law and Justice,

1 Communication and finances. Oil and Gas Policy. In the  
2 area of fisheries we haven't arrived as far as the  
3 fisheries marketing, economics, bottom fish development and  
4 Alaskan fisheries. The resolution covering Subparagraph 1,  
5 fisheries marketing in Japan. Paragraph 2, Bottomfish  
6 Development. No. 3, Alaska fisheries, Paragraph 3, a  
7 three-pronged subtitle under our resolution or subparagraph.  
8 I'd like to see us -- see the State and independent  
9 marketing agencies exert a substantial domestic thrust on  
10 marketing of Alaskan fish products, particularly into the  
11 Midwest away from the seacoast. Minnesota and Wisconsin  
12 and North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Iowa,  
13 Missouri, et cetera. Those people back there are fish  
14 eaters when they can get the fish, besides just catfish off  
15 the Missouri River.

16 MR. DAHL: Mr. Chairman?

17 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Dahl.

18 MR. DAHL: I think we're operating -- I see reflected  
19 here an interesting philosophy, and that is that we use the  
20 revenue from nonrenewable resources, that is oil, to  
21 support renegotiable resources, that is fish. Include in  
22 that non -- or in that renewable resource development  
23 timber -- what other renewable resources do we have?

24 MR. ACKERMAN: Energy.

25 MS. BENNETT: And tourism and other resources as well.

1 THE MODERATOR: We should be using the nonrenewable  
2 resource revenues to develop our nonrenewable resource  
3 potential. Economic base.

4 Mr. DAHL: And I think with that as a basis of what  
5 we're doing -- keep talking. I'll try to perhaps....

6 THE MODERATOR: That's good business. Take these  
7 substantial windfall revenues from a nonrenewable resource  
8 to build an ongoing viable economy from our renewable  
9 resources.

10 Mr. ACKERMAN: I think we're mandated to do this in  
11 all areas. I think that it's a good investment in the  
12 future. It's creating jobs and income, is a better  
13 distribution of wealth, of giving people money. And that's  
14 a lot of what's been talking about, something that will  
15 perpetuate itself. And we have to consider that, you know,  
16 developing our renewable resources, our fisheries, our  
17 timber, our agriculture, tourism, but especially our  
18 alternative energy sources. And I think we should, you  
19 know, have a high priority in these areas, and I don't  
20 think that economic feasibility is a question that we have  
21 to worry about. I think you could consider it an  
22 investment in the future.

23 We had a flood control project in Fairbanks that  
24 four engineers put in. We had hydrogen source available to  
25 us. The four engineers decided it was economically

1 unfeasible. So we don't do it. It could have been  
2 incorporated for next to nothing. The source at that time  
3 was 10 cents a kilowatt hour. If we could lower our rates  
4 to 10 cents an hour throughout the state, why -- places  
5 we're paying 40 cents an hour --

6 THE MODERATOR: Right.

7 MR. ACKERMAN: -- it would have been beneficial at  
8 this time. We're approaching 10 cents an hour for power.  
9 So we can't -- I don't think we have -- we can afford to  
10 look at things that are just economic. That's one of the  
11 reasons we're doing this ourselves rather than the Federal  
12 regulations that are adopted in the Lower 48, more than  
13 they are our needs, is important.

14 I think that we have to put special attention on  
15 our renewable energy resources. I think every community  
16 should have some sort of alternative energy, whether it's  
17 wind power, solar power, hydro power, tide power. Our  
18 hydrogen cells we were talking about earlier -- every  
19 community should have one.

20 THE MODERATOR: While Mr. Dahl is sweating over this  
21 fisheries resolution and getting it in final form we could  
22 skip to Agriculture. I am somewhat guilty of having tunnel  
23 vision where agriculture is concerned. I was an Iowa farm  
24 boy, and I think in vast acreages of croplands that are  
25 extremely highly productive under extremely favorable

1 conditions. And it's the breadbasket of America, the  
2 Midwest. And when I compare that -- use that for a  
3 yardstick to our agriculture potential in Alaska my  
4 thinking becomes very confused. I can't comprehend in my  
5 own mind -- and I'm short, and I feel inadequate -- I feel  
6 that I just couldn't be able to get it in focus how  
7 agriculture will really be of any real essence in Alaska  
8 compared to what it is in the Midwest.

9 Mr. Dahl.

10 MR. DAHL: I think we've been really lax in creativity  
11 in this area. There was an article in the Agroborealis,  
12 the magazine of the University of Alaska extension service.  
13 Some time ago they talked about a wild rice experiment that  
14 didn't work very well done near Fairbanks. I'm from  
15 Northern Minnesota. Wild rice is just that. It grows wild.  
16 It has become a tremendously lucrative commercial crop for  
17 Indians in the area. Price has increased from 50 cents a  
18 pound not very many years ago to something like \$5 or \$10 a  
19 pound --

20 THE MODERATOR: Right.

21 MR. DAHL: -- on the market.

22 THE MODERATOR: Gourmet food.

23 MR. DAHL: It's tremendous, the market. As I looked  
24 at the potential of the area of the Yukon-Kuskokwim-Delta  
25 there's room there for a cash crop because the area is

1 ideal. Water all over the place. It's the kind of thing  
2 that could be raised as a cash crop. Nobody's thumping  
3 that drum, and I'm not going to do it alone, but it's just  
4 one area, one area of thinking that we haven't even  
5 explored.

6 The Delta Barley project, certainly, is a  
7 creative use of State effort to improve our agriculture  
8 capability. I think we need to -- we need to do more  
9 because the problem -- again, if we talk about problem  
10 analysis, the problem is not so much the effective and  
11 creative use of land, although that is a part of the  
12 problem.

13 The problem is that it costs more than it should  
14 to feed our people. And as native people are moving away  
15 from subsistence food, from traditional foods that are part  
16 of their culture that have sustained them well over many  
17 years, the risk is they move to the less nutritious white man's  
18 food that comes in boxes and cans with all the nutrition  
19 taken out of it. And not only is that nutritionally  
20 deficient it's very expensive. It requires a cash supply  
21 that is not presently available under the present work  
22 standards that we have. So it seems to me that we've --  
23 that it's critical that we move toward the development of a  
24 food supply in this state, that we do it with dispatch and  
25 creativity in providing sufficient funding so that our

1 people can be fed better. We're not doing that now.

2 MS. BENNETT: Well, there is a program that's just  
3 begun this year. I believe it's under the auspices of  
4 Tanana chiefs. They have picked up on that problem. There  
5 have been people in the villages this summer doing  
6 gardening projects and things like that. Now, that's a  
7 really direct food source, I mean a garden in the villages.  
8 That makes more sense as a food supply than huge fields of  
9 grain. I think that the -- when we're talking about the  
10 Delta Barley projects and all you're talking about  
11 marketable agriculture for cash, not as a food supply. And  
12 that seems more realistic to me than to think we're going  
13 to have large farms and be a breadbasket for our own people,  
14 and in a direct way it's cash. I think except for  
15 gardening projects. Truck gardening is very important, but  
16 when we're talking about when you were comparing with Iowa --  
17 we're talking about rape seed to sell to Japan, not as  
18 something for food.

19 THE MODERATOR: I'm guilty of having tunnel vision  
20 when I think about agriculture when applied to Alaska.

21 MR. DAHL: Mr. Chairman?

22 THE MODERATOR: Yes.

23 MR. DAHL: You think about the historic cultural shift,  
24 though, with that. You're moving people that are  
25 traditionally hunters and gatherers and making them farmers.

1 Now, the hebrews did that, and Cane ended up killing Abel  
2 over it. But --

3 MS. BENNETT: But a lot of that shift has already  
4 taken place. People in the villages are already eating,  
5 you know -- importing Coca-Cola and all. So the only thing  
6 to do now is to try to make it better. It's already  
7 happened. I think it should --

8 THE MODERATOR: That's happened a long time ago.

9 MS. BENNETT: That's what I'm saying. I think Mr.  
10 Dahl is saying we're trying to prevent that happening, and  
11 I think it's already happening.

12 MR. DAHL: I don't know that we need to prevent it,  
13 but I think we need to be alert that we're not just saying,  
14 "All right, folks, there's a piece of ground. Make a  
15 garden." We're talking about a major cultural shift, and  
16 we need to be alert and sensitive to the cultural struggles  
17 that we're encouraging here in moving people from being  
18 hunters and gatherers to farmers.

19 MR. ACKERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to, you know --  
20 at this time we're -- you know, I think we need to take a  
21 closer look at our technology that we have available to us  
22 in this area. And we went to the dinner, we listened to  
23 Buckminster Fuller. You know, the geodesic dome -- we  
24 could control the environment where we want to do these  
25 things in our agriculture. And I think we have to consider

1 this technology and develop it a little bit. It has a  
2 tremendous potential. We should be able to do anything  
3 anywhere the Alaska.

4 THE MODERATOR: hydroponics gardening can do  
5 substantially well in communities the size of Anchorage.  
6 We have that -- look at that heat going out over there,  
7 that powerhouse. (Indicating.) That scavenger heat could  
8 be used in a hydroponic heat house. They have the  
9 powerhouse. They could have a hydroponic greenhouse there.  
10 We could go on and on. At our own powerhouse we could  
11 operate a hydroponic greenhouse.

12 MR. ACKERMAN: I think that our geodesic structure  
13 could probably do this. I've done. It's cheap and light.  
14 You don't have to bring a lot of stuff in and, yes, you  
15 could do this. And I think this was something Buckminster  
16 Fuller was talking about. They're talking about doing a  
17 whole city under one. Surely we could put up a small dome  
18 and do hydroponic gardening around the state. And I think  
19 this appropriate technology should be developed in the  
20 agricultural field.

21 MS. BENNETT: I think that that is happening already.  
22 In Fairbanks, as a prime example, of the uses of the waste  
23 heat with pipes under the ground and things like that, that  
24 that's really going forward already.

25 THE MODERATOR: That's been almost Alaska when the

1 commercial company started in Fairbanks when --

2 MS. BENNETT: So is hydropower and everything. I'm  
3 talking about more interest and going forward. I'm not  
4 saying it's existing.

5 MR. ACKERMAN: This is all a private and individual  
6 basis? You know, but I think the State, you know, is --

7 MS. BENNETT: But it's being funded? -- a lot of new  
8 projects that were funded in energy research were in that  
9 area also.

10 MR. ACKERMAN: We should emphasize the appropriate  
11 technology and agricultural field, that we develop it more  
12 and expand it. It's fine. In Fairbanks we have another  
13 need that when you get out of Fairbanks there's not the  
14 capability to do. You know, the State should be looking at  
15 it. We're obligated to do that.

16 THE MODERATOR: In the State's land policies dealing  
17 with getting State lands in the hands of the residents of  
18 the State -- it's very, very controversial. Their policy  
19 leaves an awful lot to be desired, and I'm convinced that  
20 it's been very detrimental to the development of an economy  
21 from the lands. Particularly in the area of agriculture.

22 I think that we need far more liberal land policy  
23 in the disposition of State lands. And when Texas was  
24 settled there were no State lands or federal lands after  
25 the Texas lands were disposed of. It was all in private

1 hands including the King Ranch in South Texas, the largest  
2 jet ranch in the nation. And they came in with property  
3 tax, the State did, and the people made the land productive.  
4 They had to make it productive or the taxes would -- the  
5 tax foreclosures would take the land from the people. And  
6 if the State or the Federal Government needed land, they  
7 had to buy it from individuals. That isn't the case in  
8 Alaska. 2 percent of the lands -- not more than 2 percent  
9 of it is in the private sector.

10 MR. ACHEKMAN: I think we should stress, you know,  
11 land policies, you know, that meet the needs of the people,  
12 and a lot better one than we've had. A lot of people are  
13 aware of the problems we've had with our land policy. I  
14 think I certainly support that. I don't think we have time  
15 to get into the land thing here. Everyone's aware of the  
16 problem of meeting the immediate needs of the people in the  
17 State.

18 THE MODERATOR: The Interior Department addressed that,  
19 and before the settlement act ever surfaced through land  
20 allotments where people made application up to 160 acres.  
21 The native peoples of Alaska. They had fishing sites,  
22 campsites, hunting areas, berry picking areas, the whole  
23 shot, that could be transferred to the individual's  
24 families on application. That was a -- really, a good  
25 approach.

1 MS. ANASOGAK: Mr. Chairman. --

2 THE MODERATOR: Mrs. Anasogak.

3 MS. ANASOGAK: It seems to me when you're talking  
4 about the native lifestyle when our parents and their  
5 parents were living or when they were allowed to live the  
6 way they have for years and years, for centuries, that has  
7 changed because of the rules and regulations by the Fish  
8 and Game and other agencies. We're prevented from living  
9 the lifestyle we traditionally did. And now it seems to me  
10 that we're trying to create something to take that place.  
11 Like we're talking about agriculture, something that the  
12 natives had not done before. They tried to introduce that,  
13 too, to the natives. And I could understand, and I could  
14 see the benefit of it, and yet I could see the other side  
15 of the coin, too.

16 MS. BENNETT: So do you mean you do or you don't favor  
17 the gardening projects and things like that?

18 MS. ANASOGAK: Personally?

19 MS. BENNETT: Yes. Do you feel divided yourself about  
20 that?

21 MS. ANASOGAK: Uh-huh. Because I -- even now I  
22 sometimes wish that I had lived a hundred years ago so that  
23 I wouldn't be -- I wouldn't have been faced with this  
24 problem. And yet, you know, in order to progress you need  
25 to think about these things, and you need to face them.

1 And a lot of the people are not ready for that.

2 Mr. DAHL: Bob, Mr. Alexie --

3 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Alexie.

4 Mr. ALEXIE: Mr. Chairman, I've been wanting to see  
5 this gardening build up again because when the first white  
6 man came to my area they had a lot of planting, turnips and --

7 Mr. DAHL: Potatoes?

8 Mr. ALEXIE: Potatoes, tomatoes, and like my mother  
9 and the other people who are on '60s -- they tell us that  
10 we're too lazy. "You guys -- youngsters are lazy." They  
11 said, "These things are fresh vegetables," what we planted  
12 some years ago back in end of '50s. I think some lady came  
13 in and started a pourage club. So I and the others were  
14 planting turnips and cabbage, lettuce, anything that can  
15 grow.

16 Well, they were growing but only once we had a  
17 flood and everything had been destroyed. You know, we had  
18 the chinook wind. And that was the time I quit, you know.

19 And now I'm beginning to ask myself: "Why did I quit?"  
20 You know, because I would have developed some kind of a  
21 good soil.

22 Right now it will be a little hard for me to  
23 start because I'll start something new. And I don't have  
24 any experience like my mother. If she died, who is going  
25 to direct us? Maybe somebody from Idaho. And every day we

1 used to haul the slime of the fish guts, everything, to the  
2 garden and pour it.

3 THE MODERATOR: Nitrogen.

4 MR. ALLAIE: Uh-huh. And in wintertime they used to  
5 tell us to gather the waste of the dogs and in springtime  
6 pour it, you know, mix it with the soil. And everything  
7 grew so good. Now just a few people are beginning to start,  
8 even down where my wife came from because there was one  
9 white man who used to grow these potatoes and turnips. And  
10 their ladies used then for cooking.

11 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Dahl, we're ready to double back  
12 to your masterpiece.

13 MR. DAHL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know if I've  
14 covered everything, but let's try this: Alpha Group  
15 recommends that the legislature adopt a policy of using  
16 revenue from nonrenewable resource development to improve  
17 the economic viability of renewable resource development  
18 with a view toward: One, providing technical assistance to  
19 industry at State cost to improve planning, quality control  
20 and marketing; two, providing creative funding programs  
21 through loans and grants paid back through employment or  
22 tax forgiveness, equipment provided to locally-owned fish  
23 processors and fishermen by lease or lease purchase.

24 That's obviously poorly punctuated, but the idea in the  
25 second one, I think, is -- and I would move, Mr. Chairman,

1 for its adoption. Second, second, second.

2 THE MODERATOR: It's been moved and seconded.

3 Discussion?

4 MR. DAHL: The idea of the second one -- Let me read  
5 again to refresh your memory. It's still early.

6 "Providing creative funding programs through loans and  
7 grants paid back through employment or tax forgiveness and  
8 equipment provided to locally-owned fish processors and  
9 fishermen by lease or lease purchase."

10 We've already talked in our deliberations about  
11 the State being the owner of equipment and leasing that  
12 equipment to -- we're talking about air taxi operators, to  
13 improve their capital position and provide better service  
14 in the bush. There's no reason why the State could not use  
15 its vast resources to assist local fishermen and fish  
16 processors in doing that very same thing.

17 THE MODERATOR: That's right.

18 MR. DAHL: And it would seem to me to be a good  
19 investment for the state rather than have the -- a cannery,  
20 for example, that needs to shift its entire emphasis, or a  
21 good part of its emphasis -- I'm thinking particularly  
22 about Mountain Village on the Yukon -- from a single-line  
23 line cannery to a flash processing operation of freezing  
24 the fish cold.

25 THE MODERATOR: Sharp freeze.

1 necessary for planning, equipment purchase and marketing  
2 assistance so that the job is not done piecemeal.

3       It's not done as funds are available. It's done in a  
4 comprehensively way, and it could be a very fine little  
5 fish processor, and the State could be paid back its  
6 investment through several ways. I'm thinking not only of  
7 direct payback of cash with interest, the traditional  
8 loan pay back approach, but the State has an income tax.  
9 And without getting into whether it ought to continue that  
10 income tax -- that's another issue that's too big for us at  
11 this point. But there would be no reason why the State  
12 couldn't say "for every dollar you pay to an employee we  
13 will forgive you a proportionate amount of -- on your lease  
14 directly or on the -- well, for every dollar you pay in  
15 taxes we will forgive you a proportionate amount on your --  
16 on your lease so that " -- I don't have any --

17                   (Discussion off the record)

18       MR. DAHL: We've talked about that with student loans  
19 where you give a student money and pays that back by coming  
20 back to the state and working. Why can't that same  
21 principal be used for capital development?

22       MR. FISHER: You mean getting a vested interest in the  
23 establishment that's initially financed by the State by  
24 those persons who are working in it gradually getting a  
25 piece of the equity ending up owning the cannery?