



4000 Old Seward Highway, Suite 100
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Phone: (907) 271-4410
Fax: (907) 271-4470

MEMO

TO: Commission Members/Task Force Public Members
FROM: Mike Irwin, Executive Director *Mike*
DATE: November 24, 1992
RE: Enclosed Nome Hearing Transcript and Addendums

Enclosed please find the full verbatim transcripts and deposition exhibits from the Nome regional hearing. Since the Commission meeting in late September, we have been attempting to figure out the best way of meeting the expressed desires of some Commission members to have more and complete documentation of information flowing from the Commission's various forums without inundating those whose informational needs are not as great. Though I still feel that providing full transcripts of all hearings to each Commission member may be less than totally useful with respect to the time and handling involved, there seemed to be enough interest in the full transcripts to warrant supplying full sets to all members.

In order to help make the transcripts most useful from an informational aspect, we have come up with an indexing system that we hope will prove applicable to all of the formal records of the Commission. At the back of the transcripts and addendums you will find two separate indexes. The first is an *alphabetical index* which includes names of individuals and organizations in addition to general listings. The second is a *subject matter index* and reflects our best attempt to come up with a general, "boiler-plate" index that can be applied to other hearing records, meeting minutes, and the "open public record" which consists mainly of input that we receive by mail.

Our plan is to send one hearing transcript per week (so as not to swamp you with the entire up-to-date record all at once) until all hearing records to date have been sent. Then, as each future hearing transcript becomes available we will, as a matter of course, send indexed transcripts for your files. **One technical note:** the various "deposition exhibits" (i.e. prepared written testimony) has to be manually entered into our data base by staff, so in the future there will still be a little bit of lag time between when we get verbatim transcripts from the court recorders and when the entire indexed data base for that particular hearing is ready for distribution.

Happy reading!

TESTIMONY

SUBMITTED

TO

THE ALASKA NATIVES COMMISSION

IN CONNECTION WITH A HEARING

AT

NOME, ALASKA

SEPTEMBER 21, 1992

ALASKA NATIVES COMMISSION

JOINT FEDERAL-STATE COMMISSION

ON

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS AFFECTING ALASKA NATIVES

4000 Old Seward Highway, Suite 100

Anchorage, Alaska 99503

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ALASKA NATIVES COMMISSION

HEARING

NOME, ALASKA

SEPTEMBER 21, 1992

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: FATHER NORMAN H.V. ELLIOTT

SAM TOWARAK

OTHERS COMMISSIONERS MIKE IRWIN
AND STAFF PRESENT:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(On record at 9:23 a.m.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: It's 9:23. We're at Nome for the Alaska Natives Commission hearing. I'd like to welcome everyone here. In way of introductions, first is the Commissioner members. My name is Sam Towarak. I'm from Unalakleet. I serve on the Commission. And Father Norman Elliott in here from Anchorage, retired or.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Retired.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Retired Episcopalian priest. And in the back is Michael Irwin. He's our Executive Director and will be assisting us today. And handling the recording will be Janice Welch from Kron & Associates. Thank you, Janice, for coming here.

REPORTER: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: The co-chairs, Mary Jane Fate and Perry Eaton, couldn't be here. Normally, one or both of them are here. Mary Jane is -- just got done handling a crisis in Fairbanks, where they lost power and electricity to their home, and she's taking care of some elderly people, and she couldn't leave them without being there, so sh -- and Perry also was scheduled to be here; but, as you know, Alaska Commercial Company has been sold, and he's right in the middle of that and working on

trying to get those details closed out, too. And so between the two Commission members and myself, we -- I mean, and Mr. Irwin, we'll be taking testimony today and be forwarding it to the other Commission members, as well as staff.

The testimony we hear today gets distributed to all the Commission members, as well as anyone that wants to listen to the testimony in Anchorage. We've already had hearings in Fairbanks and hearings in Bethel. We have others scheduled, one of them in Southeast here shortly. Because of the time span of the na -- Commission, we don't have -- we are not planning on attending too many of the sites for hearings. We have a total of about ten? Ten hearings scheduled in the state, one of which will be at the AFN Convention in October.

This is the regional hearing for the Bering Straits area. We'd like to welcome you. First, to testify -- I guess I'll -- the format for testifying would be to give your name, affiliation, and an address.

REPORTER: Oh, I don't really need an address.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

REPORTER: But if you could spell your name, --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

REPORTER: -- that would be real helpful for the transcriber.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

REPORTER: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. Name and affiliation will do, and then we'll go ahead. The first to testify is Ms. Nancy Mendenhall. Nancy?

(TESTIMONY OF NANCY MENDENHALL ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT #1)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Nancy, and I want to say right now that the Commission -- at the Commission level, federal involvement is a must; and we agree with you. What we've been trying to do is figure out ways in which we can meld in with the federal moneys; and we've already had talks with the BIA director. I know you didn't mention any scholarships; you mentioned financial resources, but that's another area.

The concept of a 13th grade, where if the child -- or the student is competent enough to attend a college, we'd pay for that year in college; and I think that's something that is a good start for providing incentives for students to excel in high school.

Regional centers, which may be the community college can be at that level, where we would provide for common services that are needed: psychological counseling or career counseling guidance. Those types of

things are needed to be rethought at that level. Thank you, Nancy. That --

MS. MENDENHALL: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- the testimony from post-secondary is few and far between, and we appreciate your time.

Oh, excuse me, Nancy, could we get a copy?

REPORTER: We have a copy.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Oh, we do. Okay, thank you. If you'd -- if you have written testimony, we'd appreciate leaving it with Janice. Thank you, Nancy, for doing that.

Next to testify will be Mr. Joe Kokochuruk.

MR. KOKOCHURUK: I am happy to be before the Commissioners that I find are familiar with our problems in our area. What a joy to be before you folks, and ones that come to testify, and I'm glad that the governments decide to get a fresh idea, according to the statement I read in the paper. I'm glad you ought -- you're looking for the -- what doesn't work in our problems up here, and I thank you that you know the problems in our area.

According to the Natives, Fish and Game Board and so forth were not in agreement with the way we fish up here. It's -- I believe it's -- it would work down

Lower 48 -- one time they used to say, and now it's 49, I think.

Up here, it's very uncertain when the weather is problem, when the opening time to subsist, or so forth. And many people lose out when there's opening for subsisting in ocean. They used to go by the weather -- according to the weather, and then they used to hunt or fish according to how much they need for the winter. That we can't follow no more, because we have regulations that are imposed upon us. And then also we have weather and also that tide (indiscernible) is a problem.

Then solutions to that problem you're looking for, I believe if you would recognize our beliefs that were passed down from way back, that is, never abuse no fish or no game that we subsist. That is, today I always notice when there's some fish laying on top of the ground or so forth, which the -- our young people throw aside, or the ones that happen to die possibly by sports fishermen that just like to play with our fish. That's a no, no, according to our beliefs. We can't play with no game. That should be changed. What they catch, they should bring home, or give to the elders or to people in need. That should -- you folks should make a rule on that. I believe that's why the fish are getting less and less, because we're abusing them.

Then I've been asked to speak on the -- regarding our problems here in this city. We have young people problem, and now I understand that they'd like to do without the receiving center for young people here in our city. As you know, this area has no roads accessible to -- like in the states. We all use airplane. The villages are not connected up, and so it's quite a problem when there's a problem child, or young man -- one of -- some of our young people get into trouble. Therefore, if this should close, it will play havoc on the -- our people up here if they should close that down. That's the only secure place where young people can be received. That much I'd like to talk on that one.

Then many of you know the airports in Lower 48, clear to Fairbanks and Anchorage, it's always nice. When you land there, you go right into the toilets. Even though you fly only one hour sometimes, I always notice many, many passengers always go right to the toilets. Not so with our little villages. Up here some villages have no willows, no trees. When you land, sometimes when the pilot say he got to wait for somebody from the tower to come or some freight that has to be put on, here possibly you have eaten something that you never eat in the village, and you're going to go; and I went through a lot of times:

"Where can I go? There's no willows. There's no place to go."

I wish when they make airports, anyone who contracts to build an airport should think:

"Where can we put a man and woman where they can ease themselves?"

It's a problem. Like in White Mountain. I often land there. Our -- it's right -- I'm right in the hill, and it's a problem. And then when we go berry picking in the highway. It's good when we go toward a lot of the willows; but evidently this area doesn't have too many willows where we can go ease ourselves. So when I drive, I always make sure the elders have a chance to ease themselves. I take it just -- I take some little reason to stop and -- I think to check something or look around. Lo and behold, elders would go into the willows. I know I -- it worked. So we don't have nothing down (indiscernible) area. You can see long ways where we go berry picking or where we go fishing. Right in Bonanza would be a proper place if road builders would make a place where you can ease yourself. It would be good for our tourists. I wonder what our tourists think. I believe the area must have the mouth, no other outlet (laughing) when they come among us. I think it would be

good for our tourists even, if we set so much -- so many places where somebody can go ease.

Now the problem is the doors. I always notice. They should be made of two-inch planks, because I always notice that up here there are -- they're windy, and they generally swing back and forth when somebody (indiscernible) decide to get out fast and go somewhere. I would suggest to put heavy doors and strong hinges on those places, so that they wouldn't be like just a thin plywood, where they swing back and forth and break up in no time.

So those are the three concerns I have. There's a lot of them, of course; but I like to have those presented before you. I hope you can -- the state and the federal government would do something about that: make our airports like airports in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Let's make it so that a tourist also would enjoy those places. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thanks, Job.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Job, sir, just for the record, what village are you from or place?

MR. KOKOCHURUK: I'm from White Mountain, but residing in Nome at this time.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Thank you, sir.

MR. KOKOCHURUK: Any questions?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I remember Job when I was a little boy, 'cause my dad, Clarence, used to deal with you a little bit way back then. So you -- he's been a resident of this area for a long time. Job, I like your suggestions on the airports, and it's at an opportune time, because right now a lot of our contracts are being awarded to those airports, and there's no reason why we shouldn't have a little commode.

I was at Search and Rescue up in Kotzebue, and they had one real nice commode there, and that made it lots of difference in how we do things up there, and it really helps.

Regarding the Fish and Game issues with regard to subsistence, that is going to be taken real close look at, and it's already been mentioned at Commission meetings, and the Fish and Game conflict with the subsistence or of the conflict of sub -- the Fish and Game regulations with subsistence is one of the bigger items we hope to tackle in this Commission.

MR. KOKOCHURUK: When I stand before Fish and Game, this is what they are. I believe that worked for thousands of years. When I present them, this is the way we do it long ago. So I wish they would get interested in our culture.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MR. KOKOCHURUK: They've -- governments are worried about our culture -- preserving our culture. That's part of our culture, how we handle our fish, so --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: The perfect example is with a caribou or sheep. When a first sportsman goes and hunts for sheep and caribou, they like to come back with the horns. Us, we like to come back with the meat, and the skin, and leave everything else. So I know what you mean. We'll work on that.

MR. KOKOCHURUK: Make sure those hunters bring back the meat for poor people or elders.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Job, when I left the airport in Anchorage this morning, there were some hunters going out, I think to Seattle, and they had racks and racks of moose. And I wondered what they did with the meat. I'd liked to have --

MR. KOKOCHURUK: You should impose that real strongly to the tourists or hunters. That's -- that will deplete our game if we just play with the animal. That should be a rule. That's our culture. That -- from way back. And people don't know what's depleting our area. I think that's where our problem is.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Job.

MR. KOKOCHURUK: Okay.

REPORTER: Job, may I have your notes? Is that possible?

MR. KOKOCHURUK: I don't have notes.

REPORTER: Oh, okay, that's fine. (Laughter.)
Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Job. Next to testify will be Loretta Bullard.

(TESTIMONY OF LORETTA BULLARD ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT #2)
(Tape changed to Tape #2 during testimony.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Loretta. I was intrigued by the makeup of the federal subsistence part. If you would believe it, too, when the -- when this Commission was proposed, it was proposed to be made up of federal agencies put together to collaborate, to figure out how to go about solving problems. And they were about 40 percent close to being the members of the Commission.

And we're looking at the federal agencies with regard to the empowerment thing, a very protective group of people. It'll be interesting to see how the empowerment idea is approached by this Commission. I know that it's on -- another task force is working on it. We have a task force called -- the governing task force?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: It's Paul Boyko, --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Governance, governance, the governance task force.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Paul Boyko, myself, and Frank Pagano.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: And one of the things that they're really committed to is the responsibility and the empowerment at the grassroots level, even lower than state level, and even lower than some people are comfortable with; but I think the commitment is there. Thank you.

MS. BULLARD: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Could I ask a question, Loretta, please?

MS. BULLARD: Sure.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: You mentioned about tribes, and so on, and I know there's a difficulty even in the Alaska Native Lands Claims Settlement Act, it doesn't distinguish. It just says tribes, villages, communities, and so on. You see? How would you define for Alaska, because if we are different from the Lower 48, where they have reservations and so on, and we don't -- except Metlakatla -- how would you define a tribe? Would it co -- be -- constitute a village? Or a community who speak the same language? For example, the Gwich'in people of Fort Yukon, Chalkyitsik, Arctic

Village all speak the same language, but Minto doesn't -- a different dialect. The Hahn (ph.) Indians of Eagle on the Yukon speak an entirely different dialect. So would the Gwich'in constitute a tribe per se, made up of several villages, and the Hahn (ph.) one village, because that's all there is? I mean, I'm just asking your -- what your thoughts are concerning the definition of a tribe for Alaska.

MS. BULLARD: I can't speak to what the Gwich'in definition should be. I think that's something they need to, you know, settle for themselves. I think, here in the Bering Straits Region, we have 17 federally-recognized tribes whose constitutions, either IRA or Traditional Tribal Councils, have been recognized by the federal government; and then we have three entities which are not federally recognized.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Oh, I see.

MS. BULLARD: But I think that tribes are a political unit, you know, and it's those individuals that -- generally, they're within a community; but it's a political relationship between themselves, as a distinct group of people, and the federal and state governments.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I see. All right. I thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you. Is Matthew Iya here? Matthew Iya? No? Robbie Fagerstrom? (Pause.) Stanton isn't here, huh? Josie Weyionanna? (Pause.) Reginald Okitkon?

MR. OKITKON: Yeah, I'm here.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. You would be next.

MR. OKITKON: I'm not here to testify. I'm just here as (indiscernible - away from microphone) --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, thank you, Reginald.

MR. OKITKON: -- what's going on here.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Gary Longley?

MR. OKITKON: (Indiscernible - away from microphone).

MR. LONGLEY: Thank you, Sam. I had planned on making an oral presentation; however, I've got a bad cold and a sore throat. But I did bring down six or seven copies of written testimony, and also I've got some backup material with it.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MR. LONGLEY: So I'd like to apologize for not being able to talk very long. I don't think I could handle it. But at least I'll leave the stuff here with you.

(TESTIMONY OF GARY LONGLEY ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT #3)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I just got off the sick bed. In fact, I'm planning on going back to the sick bed when I go home (laughing), so thank you, Gary.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Albert Ningeulook?
(Pause.) Dazee? (Pause.) Let's see. Bertha Adsuna?
(Pause.) Jacob Ahwinona? (Pause.) Frieda Larsen?
(Pause.) We'll get there. Hannah Miller? (Pause.)
(Laughing.)

MS. MILLER: (Indiscernible - away from microphone.) (Laughing.) They were all here this morning, but --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Oh.

MS. MILLER: -- had to leave.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MS. MILLER: I'm Hannah Miller, and I was born in Golovin, raised between Golovin and White Mountain, (indiscernible), I believe. And I have always had a subsistence way of life ever since I was a child. Therefore, my -- I was wondering if there was some way that this Commission would -- could allow at least the senior citizens of Alaska their subsistence way of life, without pressuring with -- too much with all these regulations?

(Pause.)

I believe we know the problems up here about subsistence; but I'd like to -- I want to make an -- one more plea for us, because when we are trying to make our own living, and you're on a set income, and the source is right here, all it needs for us to do is try and gather up as much of our food as possible; and it's right here in our state, in our villages. But we are -- every time we try to help ourselves with our own food, someone comes along and says:

"You can't do that today."

And then if you do get some, they'll say:

"You can't get that many."

And here we have a family to feed and not too much money; and we are restricted to -- I believe we are forced into poverty this way. We can no longer help ourselves when we can and when we need to. Is there some way that someone can do something about this?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: The subsistence question is one of our higher priorities. What I was wanting for them would be maybe your definition of either senior citizens or elders, --

MS. MILLER: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- knowing full well that we're going to probably bump into that definition and have to define that. Then, how -- if elders can't

get their food and it's dependent on other people, how would we go about doing that? Maybe some solutions on defining the word senior citizen or elder, and also, maybe, how do we take care of those people that are at home and can't provide for themselves?

MS. MILLER: This is where the limits hurt, because I myself, when I'm fishing, I not only fish for me and my family, I share with my neighbors that cannot go out. And this past year, they have put on our little permits that we can fish for an elder out --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. Okay, so you --

MS. MILLER: -- get their permits. But --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- you would -- it would -- you could name the elder on the permit, huh? On a permit.

MS. MILLER: I don't know just how they were going to work that, but it did say that on the permit.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, but that would be a solution to some of the problem. Now, h --

MS. MILLER: That would be one solution, if they would allow us to fish.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MS. MILLER: But they don't allow us to fish in our rivers now.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. How 'bout the definition of senior citizen?

MS. MILLER: That would be just like you define every other way, you know.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, using the --

MS. MILLER: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- what do you call it? Longevity definition?

MS. MILLER: Probably.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: It would be -- would define the senior citizen. Those that receive longevity are senior citizens.

MS. MILLER: They are. They have to be.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. Thank you, Hannah.

MS. MILLER: And the other was the problem of our children right now, and this would go for subsistence, too. We should -- maybe we should go back to the natural way of closing fishing and stuff. When we fish, we don't fish in bad weather, and sometimes that's the only time the permits are open. If we did go back to our own way of life -- subsistence way of life -- we would strictly go by weather; and we would not over-harvest.

And they say today fish are dwindling down because of more people -- of more influx of people here, and which they fail to note is when I was growing up, we had a lot of dogs and a lot more fish to catch. And I don't think having more people here has any affect on them, because we were catching a lot more fish then than we are now.

And the times they give us to fish sometimes are too late. Last two summers in our rivers, we couldn't fish, because they said there were not enough fish; but there was a lot of pinks. And we were still restricted on pinks in other rivers.

And the schools, I was really hit hard when they took school -- prayers out of schools. We need to get back in tune with God, I think, for all our problems, because federal government, state government have done what they thought would work, and those had never worked. I think we need to go back to the church. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Hannah. I think that area, probably more than other areas, has really come close to the word subsistence and how it affects our region. So thanks for that testimony on subsistence.

I notice Robert Fagerstrom, you're here, so you're next on the list. I --

MR. FAGERSTROM: Oh, that's --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- have a list I'm going down.

MR. FAGERSTROM: -- I'd like to apologize, but I didn't have a chance to come down earlier; but what I want to do is find out when we have the rest of our elders, and I could go pick them up so we could --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MR. FAGERSTROM: -- that's what I thought I'd do this morning.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, sure.

MR. FAGERSTROM: I'd like to apologize.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: We can pick them up. We're ready for them pretty much, so -- in fact, Hannah was on the bottom of the list that I went through, so. .

MR. FAGERSTROM: Well, if you'd forgive me, I'd like to go get them.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Sure.

MR. FAGERSTROM: That way we could --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Sure.

MR. FAGERSTROM: -- get them out of the way early.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, sure, sure.

MR. FAGERSTROM: You could have other people that might be here already.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. Margaret Seeganna? Is she here?

(Pause.)

MR. FAGERSTROM: That's one of the people --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. Okay (laughing). Thomas Johnson? (Pause.) I don't know why I read Thomas Johnson. Should have been Tommy Johnson, huh? (Laughing.)

MR. JOHNSON: Well, that's the way I sign my check --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Oh (laughing).

MR. JOHNSON: -- and that's the only reason. Thanks a lot for coming, and I appreciate us to go ahead and say a few kind words. But the thing that Hannah just talked about is really true. Now, if you go ahead and you take a look at the Bristol Bay, the Kuskokwim, the Yukon, and Bering Straits. You look at Bering Straits now, the amount of fish that are coming up here now has dwindled way down. I believe that Hansen (ph.) and the other person out of Dillingham have tried hard to control the fish that would come into their own spawning grounds.

Let's take a look at False Pass, where you have a great many of seiners that come up and pick the fish

before they can even get into the spawning grounds. They have approximately 67 miles of area that they can go ahead and fish. I believe, to go ahead and close an area roughly about 30 miles, where False Pass is located now, that would give our subsistence fishermen up here the right to have the fish come back into their own spawning grounds.

Now, in False Pass area, there is no spawning grounds that the fish go into, so technically those fishermen that are fishing down there are stealing our fish to come back to spawn. In time, they deplete the fishing industry. They deplete all the spawning fish that are coming into an area; and then, in ten years time, they do the same thing as the crab system that they're applying now.

I have made application to be on the Fish and Game Board, so you could put some of this into it. I have fished in Bristol Bay since 1944. That's approximately 48 years. I plan on going back down there this year. I'm retired; but the thing that I look at is, let's say, sometimes the state and federal government have a deaf ear to those people that want to subsistence fish; and that's the problem that we have here now. They made the decision last year to bring the quota up, and then they brought it back down. That's not the problem.

The problem is to close an area there, approximately 30 miles, they still have -- would have roughly 37 miles.

Let's take Igiugig, where most of the fishermen came out. Eleven million fish going up there this year. They harvested approximately that amount. A million and a half went up the river to spawn. Last year, they went ahead and put two and a half million up there. That's the reason why they have such a amount of fish going out there. Anybody could figure that out.

And Naknek has 12 miles. Igiugig has approximately six miles that all those fishermen can go ahead and go into. But those people out there are stretched on the Yukon, the Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay.

The chum salmon. There's hardly any chums coming back in that area either. The reason why we like the chum, because they're not a fat fish, and the people like to go ahead and fish them up the river. And that's one of the problems. Now, I also came up, as a senior -- I'm 67 years young, and I'd like to go ahead and give you some of the programs that are involved up here. But we, as seniors, like to go ahead and direct some of the problems that we have within our area, and I'll give you a copy of the Nome Community Center. As a senior I've looked at this program, and I figured out why we don't have more input on it. The board of directors

really are -- or who are they? Then the executive director, where does he get his inf -- marching orders? I believe the Nome Community Center may -- I said may be involved through the Methodist Church.

The senior -- let's look at the first one. The senior -- X-Y Senior Program. We have an advisory board. Then the senior program director is one of us.

Now look at the Nome Adult Day Care. They don't have an advisory board. But we like to have somebody sitting there as an advisory board.

Teen Center program. Should there be an advisory board there?

Youth Center. Should there be an advisory board?

Community Partnership. Everybody in town wonders where you got that two and a half million dollars to run it for three years or four years, or -- we don't know. There's no -- the steering committee on one of the letters is there is only one man that's running. The steering committee doesn't have a chairman, where we would go ahead and make our complaints to.

I believe that the seniors should have the chance to go ahead and make a complaint to the chairman -- not the executive director, but the chairman

of the board, or the chairman of the steering committee.

These are the things that I dislike about some of these programs. We should be all involved. If the Eskimo community had the procedure of running this, they wouldn't have to answer to no one; but we have a board up there. Sure we made mistakes. All of us do, but there was other things that involved in this process for the seniors that we should -- the seniors should run the program themselves.

We have the Community Center board, and I've seen the Community Center board members go to the senior building and have their meetings. The senior building itself, the Community Center's moved into it; and pretty soon the seniors won't have a place to move in, for the simple reason the Community Center looks like it's going to take the whole building over.

Now, maybe I talked too long on that. I was also a member of the Operating Engineers, and I was employed from them for approximately 11 years. I'm retired, and I have a good retirement salary. Now, the Department of Labor, Labor Standards and Safety Division. There is some questions that I have in reference to those people that work for the contractors. Let's presume that the subcontractor had the job, and his salary is supposed

to be \$16.68 an hour for being a truck driver. That's from 10 yards to 20 yards. Now in the contract itself to the prime contractor states that there would be a pension plan and a health and welfare plan put into it. Where does this money go to? Does the contractor keep it, or do they go ahead and give it to the employer, which is roughly about \$7 an hour, and you take 15 -- let's say at 15 hours, that would be about a hundred dollars. Let's say if he worked 15 hours a day and you have, let's say, 10 men working, that's a thousand dollars, but where does that money go to? Does that money stay with the contractor, or does he give it up to the employee?

You know the State law to have a teacher teaching, and I think you know that quite well, at the end of his term to retire, he received a State retirement. Within the state, all up and down the coast, you look at the contractor. Why are these -- some of these contractors getting so big? Maybe they're using that retirement moneys for themselves. It should be on the contract. If he's a subcontractor, he should be putting it somewhere. That's the big problem, let's say under the Davis-Bacon Act, which is federal and state; and who's stealing that money? Where is it going? And where do you put a trace on it for the employee that is working here, or in Unalakleet if he's building a school?

That's the big problem. Let's turn it back to that person that earned the money, because he only receives that money at a short time of the year, which would be about three months at the most.

And the thing that I look at the education system we have within the state of Alaska, and I think you know it very well, that there's too many standards from the village to Nome, from Nome to Anchorage. Why can't we have one standard? If the kid can't go ahead and graduate from the second grade, then that standard is looked on, too. I believe, Sam, where you were educated was, let's say, a private place. But the thing that I look at is there was a decision being made, let's say, in Anchorage. And that person went ahead -- that judge made the decision in reference to a person being the father or the mother would take care of this little child. The decision's been made that the education system we have here in Nome wasn't as good as the one in Anchorage, so I believe the father taking that children so she would have a better education in Anchorage. And I believe very strongly that we should look toward the education system.

I've been in St. Mary's. You have some very good people down there that's been educated through the Catholic -- and the Catholic Church, but still again, we

must remember our education's our lifeline to a better system.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: A lot of the NANA people through the Copper Center, too.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. And maybe I've ran off the mouth a little; but still again, these are the complaints you have to take back to the federal and state government.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I've got a couple of questions for you. One is on the False Pass. They did reduce their area voluntarily. They re -- quit fishing in a certain area. I was wondering if you'd heard of that. They did that on their own. They complained about it, but they reduced it. And I was wondering about the reduction of the Japanese, the Korean, and the Russian trawlers in what they call the doughnut area, with regard to the type of driftnets that they use. I wonder if those areas have impacted Nome yet?

MR. JOHNSON: I believe anything impacts our area for the simple reason is where do the fish come from?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right, okay.

MR. JOHNSON: We must remember that the fish come from someplace; but the thing that you must remember, we'd like to keep the spawning grounds open at

all times. Just like Hannah Miller said, when the Fish and Game says we can fish from 6 o'clock in the evening 'till 48 hours later, the good Lord, most of the time he goes ahead and he makes a big storm, so we can't even put the net out.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MR. JOHNSON: And Fish and Game don't look at the good Lord, for the simple reason they got their own standards they want to go by; and maybe all summer long we only fish when we're supposed to.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MR. JOHNSON: I think that Fish and Game should control the time that the people want to fish, not the time that they want to do it.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: There's where we need an advisory board sitting right there of elders that could work with that group and says: "Okay, let's go," so that is a good suggestion.

On the Department of Labor, Standards and Safety Division, did -- do you know where your pension went to, or is it any different than what is happening now, or do you think maybe they're just not following up on it?

MR. JOHNSON: Well, the contractor has the right to put that money into a pension fund, but --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Oh, oh, his --

MR. JOHNSON: -- where does his --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- own private pension fund?

MR. JOHNSON: His own private pension fund, which would go to an insurance company.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: So what you're --

MR. JOHNSON: My pension fund goes into the Operating Engineers.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MR. JOHNSON: And we have a billion dollars --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MR. JOHNSON: -- into the pension fund, and it's controlled by four of the industry and four from the union, so --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MR. JOHNSON: -- we can't go south with the money.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MR. JOHNSON: We can't --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: So you're asking maybe the State set up something like the Teacher's Retirement System, to be put into an Operating Engineers or union-type?

MR. JOHNSON: I believe that the best thing that they can go ahead and do is when the contract is let --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Uh-huh (affirmative).
A State contract?

MR. JOHNSON: Like the airport job out here. It specifies that amount of money is going to go into a pension fund, and it should remain within the State, so we have control of it.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, okay. Thank you, Tommy.

MR. JOHNSON: I'm sorry I came and ran off at the mouth, but this is the time we're supposed to do it.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: (Laughing.) That's right.

MR. JOHNSON: Thanks.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Tommy.

MR. JOHNSON: And I wish you would go ahead and look at that item where I gave you the copy, so you could read it and pass it on to your other fellow Commissioners. Thanks.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Yep. Thanks, Tommy.
Francis Johnson?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I just make a quick comment?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Sure.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I mean, you said earlier that you thought that voluntary --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- reduction in fish, and I looked at that as being a reduction because of the lawsuit by --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible - away from microphone).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

(Tape changed to Tape #3.)

MS. JOHNSON: Why the BLM did not know someone built house on my ground at Council?

Second one, why house turned cold when winter come? NEC promised to fix it. Always run out of money.

Why nobody build houses here like at villages? I have some children all have no houses here. My houses where I go camping, they're collapsing. I can't stay with them. And my new house what no Eskimo built, I can't stay. Wintertime come, I got to go to Anchorage, where they have warmer houses. And they're supposed to fix it, but always run out of money.

And while two grounds I have at camp, we go camping, me and my boys. I have two boys here now and

one grown. All of them don't even have house. One have house all right, but it's too cold to live in, the oldest boy, Wally Johnson. My name is Francis Johnson. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Sam, are these government-built houses she's talking about?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: She's talking about -- just for the record, on that housing, she's talking about public housing. She also mentioned that some of these housing that they provide are poor-quality housing, and that the children are not getting a chance to get houses -- housing like they are in the villages. Also she mentioned the BLM not able to monitor a property other people are building on her property.

I'll go back on the list and see if there's anybody else that's showed up here. Josie Weyionanna? (Pause.) Albert Ningeulook? (Pause.) Dazee? (Pause.) Bertha Adsuna? Okay. (Pause.) Go ahead.

MS. ADSUNA: I don't even know where to start. (Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Well, you could mention your name and. . .

MS. ADSUNA: Bertha Adsuna, Nome. Lived here for, oh, for 50 years. I know I'm always wondering why we can't do any fishing like other people, because that's

what we lived on all our lives. And then when you can't get so many, you can't -- and the people that get it want to sell it for so much, you can't afford to buy. It makes it real hard for us to live on White people food all the time.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: You can't even live on it. (Laughing). Yeah. (Laughing).

MS. ADSUNA: I know. (Laughing). Being as old as I am, you can't live on that and store-bought food, but we have to, because we haven't been able to do any hunting, because of Fish and Game stops you from hunting; - and you can only get so many things.

Just like when you have to set a net, the only time we used to do fishing when my parents were alive, as soon as the fish start running, we start catching them while the weather's nice. And then we go on to the river. When the fish go to the rivers, we get them from the rivers, too. And it doesn't make any different.

That was when it was Territory, before it become a state. I think that's where all the trouble come in when Alaska become a state. There's so many rules and regulations that we didn't live by to begin with, and a lot -- to this day, I thank my father's not alive to fight against what he believed, 'cause he would have been in a lot of trouble if he was alive today and

wanted to hunt the same way he used to when he was young, and get all the food he can gather for the winter.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, I think that Nome is at the forefront of how the direction of subsistence is going, and from what I can gather on the testimony, a lot of people are not too happy about the direction in -- that it's going. And it's real good to hear from the elders' perspective, too, that it is, indeed, need -- a food that is needed, and you can't deal with limits and weather, so. . .

MS. ADSUNA: Yeah, and the way they open them now is -- was in August sometime, and it's no time to dry them anymore, because of rainy season. And besides the fish gets too old by that time they go up the river.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you. Jacob Ahwinona? (Pause.)

MR. AHWINONA: I'm Jacob Ahwinona here in Nome. I retired from the workforce.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: That's right. Last year, huh?

MR. AHWINONA: And I know ru -- educational department. That's my first priority, the education. You know, I didn't have the privilege of going to high school like you did. The only schools I went to was up to 8th grade, see, and then I graduated from there. And

then we lived a subsistence style of living, and the educ -- when I went to school, my parents took me away from school before the school is out in the spring, whole month before the school is out, sometimes two months. And I missed out on that. But I kept up my grades, and I wanted to go to school and get an education, but subsistence style of living at that time we lived, so had to go with my parents.

But now, education went a long ways since I went to school; and -- which is good. I'm all for education. But one thing, though, I'm against is they leave God out of the picture. That's one thing they should do is when I went to school, first thing in the morning what the teacher did was grab the Bible, and then he read couple of verses and then said a prayer. You know, he taught me before he even went to his lessons for the day on respect. He taught me respect. Now respect is out of education everywhere. Children got not respect for elders. Anywhere you look it's like that. Now it's a shame. It hurts. You see that all over. Not only here, but all over. Look at Anchorage. Look at the school board, fighting over it -- fighting over everything there. They're not going to the kid -- they're fighting among themselves. That's crazy. They

should be teaching the kids now and not fighting over themselves. That's where the problem is.

But now, I'm not only interested in education, but all the topics of this task force here. You know, we generally get a task force here once in a while, but not all the time; but it's -- when we do get a task force here, we give a few testimonies, and then they go. Do we hear from them? No. They don't feedback. That's one thing I'm not -- I don't like either. You never get a feedback from nobody, either from the government or from the state, see?

I haven't gotten a written testimony, but I just got it up here just a few topics that I want to get out, 'cause there's somebody else waiting on the line here, so. . .

In subsistence, I've lived a subsistence style of living since I was knee high, and I was taught. Now, subsistence life is not like it used to be. When I went fishing, there was fish everywhere. You could walk on top of the fish. Now when I go to my summer camp, I see fish here and there. They're gone. Why? 'Cause the commercial fisherman got it down there before it gets up here. And the Fish and Game got so many regulations on us, we can't even go out and fish when we want to. They put dates, the time, and that's -- they don't agree with

us up here. They don't know how we live up here, see? The Fish and Game -- you can talk to Fish and Game 'till you're blue in the face. They never do anything. Only place we can get results is down in Juneau. Our legislators or the Governor. They're the ones you want to get after. You talk to Fish and Game, you might as well talk to a telephone pole out there. That's the results you get for complaining, see? That's right.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I wrote it down. Talking to Fish and Game is like talking to a telephone pole.

MR. AHWINONA: You're darn right. It's like talking to a telephone pole out there, 'cause even if you complain, he won't do anything anyhow, 'cause he's got higher-ups up there telling him what to do, see? And up here, we got to put up with him. And you know as well as I do what they do up here, see? So, I think they should get someone that lives up here and put on the Fish and Game board or take those guys out and put all the Natives down there, see?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I think a lot of people are realizing that we're having less and less say on the State matters. It's one of those things that because of numbers, because of the one-man, one-vote, their thinking is taking over; but I think it's the tribal authority,

tribal rights, Fish and Game matters fall within that realm. I think that the federal role in that, there has to recognize that as well.

MR. AHWINONA: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: We hear you loud and clear on subsistence.

MR. AHWINONA: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Jacob.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: May I ask a question, please?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Sure.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Excuse me. At the hearing in Fairbanks, it was brought up about no respect for elders and not knowing the Native language, and that this was the fault of the schools. But many of the Natives who testified at the hearing said:

"No, it was not the business of the school, but rather the family."

MR. AHWINONA: Well --

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I'd appreciate your comments, since I do recognize in many villages, and Anchorage is -- you're correct, it's not villages where there is a lot of -- no longer a respect for elders.

MR. AHWINONA: That's right.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: So I'd appreciate your views on that.

MR. AHWINONA: And on that education. When I went to school, we were told not to speak our dialect. In your classroom, you get caught speaking your own dialect among yourselves, we get punished. You go over there and stand in the corner. Now White man got so smart now he want to teach my own dialect. He's going crazy somewhere. Somebody's going cuckoo. That's right. They want to teach me my own dialect now. Look at the kids nowadays in school. They got bilingual program. They never learn anything from there. The only way you're going to get that culture back which we lost is little babies growing up. You talk to them in their own dialect while they're in there, and when they come out, you talk to them with your own dialect. That's the only way you're going to get your culture back. Now it's gone. We lost it. It's already lost. I don't know if we'll ever get it back. I don't think so. Not only our culture, we sold out to the State on Land Claims Act. That's when we lost out. We -- just you wait. Down the line, we'll lose our land, too. I may not be living, but I believe my grandchildren, when they get to that point, say, and nothing we can do about it. We already sold out, see? Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Jacob.

MR. AHWINONA: There's someone waiting --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MR. AHWINONA: -- to speak to you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: His comment about leaving God out of the schools, we certainly didn't leave God out of the Commission, 'cause we've got three ministers on our group, the -- (laughter) -- Dr. Soboleff, Norman Elliott, and then Father Sebesta, who's also a -- so we -- we're pretty much -- we're pretty well taken, and then -- they hear you. They hear you. They'll talk about it when we get the Commission going. I think it's a national thing, too.

Next is Frieda Larsen. Frieda, is she here?
(Pause.) Okay. Margaret Seeganna? (Pause.) Okay.
(Pause.) Go ahead.

MS. SEEGANNA: My name is Margaret Seeganna. I once was a bilingual teacher, and I didn't get anywhere with the kids. I tried, but it didn't work. The dominant culture taking away our dialects, which was the biggest mistake they ever made. Now they are taking away the subsistence lifestyle of our people -- of the Natives. Fish and Game forbid fishing, and what do they give it as supplement? Nothing. Nothing.

The culture of the Native people has been ruined by people who thought they knew better than the Natives. And what do the people get in return? First of all, it's alcoholism. When you deal with an alcoholic, you don't scream at that person no matter how drunk he is. You don't nag him. Nagging is the worst thing you can do to a drunk person. What I did with my children -- I don't drink. What I did with my children when they came home drunk, no matter how abusive they were, they never struck out at anyone, but they lashed out with their talk. I never said anything. Never, never said anything to them until they were sober enough to realize what I had to say. The worst thing you can do with an alcoholic is nag him, scream at him, or else you can talk gently with him. No matter what he says, agree, agree with him: "Okay, it's okay. It'll be okay." But screaming and hollering are the worst things you can do with an alcoholic. That's in our Native way. That's the only way you can get along with that -- with those people -- that kind of people, and I ha -- I've had a house full of them. Now some of them are sober, thought they had to be -- sober up on account of their alcoholism.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Could I ask a question?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Sure. He's going to ask you a question.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: What -- why do you think people become alcoholics, or why do you think they're -- they drink? What -- there are many people that have come up with all kinds of different reasons. I would like to know what you believe is the reason for people getting drunk.

MS. SEEGANNA: What I believe is with our generation, we were told not to speak our dialect within the school. And I had -- that made me revolt. I -- revolted about many things that -- different -- even though I was brought up in a Catholic school, there were many, many things that I revolted against; and when the younger generations got into school and were deprived of their dialect, they revolted. Revolt, confusion, they thought liquor would help them --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I think you gave --

MS. SEEGANNA: -- solve that problem.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: You gave a real good definition of why alcoholism is there, and I think it's a -- it's something that is shared by a lot of people when you say the (indiscernible) of culture took away the dialects; they also took away the subsistence lifestyle. What did they leave them with? More rules and

regulations and nothing to, you know, work towards. And I think if I could extend her argument on maybe why alcoholism will -- would increase is because a subsistence lifestyle is being taken away from Alaska Natives, and it'll just compound the social problems that we have; and I think that's what you're trying to tell us, Margaret.

MS. SEEGANNA: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you. Maybe what we'll do is we'll take about a seven-minute break around -- oh, have we got another?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Frieda was here.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Frieda? Oh, great. Okay. Good. Let's hear from Frieda. Frieda Larsen? (Pause.) Go ahead.

MS. LARSEN: I come to say my piece, 'cause I was so unhappy last few years when we couldn't do no fishing and we had to pay \$7 for a dry fish. I had to pay some dry fish for \$7 apiece. I'm a widow, but I -- as long as I have \$7, I bought some, until I learned the dried fish in Teller are even cheaper than that \$7, so I had to take a trip to Teller to buy some bundle from Teller. And this summer I was just talking to ladies at the senior center over here a while ago, a lot of them -- the few that went fishing this summer made their own

dried fish. They felt so relaxed they say, 'cause knowing that they won't buy that expensive dry fish.

And so I would like to see that subsistence be like before, not to stop us from fishing, 'cause us elder people don't have no strength to go out to the sea to set a great big, long net. I know I couldn't do it. But when they give us this summer a chance to fish in the river, I go on and go fishing and feel good about it. And the ladies that was talking with me in the center while ago said:

"I hope we still have subsistence given to us - every summer, 'cause those rivers won't get empty."

They don't get empty before we become a statehood. We fish every summer. Lots of it. Lot of people don't have no dogs now to feed the dogs, and we just want to get it for -- enough for ourselves. This summer we got enough -- I know I just made -- I just get -- filled my fish rack. That's enough for me. I just watch the river -- all black river go to the river. We get that way. We don't waste the food.

And like Margaret was telling, few days ago I had problem with one of nu -- one of my relatives staying with me, and give me kind of bad time about -- perfectly abusing me about the liquor. I don't drink. I never

play with alcohol all my life, and I have problem with one of my nephew bringing in by hiding some liquor into my house; bringing in some that other funny -- they smoke -- what's the stuff they smoke? I can smell it, and yet he tried to say he didn't. I could smell it. I told him I could smell it. I find two bottles of beer in my house, too. I spilled them, 'cause I don't want that. We don't do that. I know they do that, 'cause I can notice sober man and drinking man, too. I told them:

"The face of the person is bare. We don't have fur on our face. It shows."

So I said:

"I wish you don't do that anymore."

I have him in my house, because he didn't have no home to go to; but I finally got wise, and I court ordered him other day. Now I feel relaxed. And this why we have to -- I wish they would do something about that, you know, because it give us lots of heartache, lots of abuse; and we can raise Cain with them until they're sober. Then I was really scold him the next day for what's he trying to do. So when I finally got it fixed where he can't come into my house unless he made up his mind he's not going to drink anymore, he hides it. Only thing I could help you now, you go to alcoholic center, get yourself dried up, then I might welcome you home

again. Lots of -- it's not only me that's abused by alcohol from their relatives. That's very bad in this Nome, Alaska. A lot of us Natives are having lots of heartaches from our -- my kids -- my three kids -- my two girls never do that, and my boy, he used to do that before -- when he was young kid, but he get kind of bad, but he don't do it all the time. I'm glad he's not doing it anymore, and that relieves me from my worries. Lot of us is worried about those things. About how some part of their family going to come home. And I wish they would do something about that. That's one thing that abuse so many Native people up here -- the oldsters from their kids.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. So it sounds like maybe this abuse of alcohol and then the side effects of it is not being taken care of adequately by state or federal agencies or maybe community, local?

MS. LARSEN: Sometimes it look like that (laughing), you know, yeah.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: And then do you -- can you see some kind of a tribal -- within your own people how we can maybe resolve it?

MS. LARSEN: I just don't have no idea how they would resolve it, 'cause lots of parents --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: It's --

MS. LARSEN: -- trying to help.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- it's -- to me, it sounds like it's a problem not --

MS. LARSEN: Yeah, it's very --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- being solved by society.

MS. LARSEN: Uh-huh (affirmative). I think if they think of something to kind of try and solve that, to even help, lots more parents would be helped.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Yeah, yeah.

MS. LARSEN: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MS. LARSEN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thanks.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Do you have any Spirit Camps, such as Minto has in the Interior, which is for the treatment of those who are suffering from alcohol --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Civunelmic (ph.) -- like Civunelmic (ph.) --

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: -- or trying to combat it.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- or have you heard of Civunelmic (ph.)?

MS. LARSEN: Yes, I think they have them here.
I wish they would have a little bit more, you know.
(Laughing.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Yeah, okay. Thanks.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Could we take maybe
about an eight-minute break, and I think we got all of
them (indiscernible).

MR. FAGERSTROM: Okay.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thanks, Robert.

(Off record.)

(On record.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: We're back. It's 11:30
at the Alaska Natives Commission hearing in Nome. Next
to testify will be R -- I better get your name right.
Robert Fagerstrom. I know him as Robbie. (Laughing.)

MR. FAGERSTROM: Well, good morning, and my
name is Robbie Fagerstrom, and I would like to -- first
to thank you for this opportunity to address the Alaska
Natives Commission at this hearing in Nome. I represent
the Citnesok Native Corporation, and we've got 2,200-plus
shareholders, of which 60 percent live in Nome, and 40
percent live elsewhere.

I enjoyed leading up to this, where we had two
working meetings with our elders, and -- at Citnesok;

and, first of all, I -- they were worried about their testimony being in written form; and I said:

"Well, the best thing to do is just speak from your heart."

And to go along with speaking from your heart, I thought maybe one of them would speak in the Eskimo language that would have to be translated, so (laughing) -- and I think they can speak better that way coming from their heart, because I think so often English is a hard language for anybody to master. I went to school for 12 years, and I still have a difficult time with it.

But I think there's three or four major points that I'd like to talk about this morning, and if -- you've heard some of them from our elders that did testify. Well, I think number one is our family values, and that's categorized into many different sub-titles or issues. It's respect for the elders; it's the language; it's our tradition and culture that is best taught by ourselves at home. And for an example, subsistence fishing. That's where you learn how to hold the net; how to chase the fish into the net; and there's a lot of -- it's pretty technical, and it gets us a (indiscernible) for survival.

And I think it's best learned at home, our language and our culture, like Margaret stated that you

can go to school and it can -- have bicultural programs, and I think it's best learned at home, where it's fluent and it's in your own environment; whereas, in school I think so much the Western ways is structured.

With our problems in rural Alaska and Nome here, I think one of the main thing is economics. And I think if we had better coordination by the state and federal governments on projects. And I think this ties in with the alcohol and sex abuse, where what would you expect of somebody who didn't have a job and you were living on AFDC, food stamps? I mean, how would you feel - yourselves? And then, most of all, you'd -- from the Western way, you'd take the easiest thing to get rid of those problems, and that's programs about drug and alcohol abuse.

And maybe what I'm leading up to is I know one year over at White Mountain -- and I could probably be corrected, but I believe that there's three or four different projects going on at the same time. The reason why you have these projects all the same time is everything is budgeted; they gotta use the money, or else they lose it. Maybe what we need to do is take a look at those type of regulations, both state and federal, to where they could spread out the projects in three or four years, and you could keep everybody locally hired; you

could have forced accounting. It's these type of concepts that we need to look at in order to help with the economic development within our region.

I know subsistence is a cash economy, but you still got to have money to buy gas; you got to have money to buy bullets, rifle, and those other things; but I think to help solve these problems that we face, number one is the economic picture has to be satisfied first, before we can carry out anything else.

And to go along with that, about three or four years ago, Citnesok in Nome here and other state and federal agencies and other organizations, both tribal and nonprofit, we were all appointed to a technical committee. And this committee's mission was to expand the 3-to-12-mile gold mining out in the Bering Sea. And I thought that was a good process, where the governments, both state and federal, got into industry; got into profits and nonprofits and tribal governments, and those other social nonprofit-type of organizations to work together to solve mutual problems. And I think this is a way to be more effective, where there's economic development or etcetera, or looking at the issues. And I think Jake Ahwinona had a great point where we're always under study; we're always doing this plan, that plan; but there's no end result; there's no follow

through. And that was one of my comments the other day is you come here to Nome; you go to other cities and villages; you hear this testimony, but whatever comes out of that?

(Pause.)

And really I think, basically, you know, what's expected of the Native people. We've been into the Western culture the last 200 years. We're going through kind of a cultural shock. And I think what Margaret said is, you know, what's best for us might be -- in the eyes of the government, might be what's broadest to this problem, but we're ultimately here and now.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I like your third point down, involving all agencies where economic development is prevalent, setting up a plan and doing something. I was just going to mention, when we deal with economics and providing a job, the Red Dog Mine when it was set up up north, the City of Kotzebue didn't plan for increased income by the workforce, and then the need for land and property, the need for a home. And they found themselves with half of their shareholders, half of the workforce living in Anchorage, because the market didn't provide -- or something like that. I think that when you involve all of the agencies, some of that might not go.

On the issue of force account, I wonder if the State has decreased their acceptance of such a thing and that is acceptable?

MR. FAGERSTROM: I don't know, but I think what we need to be is creative in our vision to work across all these regulations, where you keep -- look at the total picture from the legislature all the way down. There must be a way where we could work these out that would give more opportunities and keep more money in the villages for that economic development then. I guess what ultimately ties into these whole issues is that we as a Native people have to work together. I know there's issues where we feel more comfortable here in Nome about development, because we've been -- part of our growing up has been with the dredges, where we're more workable, or we understand working with development. But I think, in general within rural Alaska, I think there's always been a doubt about how industry can work within the environment and working with the subsistence way of life; and if nothing's going to be done where we're shutting everything down, there won't be any work for anybody; and they look at the existence of Nome where it's a service and a transportation -- and just in thinking if it wasn't Nome, maybe it would have been Golovin or Council; but we were fortunate to still have some gold left in the area,

so -- but I think that's -- we've got to cut across all the indifferences that we as a Native people have to start working together for common goals, instead of us having our own little bureaucracy the way Native politics is run. That's throughout the whole state.

(Tape Changed to Tape #4.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Robbie.

MR. FAGERSTROM: And just in closing, I guess I'd like to stress that, through this process, I hope that there would be follow-up, and we as a Native people just have to start working together to choose some -- comm -- we all have common goals --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MR. FAGERSTROM: -- so. . .

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, I'll work with our Executive Director on follow-up. As soon as I found him, his eye lit up and so he -- we -- I think that's a challenge that the Commission -- Mike is trying to get our Commission so that it's not one of those throw-in-the-dust Commissions. And we're trying to make an impact. We've had quite a challenge, and we've been working on it, trying not to be a Commission that is from the top down, but acts from the grassroots up. I'm hoping that's the Commission that comes out of this whole things.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yes, and what effect, if any, would you say perhaps the Davis-Bacon Act has had on the economics of this area, as far as employment you see?

MR. FAGERSTROM: Well, I think that it can run both ways. You know, usually when you look at a project, you bid it at a certain cost; and if you're forced into paying higher wages, I'm not saying that's good or bad; but I think, in general, this is where there's so many big issues out there. It's just so compounded and complex, how they're inter-tied together; but when you normally look at a business decision, it's based on what you know and what you have to pay; and there's got to be a profit in there for everybody. It's got to have a trickle-down effect. I'm not a union person, but I think the unions are good; and I think it does have -- it -- I mean, it brings in a salary to the employees; but as long as employees are Natives, I'd say that would be good then. But, there again, you've got to have qualified people to work the jobs; and how do you get that when you don't have the experience? So, you know, your hands is forced into getting into an apprenticeship with one of the unions, or going into the military or relocating outside of the region where you're living to get -- gain the experience. So those are all multi- issues and problems that we could probably meet a week about and not

get anything. I'm just trying to point out the highlights and concerns.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thanks, Robbie.

MR. FAGERSTROM: Okay.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Next is fellow educator Eileen Norbert. And I'd hope somebody talks about social issues, and I'm hoping it's you.

MS. NORBERT: (Laughing.) Well, actually, in this presentation, I'm speaking on behalf of Matthew Iya, who's the Director of Kawerak's Natural Resources, and he's also the Director of the Eskimo Walrus Commission. -

First, I'd like to welcome you to Nome and thank you for this opportunity, you know, to testify. And I would just like to strongly emphasize that it seem like, you know, the issue that Jake brought up on follow-through is so important. We spend so much time testifying, you know, about our present conditions; and even a lot of the boards and commissions that we have to be on, for -- just for example, you know, I was sitting on the Fish and Game Advisory Committee for Norton Sound, and the body as a whole had made several recommendations that were contrary to what the Alaska Department of Fish and Game staff were recommending. And, you know, when it comes before the full board, I think that the full board

puts more weight on staff recommendations, rather than, you know, on the advisory recommendations. That's just a small observation that I made.

The areas that I'm going to be addressing here for Matthew is -- he's also the Director of Kawerak's housing program -- will be housing and subsistence.

Last year Kawerak worked on -- finished working on their long-range planning. What we did was -- is to define the present status of different areas, and then what the ideal status would be, and the action, you know, to achieve those goals and objectives. So what I'm going to do is kind of just read through, you know, what the present status is and the recommendation in the area of housing, first of all.

Currently, 47 percent of housing units in the Bering Straits Region are substandard. And this comes from our own housing inventory, of which 43 percent need repairs, and 57 percent need total replacement, as opposed to the national average being 10 percent. We would like to see special appropriations made from Congress to address the housing needs in the region. The average waiting period for new housing for families with young children is 16 years. In addition, 26 percent of total housing units need to be replaced. To build new and replace old housing at a rate of 40 per year is one

of our objectives, so that families with young children, elders, and other eligible residents have acceptable housing which meets their needs. Twenty percent of our total housing units in the region are substandard and in need of extensive repairs. Again, we need funding. Matthew said that, with the funding -- the present funding that he has right now, when he goes to one village, say Koyuk, he doesn't have the necessary funding to return to Koyuk to attend to their housing needs for 18 years. And, you know, that -- when you think about it, it's kind of mind boggling.

Overcrowding. 4.52 persons live in a Native household in this region. Thirty-six percent of single-family homes in the region have two or more families living in that one house.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: What's the percentage?

MS. NORBERT: Thirty-six percent of single-family homes in the region have two or more families living in the home.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MS. NORBERT: We need to address that, so that, you know, necessary and acceptable living space for eligible residents is a reality.

In the area of energy consumption, for BIA, HUD, State, and RuralCAP housing, heating oil and

electric costs in the Bering Straits Regions average 42 to 84 percent higher than Anchorage costs, and I think that might even be higher today than when we first made these initial figures.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Is the 42 out of Nome and the 84 is out of another village?

MS. NORBERT: Yeah, generally. Also, you know, with that -- like the University Extension Services comes out with these co -- living costs in different areas of the state, but I think it -- in one I saw a couple of months ago, it cost like for something -- for heating in Anchorage around \$70, \$75. In Teller, that same amount, you know, was like 400 -- over \$400. That's really a huge, huge gap there.

The ideal status would be to meet State energy-housing standards. All new housing and existing housing be retro-fitted with energy-efficient devices, especially fuel-efficient heaters, for example, Monitor heaters.

We need proven arctic construction designs for new housing, or retrofit energy-efficient devices. We had a goal to meet these by 1995, but given our present funding levels, you know, that's too optimistic.

Sixty-seven percent of the homes in the Bering Straits villages lack sewer and water. We would like to see that there be some concerted and -- effort by state

and federal organizations, you know, say coordinating between Indian Health Service, the State of Alaska, HUD, you know, to address this, so that even by the year 2,000 most -- the majority of the homes in the Bering Straits will have sewer and water.

(Pause.)

I'm not going to read all of them. For innovative housing programs, we feel that this is something that -- this is one way we can address our housing needs that requires funding, but it also, I think, requires a lot of participation by residents themselves. BIA allots a specified amount to build or renovate a house, and I'm -- I think this is true of like HUD or ASHA. Funding is limited, so at the rate new housing is being built and renovations are being done, it would take at least a hundred years to a -- just to address our present needs, just to -- these other statistics that I gave to you. That's how long it would take.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: In the Bering Straits Region?

MS. NORBERT: Right. Just in the Bering Straits Region. I think what needs to happen is there needs to be coordination with other housing agencies to fund housing needs in the region, to seek again special

appropriations. Residents have access and funding for innovatio -- innovative construction and engineering designed, you know, where residents have an input, you know; and they know the environmental conditions; they know, you know, about housing also. And that kind of takes care of the housing issue.

In the area of subsistence, there was quite a few people who testified, but I think I'd like to still make some points. Natives in the Bering Straits Region have to deal with state and federal regulations; they have to deal with international treaties, you know, the Marine -- for instance, the Marine Mammal Protection Act; the Migratory Act, which involves Canada, the United States, Mexico, and the Soviet Union; just the whole process that you think about that we have to be involved in. You know, all the reviewing of proposed regulations, those take a lot of time. It also takes funds, you know, to go to meetings. They have these meetings all over. Not only here in Alaska, they have them in Canada; they have them in different parts of the United States.

The -- and then, as I mentioned before, the regulation system that, you know, that we have to deal with in many parts of our lives. You know, it just comes down to being able to feed your family the food that you want to. You know, but most of -- lots of times we don't

even know if we're breaking the law, you know, even -- for example, this summer here in Nome, they said you can only catch so many trout, so many grayling, you know, and those type of things, and you say, "how many are -- how many were we allowed in this river? How many -- you know, and (laughing) say: "Oh, just -- I'll take your share," or "Here, you can have part of these fish."

But that's kind of wh -- the point in our lives that we are in. We have so many rules and regulations, time periods, you know, and a lot of these rules and regulations are contrary to our customs. We, as Eskimo people, have our own obligations to each other. Our -- you know, who we share with, how much we share, and that type of thing. The regulatory system right now does not take into account, you know, our customs; and that puts a lot of stress on people. It -- some of the groups -- well, I'll just go down this -- this is -- ongoing state and federal regulation of hunting and fishing in Alaska. The governments that come out with these regulations do not recognize the authority of Alaska Native tribes to regulate and protect the subsistence harvests within our own areas as we always have. Arbitrary regulatory restrictions deny Native customary rights to hunt, fish, and trap to fill our needs, in spite of the subsistence priority of ANILCA. By 2,000, we -- what we would like

to see is to have fish and game management regulatory schemes made by ourselves in cooperation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, who else do we deal with?

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: BLM.

MS. NORBERT: BLM, all these different federal and State agencies that we have to deal with. You know, we can -- we're willing, you know, but it's -- I think a stumbling block is the State's reluctance to, you know, accept Native tribes and our rights to regulate our own resources.

In the area of the Marine Mammal Protection Action, it's up for re-authorization next month -- I mean, next year in 1993. We would like to see existing Native rights and to further some other rights that we see. For example, since 1972 when it first came out, you know, they said like in the area of arts and crafts, anything that you didn't make before 1972 is not permissible. I mean, that's really getting down to, you know, regulating your creativity; and it just goes back to, you know, us as a people being regulated to death in every single area of our lives.

There are so many federal and state commissions, like there's, you know, some that deal with sea otter, whales, you have the Eskimo Walrus Commission,

the Eskimo Whaling Commission, you have -- just -- the list is probably really, really long. And just for your information, you know, we're trying -- I mean, Kawerak is taking the lead and advocating for preferred language in the Marine Mammal Protection Act; but we also need cooperation, you know, from State and federal agencies, so that whatever we do, whatever input that we have, won't be an exercise in futility. Sometimes you sit there and you talk and talk, you sit and talk to people for a week, and in the end, the decision, you know, it's like you had no input at all. That was my experience with the Board of Fisheries this past year down in Juneau.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the guidance -- guidelines of the Marine Mammal Protection Act manages and regulates walrus, polar bears, and sea otters. The National Marine Fisheries Service manages whales and seals. We would hope that we would have greater participation and -- in that management, as I said before.

We have to be really sophisticated now, because we're even talking about cooperative agreements with the U.S.S.R., you know; but those type of things are hard when our own government doesn't even recognize our tribal status.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Maybe can I interrupt you right here and just --

MS. NORBERT: Sure.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- figure out where does the Federal Subsistence Board then fall within all of these responsibilities that we --

MS. NORBERT: Well, see, this is where --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- (indiscernible - speaking simultaneously).

MS. NORBERT: -- I think the complications come in is that the Federal Subsistence Commission has jurisdiction over those federal lands in Alaska, you know, that were turned over to them when the State could not come up with an acceptable subsistence bill. Now --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: So it just deals with the land area?

MS. NORBERT: Right. The --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MS. NORBERT: -- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service still has jurisdiction over --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Walrus and polar bear?

MS. NORBERT: Right.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MS. NORBERT: And whales, and -- but, see, that's part of the complication, too, you know, is that we have to remember all these things.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Yeah, yeah. It's a college class.

MS. NORBERT: (Laughing.) The protection of our hunting rights, I think is -- we spend so much time -- our hunting and fishing rights -- we spend so much time just fighting for our basic survival, we really don't even have time to thrive as a people as we should be. We should be spending a good deal of our efforts and time, you know, on addressing all these social issues. We spend so much time and money and effort, you know, on subsistence issues and those areas. You know, if we had the -- that time to, you know, get into economic development, and like Robbie was saying, you know, then I think a lot of our social issues would be alleviated, 'cause we would be taking care of them ourselves.

There has to be state, federal, and international collaboration and cooperation in all these areas that affect our lives in subsistence areas, and I said that before; but it -- I would just like to emphasize that Natives definitely have to be involved.

In the area of research, the research efforts have -- you know, have this one other strong area where

there seems to be a lot of fragmentation. We see, you know, the need for documentation in our subsistence activities, you know, for our own protection. I'm just going to give you an example. This past summer there was three or four researchers from different places that had come, you know, and come to my office.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Bilingual studies.

MS. NORBERT: Just all kinds of, you know, and this young man who was being sponsored by the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, but getting funding from the National Park Service, he was going to do something in two weeks, you know, study Eskimo people in three villages in two weeks. I said:

"What is your focus going to be?"

He kind of had a general idea, you know; but what could you do in two weeks? These type of things take years to do; and it sounded like to me is that one organization had money to spend: "Let's spend it. Hurry up."

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MS. NORBERT: "Right now."

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MS. NORBERT: You know, why wasn't that money maybe given to a Native organization, or, you know, where it could be better spent. We have a lot of real critical issues that are facing Natives in, you know, our food

chain and the pollution. We hear about all this nuclear waste possibly being dumped. You know, we hear that the Bering Sea is in trouble. I think Larry -- you probably heard from Larry Mercurieff, you know, from the Bering Sea Coalition, you know, on all the problems that Pribilof Aleuts have seen. You know, there needs to be some just pulling these research together and, you know, saying:

"What is important to you? What do you see out there?"

Rather than, you know, giving fifteen thousand here, two thousand here. You know, I think we really need research -- our own regional research centers, where Native people can really be involved and --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MS. NORBERT: -- that also would expose our children, you know, to science. They have no real -- any Native role-model scientist to even strive after.

One of the things that we're really regulated in is like the utilization of marine mammals and their byproducts for commercial purposes. They -- we are so limited in what we can do. You know, we aren't supposed to use like walrus meat for dog feed, or for, you know, to sell as dog feed. We, ourselves, see different ways for like commercial exploitation. Why can't we

commercially exploit our own resources like we have in our traditional past? We aren't allowed to do that. I mean, we feel like we could offer some answers to our own problems; but by federal or state law, or even international law, we are not allowed to, you know, and that causes frustration and just anger.

We see a great need for public awareness and information dissemination, first of all, to our own, but also to the general public out there. We need some assistance possibly with funds to combat the adverse and negative publicity that has been coming out in subsistence, like this -- I think Loretta probably brought out, you know, this sting operation. You know, we need the sophistication and the funding to do -- it's not just in Alaska, but, you know, nationwide. That takes a lot of money, you know, and where do those funds come from?

Again, I would just like to touch on the area of funding one more time is that we have so many areas that we have to fight for, especially in the area of subsistence. You know, we -- our -- Matthew right now is taking care of both natural resources, which takes care of subsistence; he's also the director of the housing program, you know, and we just do not have enough money.

That poor man doesn't have time to breathe I don't think.

And that kind of winds up my testimony, but I think -- I just would -- since I used to be the Director of Native Programs for the school out here, and given the testimony by our elders this morning, I think I have a few things to say in the area of education is that, in my experience, there seems to be, you know, blaming of each group on why our Native children are doing so poorly in school.

When I did statistics out there, there was like 30 percent of our elementary students were below grade level, and that figure jumped up to like 41 percent on the 7th through 12th grade levels. When I brought this to the attention of the school board, you know, it's like, oh my gosh. What I had to point out is that we're not trying to point fingers to everybody, but just that there -- we have a problem, and how are we going to solve it, you know? Our children generally, I think, from rural schools are not adequately prepared for college. I think -- you know, what are the State standards? Is there a -- expectations, you know?

And then I also was a tutor in Anchorage for Indian education, and it was generally acknowledged that the academic standards of rural areas are much lower

than, say, Anchorage; so those kids had a really hard time. But when I was out here, I would talk to students who went on to college and say: "How'd you do?" One student said he was in for a real shock, because he was making As and Bs out here, and he went, and he had to take some basic courses in math. He was not prepared, and that's at -- we also had some students who were making As and Bs and wanted to get into an Ivy League school back East, and she was told, you know:

"You'll need to go to a prep college school for a year or two."

You know, I think these are pretty serious issues that probably we need to address on the local level; but I think these things need to be resolved, you know, working with everybody.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Eileen.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Excuse me, Eileen? Did you read -- you spoke about the housing and the sewage. Did you happen to see the article -- I brought it with me if you hadn't -- in Anchorage Daily Newspaper yesterday, about the sewage problem in the villages of this area?

MS. NORBERT: No, I didn't.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I have it here. I'll be glad to give it to you right now.

MS. NORBERT: Oh, okay.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I think one of the bigger things you impacted me with was the countering the sting count operations with regard to public awareness. I think that's what the agencies need to hear, and I think if we collaborate with them on that, we'll go a long way towards changing the feelings of this area with regard to subsistence; and I'm with you on -- there, and I think that sort of takes a general effort on the part of the agencies to do that.

MS. NORBERT: And we really appreciate it and -- sure hope it makes a difference. You know, we as Native people try to make a real honest effort to follow these rules and regulations that we have to live with. We don't do it happily, but we do it nevertheless. You know, it seemed like when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does something like that, it's just like stabbing us in the back, --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MS. NORBERT: -- you know.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Would you also -- well, could you comment on what effect, if any, the fetal alcohol syndrome has on your lower grades in the school?

MS. NORBERT: Well, unfortunately, I think we're seeing a greater number of those children in our

schools. We at Kawerak are trying to do, you know, a more public awareness, preventive-type thing in that area; but, you know, what I see happening is that it takes resources away, you know, that could be used for everybody else. But it's a drain on families, too. It's a terrible drain on families.

We have -- we were very surprised that a person with an FAS child from one of our villages had volunteered to come to the regional conference in the next few days, you know, to talk about how it's impacted her; and one of the things that she said that really stuck in my mind is it seemed like she realizes her responsibility for this child, and she realizes that she is going to have to take care of the child for the rest of his life. But she -- her frustration was that she doesn't seem like she has any control over that. All these different agencies, the school, the social services, the -- you know, they say:

"You have to do this, you have to do that."

And she's even come to the point where, you know, will she even have a say in his -- if he passes away, even in his funeral arrangements? You know, it's like this deal happened; but even though she's willing to go through with her responsibility as all these different agencies are totally taking over.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Could you give an approximate, perhaps, percentage of the number of children in this region that are FAS -- are suffering from?

MS. NORBERT: I sure couldn't. I think one of our other staff members will be giving testimony this afternoon. She deals with more children's statistic, and she was going to bring up specifically children's issues -- adoptions, and -- I just wanted to comment that we have villagers -- village delegates coming in from all over this region, and they will be testifying this -- afternoon.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: That concludes our testimony for this morning. We're going to break for lunch and reconvene about 1:15 or 1:30, and I guess we're invited to the XYZ, so we'll break for now.

(Off record.)

(On record at 1:30 p.m.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: We're back here at the Nome chambers with the Alaska Natives Commission hearing September 21. It's now 1:30. Beginning our testimony this afternoon is Stanton Katchatag. Stan, if you could,

just give us your name and then your affiliation. We will sit and listen.

MR. KATCHATAG: Hold on just a second. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Sure. (Pause.) I don't know if you're going to say anything, or. . .

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have anything --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- to say, but I could --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- you know, say something.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay. This morning we heard from 13 people, and it was good to hear from a cross-section of the community, especially the XYZ Center, which we're fortunate to be right next door to, so Stanton?

MR. KATCHATAG: Thank you very much, Sam. Mr. Chairman and members of the Alaska Natives Commission, special guests, visitors, spectators, and everyone else. My name is Stan Katchatag of Unalakleet, Alaska, which I feel is one city are Nome's very close neighbors in this region, which make me feel qualified to participate in this hearing. I have been involved in various

organizations, in local, regional, and statewide levels that has been striving to promote and to improve the standard of living in the same categories that this Commission is now seeking to focus on as they undertake to perform the purpose of this task, which is long overdue; but, by all means, necessary and still in demand.

Health, education, economics, governance, and social and cultural matters are, indeed, the core and central demands relevant to all urban and rural societies. Therefore, as one of many identified Native - leaders, I express my wholehearted support and blessings as you join our endeavors to establish meaningful and effective services to our people in our environment.

The health of our future will be the result of the mechanism of tomorrow, so we must find ways to stay healthy physically, politically, and spiritually.

The education of our generation will rely on how well we use them. We use and prosper in performing our responsibilities today in this important field, rapidly-changing situations for survival on all walks of life. The achievement in education is like a toolbox and skills of any trade. They must be utilized to perform their purpose. The baseline of economy changes no matter

where a person, family, or group chooses to live, along with the changes of time and challenge.

Example, when I was growing up, subsistence -- hunting and trapping, and trading -- were the basic economy. The commercializing of these resources are affecting most people in our region in adverse conditions. I strongly believe change affecting economy should first find alternative to make the demands affecting the economy.

And the same thing applies in governance. Any governing system has people behind who relies to perform in their favor and their lifestyle. And to me this is a reasonable government, because there is no government without the people behind it. And not only are the people behind, but they are the structure. So, to have a strong and affective government, people must be committed to live for and even die for their government, or the government will not stand. I have seen this happen with my own political eyes, and I'm sure you have. That's social and cultural matters are tied in and are the bonds and framework which holds any and all governments together.

Finally, in closing, IRA and Traditional Councils are sovereign not only in nature, but grandparents of all after-born governments, rather

recognized or not. We may at times seem ancient, but we are struggling to keep up with the Joneses for the sake of our country and its adopted people and our resources. We are not anti-government. We simply ask fair share in government-to-government relationship with all governments.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

(Tape changed to Tape #5.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I would just ask, Stanton, what form of government do you recommend as being the best for your people?

MR. KATCHATAG: Really, I did not give this subject you asked that much thought; but, on the other hand, when I speak of government, I realize that there are different forms of governments that are organized and working for the demands of the people, and for the needs of each community. I realize personally that the municipality or the city form of government within the small communities is also a matter of demand. This is my personal objective, so to speak. The thing that I want to see in each and every community is for these and other organizations who wish to prosper to work together. In my thinking, the IRA or Traditional form of government can be used to meet demands that are not qualified to the city governments. And there are widespread resources or

things available to each community that you cannot legally obtain through the IRA governments, and the city governments can take care of those. By that, I think I mean the revenue-sharing and all those state-affecting programs. Does that answer your question?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: I think you're one of the few that talked on the subject of governance. We're constantly trying to figure out the tribal responsibilities and the federal government's role in protecting the tribal authority that we have all -- even -- recognizing it. So thanks for your testimony on the need for something like the IRA Councils.

I know in the education recommendations that we had, we're looking at the tribal authorities to provide for moneys that would take care of some educational needs that we have, mainly the 13th grade and preschool. If we were to depend on the federal government for funding, that was our recognized way in which we could pass the money down to the local area, and then the IRAs would work jointly with the schools to provide preschool and 13th-grade education, so they are in need of some -- and they are capable of taking on some responsibilities.

MR. KATCHATAG: Thank you very much, Sam. Speaking of education, I have another thing. Might -- I

don't have any document in relation to this thing, but I do have a (indiscernible). There was a proposal of Native language -- I cannot get it in terms of how the thing was; but it's to promote the Native language. I must first admit that although I can in fluently speak my own tongue, there are so many, younger people especially, who cannot speak this tongue. And the thing that bothers me most is that, according to qualifications that are in demand for those responsible for teaching our children, are -- does have a danger or a weakness there, because the thing that is one of the demands in obtaining or - teaching children in the Native language, and I believe this may be or may not be a statewide matter. Maybe they are better off in some areas; but in our area, this can lead to what I would call slang language. By that, I mean the qualified people cannot speak the Native tongue fluently as they should. On the other hand, those who that can speak fluently does not have the degrees to meet the teaching qualifications that are in each school district system.

(Pause.)

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Yep, we have what they call alterative certification for them, and that just became a reality this year, so now I guess that's

JW/ss

something that you're alluding to then. Okay, thank you, Stanton.

MR. KATCHATAG: Thank you very much. If I'd known that people would be so -- feel like this, I'd a prepared a longer statement. I sure appreciate that you have given us this privilege to present our views to you; and I am looking forward, and I am sure all of the other IRA and Traditional Councils within our region are looking forward to working jointly with your efforts in promoting our way of life throughout the system. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thank you, Stanton. Next would be Stella Weyionanna, instead of Josie, and the (indiscernible) Stella will be speaking on their behalf.

(Pause.)

MS. WEYIONANNA: You'll have to excuse my cold. My name is Stella Weyionanna. I'm the president for our IRA Council at Shishmaref, Alaska.

REPORTER: Can you spell your last name, because I didn't have you.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Yeah, it's the same as Josie -- Josie.

REPORTER: Okay.

JW/ss

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Just cross out Josie and put Stella.

REPORTER: Right, thanks.

MS. WEYIONANNA: Actually, we had directed our general manager to get more information regarding this Alaska Natives Commission testimony, so we didn't quite have anything prepared. I'll just kind of bring out some main concerns that usually come up from -- at our meetings.

One that I could kind of touch up on is the Native education. As Stanton was saying, I had this kind of written down, 'cause it was stressed that -- at an AFN resolution that was introduced -- a youth resolution that was introduced at the ICC, it was stressed that an elder should be placed in a school system where Inupiat, or where our languages -- or where our bilingual staff are not fluently talking it; but in those schools where our bilingual instructors are teaching like the culture and tradition in English and not having our Inupiat language spoken, that an elder should be placed along with the bilingual staff to pass on -- even to have the kids recognize the Native language when it is spoken, and then to converse with the other bilingual staff, and in that way they at least exposed to the sound and maybe start to understand and even talk the language. So that was --

and als -- not only the language, but also to teach the culture and tradition of those people.

The other priority, I think, that we're always coming up with in the villages is the water and sewer. That should become a priority in the villages, because some of the villages do not have water and sewer, and they end up with a system where it's -- like in Shishmaref they have the honey-bucket system; and they have like a bin placed in each home; and this happens to -- this tends to draw a lot of these real unhealthy flies. We've been getting a lot of those, and we have like a dump at the other si -- other end of the village, and I think it should be stressed that water and sewer should become a priority to make it more healthy for the people in the villages. And that way I guess it would kind of lessen so -- a lot of the illnesses that's go around.

And as for our IRA Councils and offices, we, in the last few years, have hardly any moneys to operate on, because of our 104-A moneys being -- I'm not sure if you call it distinguished -- or I mean extinguished; but, in order to have a strong governing body to address important issues as these, like the subsistence, we need to have moneys in our IRAs to fund like a full staff --

not only a general manager, but a full staff, like a secretary --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Administration fund.

MS. WEYIONANNA: Administration, yeah.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: -- 'kay.

MS. WEYIONANNA: That type. Because, without that, we can't keep addressing issues that come up like this, without having a full --

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Right.

MS. WEYIONANNA: -- a full staff.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Do you call 'em 104-A? -

MS. WEYIONANNA: They used to be called 104-A moneys.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay.

MS. WEYIONANNA: Through BIA.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, okay.

MS. WEYIONANNA: But I guess we need to try to find moneys to make our councils more stronger, so we can address issues such as these.

And also under the education, this has, I guess, been brought up with the school districts, but the classified staff payroll is usually like during the school year; and they're left without any type of income during the summer months. And we weren't sure which direction to go to, even to somehow get unemployment

compensation for those classifieds now. I don't know if that's a federal or state issue, but it seemed like that we should look into this, so the staff like during the summer months wouldn't have to apply for public assistance or that type situation.

And another point that I had wanted to bring up was that it would have been beneficial if this testimony would have been right after the regional conference, where all these issues -- all the Native issues would have been brought up. They would have been reviewed and discussed, and if they were -- if they had discussed these and then brought them to like a hearing like this, I'm sure that that would have been very beneficial for our region.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Okay, Stella.

MS. WEYIONANNA: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: Thanks. I have checked into the unemployment issue, and it was originally a federal responsibility, and they paid the BIA staff, you know; and when the states took over the BIA, the state paid in the neighborhood of three and a half million, four million a year. And in order to keep it going, they would have had to put about a four-million-dollar thing in there, and this is one of those things that Willie Hensley tried unsuccessfully to get; and we helped him

trying to get it; but thanks for bringing it up here at a Commission hearing (indiscernible). Putting it in the record is valuable, so. . .

MS. WEYIONANNA: Uh-huh (affirmative). Yeah, even if it -- they did get -- I mean, they find other sources, you know, to try to get their income, such as like public assistance, and that still does use, you know, considerable moneys to try and get them back up.

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: 'kay.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Just for -- well, to help me, and I think perhaps there may be others on the Commission who don't know exactly what you meant by 104-A money. If you could just -- for the record, maybe if you could just let us know what that is.

MS. WEYIONANNA: Those used to be BIA moneys that were what they call 104-A moneys, and the IRA would operate on these moneys that were allocated like from the -- I believe, the federal government. And like they had these for years, and in the last few years, they kind of started to become smaller and smaller, until now the villages are no longer receiving these moneys. But if you wanted to get a clarification of that, the BIA area office should have that information. I'm not too sure if I clarified that.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: All right. Thank you, Stella.

MS. WEYIONANNA: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER TOWARAK: What we'll do right now is stand in recess until we receive more people to prepare testimony, and we will resume when more people come in. Thank you.

(Off record at 2:00 p.m.)

(Commissioner Towarak departed meeting.)

(On record at 2:40 p.m.)

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: It is now 2:40. I'm Father Norman Elliott. Sam Towarak had to leave. We now have testimony coming from a Dazee (pronounced as short a and long e).

DAZEE: Dazee (pronounced as short a, then long a), yes.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Dazee. If you would please then state your name, and your occupation, and proceed with your testimony.

DAZEE: Thank you. My name is Dazee. I'm the Executive Director for the Bering Strait Economic Council, Inc. I am the Project Director for the Salmonberry Shop, which is an ANA grant, all Native; and we have just gotten the Governor's Exporter of the Year

Award for our Eugene Omiak (ph.) Sourdough Factory, our Sourdough Starter, which we ship all over the world.

I'm here concerned on several issues, but I think my main issue is the board members of this Commission are volatile, fighting, neutralizing the strength of this Commission, because they can't get their act together, as I understand it. I have just come from another meeting, and I'm not at liberty to say where I heard this, but it came from very informed sources. We out in the Bush are usually the last to be taken care of, the last to have things happen for us; and we don't need a Commission that's fighting among themselves. We need a cohesive Commission that will help us, will lobby for us, will give us the things that we need up here; because all the time we hear:

"Oh, you're the Bush. You're too hard to deliver to. You're this, you're that, whatever."

So what? If there's going to be a Commission, then it needs to be what it's supposed to be. I would like to see, once your findings and your meetings are done, a plan -- an action plan that's published and is shared with us in the Bush, so we know what you're going to do; and then we want to benchmark you to see that you do it. And I'm sure you'll try, and don't misunderstand me, and

this is nothing against your Executive Director, it's just we want to see it really happen. We get these testimonies up here all the time. It's nice; they pat us on the head; they go back to wherever they are; and we don't get anything. That's one of my positions.

Education in the Bush for our students is nothing but social passing. A kid is in school; he doesn't read or write well; he's passed along; he's old -- too old to be in school; he's too big; he's whatever; he's disruptive; so we're not going to educate him; we're going to pass him through. That's got to stop, and it's got to stop from our school boards, because they allow it to happen. We're very fortunate here in Nome. We have a superintendent by the name of Bob Kenna (ph.) who's addressing our absentee problem in a positive manner. I would like to see more of that done. I would like to stop seeing the White ghettos in villages. The teachers come in; they live by themselves; they close the gymnasiums on Tuesdays and Thursdays so they can play basketball. The village can't go. That's wrong. Our village youth need as much interaction on every level with our teachers; so, if they decide to go to college, they don't come out, and they don't know what to do; they aren't homesick; they understand the social issues, how to act, how to behave, how to eat properly

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and be comfortable in another environment, which is not always the case. And I think, since our teachers are our first line to our youth, that's part of their responsibility.

I'm also hoping that the Commission will take some kind of stand on Native preference in hire. Now I know that gets to be old up here. I'm non-Native. I couldn't get a job when I lived in Shishmaref. It was hard for me to get a job when I came in; but you see these construction companies coming into our villages, and they're constructing this, and they're constructing that, and they're bringing their own crews, which they have a right, via the Supreme Court, and I understand that. But there's got to be some way that we can work with these employers to know prior -- from training programs, to have people that are in the villages be hired. We need that money in these villages. So I'm hoping that the Commission will do something to work towards that and help us in that area.

And then I'm hoping that the Park Service -- please, gentlemen, don't be mad (laughing) -- at times, they have come into our villages, and they're much better now about their public meetings and let us -- letting us know they're coming, etcetera; but there was a time when perhaps that wasn't where they were; and I'd just like to

see that they're monitored to be sure that that happens.

Like in Shishmaref, we have a piece of land five miles wide. If you look towards the Bering Straits and to the left of the village -- that's how I always do that -- it's five miles, and we'd like to be able to get across it. We can't now. I guess it's impossible -- that's part of Viringe (ph.), is that -- you know the piece I'm talking about by the village, Ken? (Inaudible response.) Well, if you look at the map, here's Shishmaref, and he's all the pink, and then there's about a five-mile strip on the le --

KEN: Oh, you're talking about that long, narrow strip.

DAZEE: Yeah. And if we could get across that, there's gravel and things, that a gravel-pit possibly could be done. But now we're told that it's environmentally impossible, de da, de da, de da, and so an economic development project is stymied.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Okay.

DAZEE: And that's all I have to say.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Well, thank you.

DAZEE: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: And --

DAZEE: Yes?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Well, first of all, I think I have to say something to you concerning your hearing that the Commission is fighting among themselves. And I think I can honestly tell you we are not fighting. We do have differences of opinion on some issues; but there's been no storming out of meetings, or anything like that.

DAZEE: I don't think the Commission can afford differences of opinion.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Oh, well --

DAZEE: I think you guys should have one common goal and go towards it.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: That's -- the issue, perhaps, over which we are in disagreement is just that -- how we go about the problem -- not the -- nothing else. For example, there are some of us on the Commission who feels the meetings, rather than being held in Nome, Kotzebue, should be held in, we'll say, Shishmaref, Unalakleet, Fort Yukon, Tanana, you name it. And others on the Commission feel that it would be best to have them in Nome, Bethel, and Kotzebue, and so there's that area of difference. Now that's the only area that I'm aware of, and we are having Commission -- the Commission will meet again this week, and I don't know of any -- we -- as I say, we've had some differences

of opinion on some of the rules that -- under which the Commission's going to operate; but, certainly, not -- I couldn't use the word fighting.

And secondly, yes, we do -- in fact, none of us would be on the Commission if we felt that we were simply going to file a report with Congress that would be printed, put in the official records and forgotten. In fact, in Washington, D.C., we did talk to Senator Inouye, who's --

DAZEE: Right, I know the Senator.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: -- really responsible -- for this, and he assured us that action would be taken; because we said:

"We don't want to be on a Commission -- "
There was one, I think, in '79, and you can read the report, and that's about all you can do is just read the report. So I want to assure you that I -- well, I personally would not be on the Commission if I thought that, well, we're just going to write a report, and get our names down in something, and then go home.

Thirdly, it was brought up today about Native preference in hiring, and we are aware of the disaster, you might say, in a sense of the Davis-Bacon Act.

DAZEE: Right.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: But, at the same time, as one of the testifiers mentioned, it's understandable that, because of the skills necessary on many jobs, the contractor must bring in people --

DAZEE: We understand that --

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: -- from outside.

DAZEE: -- as well, but there are many times when --

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yes.

DAZEE: -- they don't.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yes.

DAZEE: More times than not.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yes, I can un -- yes, and that's why -- so, you know, we are aware of that and looking into it.

Now, you're the first person that's mentioned the Park Service, so (laughing) --

DAZEE: (Laughing.) Here I come, the ten-ton gorilla. They sit wherever they want to; but I just hope we can make a chair that they want to sit in, so we can kind of maneuver them in once in awhile.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Well, I think they'd be happy to attend any meetings you'd like them to come to.

DAZEE: Oh, I think so. There's a better working relationship than there was.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: That's grand. Now, of course, I don't know anything about that strip of land you're talking about from Shishmaref; but, as an example -- I mean I think that will help us to see your -- to understand your point of view in that.

I -- you're the first one that's mentioned the White ghettos, and I don't know what the Commission can do about that, you know, to be frank. I --

DAZEE: I think they're doing something about in our region. I talked to Dave Dowling (ph.) -- is that the guy's name from Unalakleet? But he said it wouldn't happen. He promised.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Uh-huh (affirmative). I think that's something that the village must confront.

DAZEE: They're not confrontive people.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I don't -- yeah, well --

DAZEE: They're not adversarial. They're very kind, very passionate, very gentle people.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yes.

DAZEE: And they accept a lot of things that you and I wouldn't accept.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Uh-huh (affirmative). But I think, at the same time, out of -- I've heard the testimony today concerning the teaching and what needs to

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be taught. Now, it would be up to the people themselves to present that, and so I'm just using that --

DAZEE: Sure.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: -- as an illustration that perhaps the teachers themselves don't realize that there is this ghetto situation; that that's just something that they do, and that they might be willing to rectify if they were made aware that it is --

DAZEE: Well perhaps the Commission can help with that.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Well, you've got it -- -

DAZEE: I think that's what we want you guys to do. (Laughing).

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: We've got it down, and it certainly will be considered because you have brought it up.

DAZEE: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Thank you for your time.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: And thank you for your time.

DAZEE: Oh, it's my pleasure. It's what -- that's part of my job. Thank you.

MR. IRWIN: Mr. Chairman, before we go off record, I -- there -- I'd like to enter something into testimony. This is on education. It's from Loretta

Muktoyuk, who's originally from King Island, now residing in Nome. And I just ask your permission to add this to the record of the hearing.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yes, but introduce yourself, Mike, so that --

MR. IRWIN: Oh, this is Mike Irwin talking.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Did you want to read that -- so -- for the benefit of those present?

MR. IRWIN: Oh, okay. (Reads testimony of Ms. Muktoyuk.)

(TESTIMONY OF LORETTA MUKTOYUK ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT #4) -

MR. IRWIN: And, again, that's from Loretta Muktoyuk from Nome, who is too bashful to come down.

(Pause.)

REPORTER: Mr. Chairman, are we off record at this time?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: We are off record.

(Off record.)

(On record at 4:22 p.m.)

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Now on record, and it is 4:22. Tina, if you would then now, for the record, give us your name and where you're from, and then please begin to speak as freely as you wish.

MS. HENDERSON: Okay, my name is Tina Henderson. I was born and raised here in Nome. I

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currently hold the position with Kawerak, Incorporated, the Native regional nonprofit -- I hold the position at Kawerak as their Indian Child Welfare Act Liaison. And a part of my job is to advocate for children, families, and tribes in state court proceedings; and I also am responsible for providing adoption services under Kawerak's adoption agency. And I've taken on this responsibility for now over two years. I travel quite frequently to the village communities here in the Bering Straits Region, and have found a couple of things that are points of concern regarding children and families in general throughout the region, one being the state of the Child Support Enforcement Division's requirements to seek reimbursement from absent spouses through AFDC, the welfare system.

I have found in my work that sometimes this -- the CSED requirements actually split up families, where, through the tribal adoption process to change birth certificates at the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Juneau, new parents will decide not to name a father on a birth certificate if they are on AFDC, so the father will not be responsible for large amounts of money to be reimbursed back into the State. So what happens with the Native families is that when they choose not to name the father on the birth certificate because of AFDC, that

child loses half of his heritage. He's only considered one-half Eskimo, or one-half Native, whether he is full Native or not, because there is an absent parent on the -- not named on the birth certificate; and that concerns me.

I had always been under the assumption that the welfare system provided what could not be provided, because of economic hardship; and it just doesn't seem to work. I know a lot of families and a lot of young men that have bills and statements from CSED, ranging from \$34,000 to \$62,000 that they are in arrears for; and these young men do not have jobs because of the economic situation at the village level. I suppose this issue raises many issues regarding families, their economic financial states. I don't believe the -- this system works in the Native community. They are very rigid in the reimbursement for the amounts that are collected through AFDC.

I think, as part of a problem solver, one that has always come to mind is that I've seen young men who, although they are not providing any monetary support to the families, that they will go hunting and get a moose, or a seal, and provide it to the family, and that is not taken into consideration as any type of payment. I believe that if they -- if a lot of these young men had

the opportunity to provide some type of in-kind donation to eliminate a portion of their child support payments, that they would be able to do that; but it's not anything that CSED will take into consideration at this time.

I realize that you're here for possible solutions to many problems, and I've asked different families what they do in the absence of jobs, of any type of income to reimburse the State, and they do nothing.

I believe another solution could be that if there was an advocate to tell these many, many young men in our communities that if they approach their caseworkers or managers, that something could be worked out; but they are so afraid of this whole system, because it's very foreign; and they're afraid that -- because they don't have the money to pay the State back. I think there needs to be some type of service for, or some individual -- a person for these people to see, that they can see, or speak to, or write to, at least regionally. I know the only offices that exist are in Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. And even those offices when you call them, you get a recording. They don't speak with human beings until they've called several times; and that's -- that has been one of the points of concern that I have heard from several different young men throughout our communities. And I'm in great hopes that the despair

that these young men have could soon be helped, because they've ri -- at this point in time, I know many, many who just do nothing; and while they're not doing anything, their bills are accumulating. I have sat with young men that are ready to commit suicide, because they don't have a solution to this big bill.

I fully understand, and I think this Commission also understands that there is a problem without jobs in the Bush villages. There are very few people employed year around, and it seems to be mainly the young men that are unemployed. At this point in time, I know several that just don't work at all, because it behooves them to work, because the State will take all of their money. That seems to be a cry that really nobody has answers for at this point. I fully understand that it is federal law, and, of course, a state law; but I think there could -- they could take into consideration the lifestyles of the Native peoples here in Alaska, or throughout the United States. I certainly hope one day that some of the issues that I've pointed out can be resolved, where it's not creating more hardship on already compounded problems, just for basic survival in the Native communities.

Through my position as the Indian Child Welfare Act Liaison at Kawerak, I have -- I certainly hope that

the -- there will be more people, such as I, at the village levels to advocate for children, families, and tribes in the future. I fully understand that the federal government has increased programs through the state -- Indian Child Welfare programs throughout the state; and, hopefully, we'll see a better and brighter future through our children. I believe that our programs and services that are provided to the Native communities need to be prioritized; and, as a priority, the programs that are implemented should involve children as a priority. They are our future. We will depend on them; that I believe subsistence and land issues are important also; but, as a priority, our future depends on our children and healthy lifestyles; that we should fully support the sobriety movement from the AFN, and not just say we support it, but let's do it. Through healthy people and healthy children, I think our Native communities will have a better chance of being around for another ten generations; and that's all I have to say.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Thank you, Tina. Tina, I'm just going to ask a couple of questions for clarification.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: One, when you refer to children's father not being listed on the birth

certificate, -- MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh
(affirmative).

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: -- are these necessarily
unmarried couples, or is it true of married couples as
well?

MS. HENDERSON: They are unmarried couples.
All of the birth certificates that I've assisted with
the -- they have been unmarried couples. There is some
legal format, legal language, stating that if a woman is
married that she must name her spouse on a birth
certificate, whether that spouse is the biological father
of the child or not.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Uh-huh (affirmative).
Thank you for that clarification. Since you're working
with children, I'm going to ask you a question that I
asked another person earlier, and that is what are the
affects of -- you mentioned alcoholism. What is the --
what are your views on the fatal -- the fetal alcohol
syndrome?

MS. HENDERSON: I think there needs to be more
qualified medical personnel that have the qualifications
to diagnosis fetal alcohol effects and fetal alcohol
syndrome. I don't believe that all of the children that
are affected by alcohol in the fetus are being counted.
I think the numbers are very, very low.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: You mean, the real nu --

MS. HENDERSON: The --

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: -- the reported number is low?

MS. HENDERSON: The reported numbers of FAE, fetal alcohol effect, are very low. They're inconsistent with the children that have actually been affected by alcohol in the fetus in the Native communities.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Again --

REPORTER: Off record.

(Tape changed to Tape #6.)

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Again, because we are seeking solutions, and this is a difficult question to answer I'm sure, what do you think can be done about alcohol in the villages?

MS. HENDERSON: I think there are individuals that are choosing sobriety as a lifestyle and that these individuals need full support to continue sobriety; and I don't really think there is an outside program that's going to assist in any of the problems that are in the Native communities. I absolutely believe that the Native people need to recognize and become responsible for their own problems, as individuals, as a community; and these same individuals and the same communities need to come up

with their own solutions, because they're -- historically, there have been -- there has been a lot of money pumped into services. An individual will come into either Nome or into the village communities maybe for one or two years, and they're gone. So all of a sudden the people are thinking then they don't have any more solutions, because that professional is gone. I think the problems in the Native communities today need -- and the solutions need to come from the Native people themselves.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Are you aware of any Spirit Camps, such as they have in the Interior?

MS. HENDERSON: Not in this region, I'm unaware of the Native Spirit Camps.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: That, you know, is for the treatment of persons suffering from alcoholism.

MS. HENDERSON: Right. I think there are other afflictions in our communities, and not just alcohol, but ~~especially for children, there are high rates of problems~~ stemming from gas sniffing is another problem in the communities, because most of all ou -- most of our village communities are dry. They're not allowed to have alcohol. There are other things that people find to get high on.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Yeah.

MS. HENDERSON: And young children choose gas, because it's available. And people make their own home brew.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Uh-huh (affirmative). Not mentioning the name of the village, but I do know of one in this area that is also very badly affected with both cocaine and marijuana.

MS. HENDERSON: Right. There are many things, I suppose, that an individual can become addicted to. There are other problems coming from gambling, and it's legal. It's legal in the Native communities; but, like I said, with these -- there are some types of problems stemming from affliction and addiction that the community needs to recognize it as a problem, prioritize it, and make a decision based on what they're experiencing in a community.

There are many communities where families are receiving AFDC checks, but they're spending them at the bingo halls or at the pull tab places, so at those places, each -- I believe each and every individual community needs to make the -- make a decision whether they are going to continue that type of activity or not.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Do you think the tribal -- some type of tribal government would assist in this matter?

MS. HENDERSON: Ab --

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: We're interested in governance. That's why I ask you that.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative). Absolutely. There -- I work directly with the tribes -- 20 tribes here in the Bering Straits Region, and -- regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act, and asserting their rights in state courts -- state court proceedings; and I believe it's time for a change. You know, you get sick and tired. This -- I hear this all the time. You're sick and tired. I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired. We want to see something done. But that's all that's said. We're the ones that have to do it; that does -- the Native community has to become unified against the problems that we face, and come up with our own solutions; and that's what I tell people in the villages. It's their problem; take ownership of it; and you come up with your own solution; and I guess that's -- the villages here in this region are very diverse in their peoples and their problems.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Well that, as you know, I hope, is the real purpose of this Commission. It's not to impose solutions. It's not to even try and find solutions outside of those which the Native people themselves can propose, evaluate, act on, and so on.

MS. HENDERSON: Definitely, that in the creation of solutions and programs to come up with these solutions, I'm certainly hoping that the goal wouldn't be too far to reach, so we don't set up -- set ourselves up for failure.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MS. HENDERSON: Of course, in taking on the responsibilities of our problems in our Native communities that that's, I guess, the only fear that we have is fear itself, at this point. There hasn't been -- there haven't been very many solutions that have totally fixed problems in the past; and I suppose it's time for a great change, for the people to come up with their own solutions to their own problems.

MR. IRWIN: Can -- I have a question. Going back specifically to the Indian Child Welfare Act, you know, it's been -- what? -- 14 years now, I think, since it was first passed by Congress; and at least the way I have -- I've always understood it is there were two key goals to be achieved by that. One was to try and reverse the ages old trend of chil -- Native children going either into foster and/or into adoptive homes that were not of their own culture -- mainly going into White America. And then, second of all, to bring the villages,

through the tribal government, into that decision-making process, and empowering communities in that way.

Do you think that we're even close to having achieved either of those; and, if not, it -- and then, I guess, the second part to it -- that kind of gives my own feeling on it, which is I don't think we've come that close. How is the State -- how does the State factor in? And I know when I worked in that area, 10, 12 years ago, that was the real difficulty that we had was foster care is controlled by the State, --

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: -- mainly because they control the purse strings where foster care is involved. They control adoptions, because adoptions go through the State Court System; and, thirdly, they're the ones in power to be doing (indiscernible) foster home licensing and that type of thing; and we -- I always was of the opinion that the State government itself was a big, big part of the problem; and do you feel that that has changed at all?

MS. HENDERSON: They have been -- I guess in the past couple of years, they've managed to have a relationship with the State officials as a tribal representation. When a child from this region is taken into State's custody, the tribes in this region have come up with a tribal policy regarding children, where they

have stated that they will always intervene; and that's where our staff comes in. We intervene on behalf of the tribes. And, I guess, for the 20 tribes in this region, we have participated in all hearings, have intervened on behalf of all children that have been taken into custody -- not just in the state of Alaska, but outside the state of Alaska.

So, like I said, I've been in this position for over two years, and Kawerak has maintained an Indian Child Welfare program for the past eight years. So there is a solid program here regionally for the tribes and in our region. But statewide throughout the state of Alaska, I have found that other tribes do not have tribal law or policy to go on. When it comes to a child that is taken into custody -- a Native child -- when that Native child is taken into custody, there isn't the contact persons, there -- they -- that some people don't fully understand their rights -- tribal rights in the proceedings, and how to go about advocating for the tribe. But I have found in the past couple of years, working in this position, that the relationship -- it's been a difficult one in several different areas, several different places; and I think this past year has even been more difficult working with the Division of Family and Youth Services, because of all of the changes within

the State regarding budgets, and cutbacks, and a change in the whole DFYS system throughout the state; where I think it's a real key time for State -- the State of Alaska and tribes to work together, because while the State of Alaska is cutting their funding for the -- a lot of their programs and services, where the State is making cutbacks, there is an increase in federal funding for Indian Child Welfare programs. And I think if we can work together, and maintain that children are a priority, I think we'd both be better off. That's -- that sounds really big, and it isn't working quite that way yet throughout the state; but here in this region, we do have a -- we have a good relationship with our court system, our local court system, and within the State Court System in the Anchorage area, where a bulk of our caseload is. So it -- I guess it can happen. That relationship can be enhanced; it can happen; but it takes commitment, and patience, and a lot of work.

MR. IRWIN: Probably a lot of diligence, too; I mean, staying on top of it, I would assume, has a lot to do with it. Just persistently being there and making sure that the State understands that, in fact, as a Native community, you are interested in what happens to those children.

MS. HENDERSON: They know that. When we're -- when we become involved -- at this point, when a child is taken into custody in the Anchorage area, they know that if they're from a village here in this region, they know to contact our office. So it's -- I guess it's -- it has worked out for us. Our relationship with the State officials, State workers, has worked out.

MR. IRWIN: How about in the area of actual licensed Native foster houses, like a child, let's say, taken into custody in this region. What are -- what's the likelihood that he or she will wind up -- if they are to wind up in a foster home, what's the likelihood of them being able to be placed in a Native foster home?

MS. HENDERSON: That always occurs. If it --

MR. IRWIN: So there are enough Native foster homes?

MS. HENDERSON: There are not enough licensed, but it's usually a relative that will take a child in and become licensed, --

MR. IRWIN: Okay.

MS. HENDERSON: -- or an extended family member. There have been very few situations -- there have been isolated situations where a child is not in a -- is in a Native -- a non-Native foster home, because he or she has medical problems, and --

MR. IRWIN: Special needs.

MS. HENDERSON: Special needs, exactly. But in the absence of tribes being responsible to license foster homes, are the tribes -- some tribes in this region have a code or an ordinance -- codes and ordinances regarding the foster-care home-licensing process. And we are in the process this year through our program to come up with an application, and whether the State of Alaska recognizes tribes or not, that we will come up with a standard application for tribal members to become tribally-licensed foster homes.

MR. IRWIN: Well, I think that that would be -- it would be excellent if the final step in that is where the tribes are working closely enough to where -- with the State to where the State will accept that tribal licensing and thereby pay -- make the -- why -- just have him:

"If you guys have licensed, that's good enough for us, and we'll state it -- and we'll say that, you know, so it meets requirements of the State licensing."

Because that was one of the things that I really found back in the late 70s and early 80s was, first of all, the State didn't know how to get foster -- Native foster homes licensed.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: (Laughing.) You know, they didn't know to get out there into the communities and find good people; and also, back then, although I could see that it was -- the easiest thing is just to put them in a foster home and then we could -- the detail of getting the thing licensed after the fact, you know, that can be handled. And I'm glad to see that that process is in place; but I guess the very next step is to where the State and the tribes are working close enough together to where the State recognizes that the tribes have their act well enough together to have standards for licensing that can meet the requirements of the State, so that ultimately the tribes can just take over that function almost --

MS. HENDERSON: Right.

MR. IRWIN: -- completely, and the State being more just an adjunct to the process, rather than the driver of the vehicle as they have been in the past.

MS. HENDERSON: There are actually -- some tribes here in this region have higher standards than the State in regards to adoption; and that's really nice to see. I'm really proud of 'em, the tribes that have passed their children's codes and ordinances; and regardless of what standard the State has, they've -- it's not that they've lowered their standards, their

standards are higher in the placement of their tribal-member children; because they absolutely do believe that their children are mo -- their most valuable resource, and they will be responsible for that protection of that Native spirit, and the Native family, and the Native community. Do you have any other questions, or. . . (Laughing.)

MR. IRWIN: That's all mine.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I do -- we do thank you very much.

MS. HENDERSON: Oh, you're welcome. I had understood that there was a State House Joint Resolution that was passed by Se -- Representative Eileen Maclean, regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act, and -- with respect to studying the Act. And I think, throughout the state, our organization and the tribes in this region were the only folks that opposed the detailed studying of the Indian Child Welfare Act; but instead of studying the Indian Child Welfare Act, maybe they ought to do a more comprehensive evaluation of the State's child protection system, that the Indian Child Welfare Act was -- came about to protect the Natives across the nation, through our children; and I don't think that it is any time -- or this is not the time to especially change what right we have left through our children; that I absolutely believe

that Native people across the nation have never been accused of failing to compromise; that when it comes to our children, we won't compromise no more. And by not compromising any more, we assist in the drafting of tribal laws; and that's real important that there's State law, federal law. What about tribal law? Those are priorities these days through our office.

MR. IRWIN: I'm familiar with the joint resolution you were talking about, and then -- and I believe it was more -- if I recall correctly, it was more aimed at examining whether or not the state has lived up to its part of the responsibility for widespread implementation of the -- basically the intent of the Indian Child Welfare Act, and that's where my -- in fact, my earlier question came from is whether or not, you know -- or how, if at all, things have changed to where, you know, is the State -- see they used to be uncooperative for many, many years in implementing that; but I have sensed that they've loosened up quite a bit; and once they've seen that, hey, these Natives out here, they, you know, they seem to have a good sense about what needs to be done, you know, generally, where it comes to their children, and maybe we don't have to be so fearful that if we --

MS. HENDERSON: Right.

MR. IRWIN: -- let them have a part of the decision- --

MS. HENDERSON: I guess --

MR. IRWIN: -- making action, you know, the world's not going to fall apart here.

MS. HENDERSON: I guess that's a -- where maybe another misconception has arised, when the tribes in Alaska are involved in the screening process for children's placements, that I think a misconception is that the standards are lowered because the -- a Native organization or the Native tribe is involved. And that is so totally untrue that -- and that's why I say that there are tribes in this region that have higher standards than the State does at this time. And I think, at this time, they really need our help; and if we can work together, I think we'd all be better off, and especially our children would be better off.

And with this Child Support Enforcement Division stuff, it's -- it doesn't even make sense that -- it doesn't make sense to me how decisions are arrived, or how amounts are arrived -- where they arrive at amounts, or how they arrive at their decisions is beyond me; and I always thought I was a little bit intelligent to figure things out. I haven't been able to do that yet.

(Laughter.)

MR. IRWIN: Well, I think the thing with Child Enforcement, too, is they're so much more -- they're concerned with revenues. They're within the Department of Revenue, and I don't think they tend to look at what they're doing where it's social --

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: -- policy implications.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: You see that also in situations of child support, and in divorce proceedings, and how they go after them. Even if it's not in the best interest of the family for them to be doing what they're doing the way they're doing it, it doesn't seem to much matter, as it's the whole drive to get that revenue back.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: And a similar situation that Native people a lot of times were finding themselves in was where, for all intensive purposes, a traditional Native adoption had taken place. For instance, the grandparents raising a child.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: And although no formal State court proceeding had ever taken place severing the parental

ties and granting an adoption to the grandparents or anything, it is in effect an adoption.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MR. IRWIN: And -- but the biological mother, for instance, or -- and/or the biological father would find themselves in the same situation if grandma went down and applied and got AFDC, then the biological parent would start getting hit. And one of the things that the Cowper Administration did -- was able to do was to -- is to change their policies and their approach to things, to make tribal -- traditional tribal adoptions much easier to, in fact, effectuate; and effectuate them without the State courts ever having to become involved. Thereby, the main reason for that was in order for grandma to be able to take care of her child, who was, you know -- maybe not her biological child, but the child that she's raising without her daughter or son having to have ultimate responsibility for it. Just as happens in Western society, somebody severs a relationship; the child goes to the adoptive parents. If the adoptive parents have to apply for AFDC, that biological parent isn't hit with the bill with that; and so it was to try to bring -- and to try to recognize that there are different ways of adoptions taking place. And maybe something along those lines, you know, could happen in

the future with respect to the issue that you raised, and being that the -- you know, the biological father basically not being able even to be a part of their child's life in any way, because they're scared of the consequences that will rise from that.

MS. HENDERSON: This region has been fully aware of the traditional tribal-adoption process since the regulation was passed in April 1990; and the tribes in this region have all of the forms. We xerox the forms at Kawerak and provide them to the tribes and the families throughout the region; and I'll have to say it's -- it has been a godsend for families. It's very simple; it's economically feasible; and they don't have to travel to a State court to adopt a child. That's been one of the better things that have happened in the Native community probably for two generations.

MR. IRWIN: Good to hear you say that, because I worked for Governor Cowper, and I --

MS. HENDERSON: Yeah.

MR. IRWIN: -- put a lot of time and sweat into that.

MS. HENDERSON: Did you?

MR. IRWIN: Yeah.

MS. HENDERSON: Yeah?

MR. IRWIN: And I think that also your suggestion about, you know, there being (indiscernible - away from microphone and papers rattling) father's credit for traditional ways of helping out.

MS. HENDERSON: Right.

MR. IRWIN: Yeah, maybe he's not able to supply \$364 in a check or cash each month; but -- and making that the only requirement of the only way that he can become involved, I think ignores a lot of the traditional Native ways of community and family helping, and responsibility for ones own.

MS. HENDERSON: Uh-huh (affirmative).
Hopefully --

MR. IRWIN: Although there are some deadbeats out there; but --

MS. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. IRWIN: -- there's -- those who, you know, legitimately are trying to make it.

MS. HENDERSON: I mean, I've read it in our headline news in our -- in the Anchorage newspaper where, I mean, they even named one of the individuals that owes \$62,000 here in one of our villages in this region. And so by naming this individual and shaming him through the press, is this supposed to make him come up with the \$62,000? Come on, you know, they -- I mean, and they've

publicly called him a deadbeat and everything, and they don't even know the guy, you know. They don't know that there is -- there aren't any jobs in his village. They are in -- and if there were, and he were hired on, he probably wouldn't even take the position, because they'd be taking half of his money; that it's not -- but at the same time, the same individual, like I said, would go moose hunting, or get a reindeer, or get a seal, or fish, and bring it over to where his child was staying to make sure that he ate and had the basics. It's not like, you know, that they stopped caring for their children because they owe all of this money and it's scary. It's really scary out there with this issue. I think I've only spoken to the tip of the iceberg for the young men that are responsible for reimbursement. There are many, many, many people out there that are too afraid to even admit that they're in this dilemma. It's scary. It's really scary.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Thank you very much.

MS. HENDERSON: Oh, you're welcome.

MR. IRWIN: Is that a wrap?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Good-bye.

(Off record at 5:06 p.m.)

END OF PROCEEDINGS

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ALASKA)
) ss.

I, _____ court reporter for the Third
Judicial District, State of Alaska, hereby certify:

That the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 114 contain a
full, true and correct transcript of proceedings in hearing of
September 21, 1992 transcribed by me to the best of my knowledge
and ability from tape identified as follows: Tape Nos. 1 through
6.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this _____ day of September,
1992.

SIGNED AND CERTIFIED TO BY:

Court Reporter

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT #1 - TESTIMONY OF NANCY MENDENHALL

Testimony of Nancy Mendenhall, the Director at Northwest Campus, College of Rural Alaska, which is a part of the University of Alaska Fairbanks here at Nome, September 21, 1992.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify to the Commission here today. I am going to speak to you about some of my concerns in the area of rural adult education. Our campus serves the sixteen communities of our region and, through audioconference links with other rural campuses, also enrolls students throughout rural Alaska. About 50% of our students are classified as vocational students. From 55 to 60 percent of our students are Alaska Native, and we are classified as a minority institution for purposes of receiving grant funds.

To introduce myself a little more, I have been working full-time at Northwest Campus since 1982, as its director since 1988. Prior to that I was in charge of training programs at the regional health corporation, and was an Upward Bound director for UAF for two years. I have also taught in schools and travelled as a program coordinator to villages in our region. Today I am going to confine myself to comments about adult education, both academic and vocational for rural Alaska Natives, and to the socio-economic situation which our young adult students and potential students face today. Most of my remarks will also be applicable to the other rural campuses in Alaska.

Many decades of work have gone into trying to develop a system of adult education for rural Alaskans that is successful, and surely by now we have enough experience to be able to say what constitutes a viable program that will give us the results we all want, and yet, with a few exceptions most of us are not satisfied that we really are meeting the needs of rural Alaskans, are providing the training that will allow them the choices they want. And by that I mean the skills and understandings to be able to choose to join the computer age as a productive member of the work force, or to remain in their traditional community and pursue as much as possible a traditional lifestyle, or a combination of both, which is what so many young adults want.

My belief is that we do know a great deal more about what constitutes a successful program than we are actually putting into action most of the time. Why? First, we must be blunt and recognize that there are still many people who believe in assimilation of ethnic and cultural minorities. If these so-called minorities don't want to or can't join the great mythical American majority, too bad for them, is the attitude. That goes double for people who want to live isolated rural villages. Social Darwinism is still alive in

every state capital to some extent, enough to influence the political process in Alaska for sure. And beyond that there are always natural and social forces operating which resist change, i.e. are invested in the status quo, whatever it is. And of course, there is the big problem of committing the resources required to make any change. The U.S. and Alaska aren't all that rich today--where will we reallocate the resources from? Any kind of spending program becomes a political issue; the issues which get the dollars reallocated to them are those with powerful constituent groups and lobbies. Education is always very political in our country, and inevitably will be in a democracy. Right now, rural Alaska is politically not as strong as it was.

To build successful programs for Alaska Natives, there are three general principles I think we must follow, none of which are new insights, but which somehow get overlooked too often:

--First, the people for whom these programs are intended must have identified the need, must want the programs, plan them and direct them. They must be involved in every aspect. This is not only ethical, it is realistic.

--Second, all sectors important to the success must recognize that the need is critical, that the programs are important enough to give their total commitment, that to ignore them will cost everyone.

--Third, the necessary resources must be directed according to the plan. I want to talk about the last one in more detail. Too often, critics charge that we seem to think that all we need is more money to solve our problems. Although this is not true, the changes I will propose here today will all involve the commitment of more, or better use of resources.

One could argue that there are some changes that simply take insight and energy, are not so much an issue of dollars. But look at the realities. For example, one could argue that it costs no more money to hire a good teacher than a bad one, or ill-prepared one. Not true. To take care in the recruitment process takes time. It may mean spending more money advertising more broadly. It means being willing to readvertise and wait if you don't get the applicant you want the first time. It could mean that you recognize the importance of hiring Alaska Native teachers, so important for positive role models as well as their cultural understandings; and if they are underprepared in some areas, you are willing to put out extra dollars in in-services and mentorships to get them up to speed. It means being willing to pay competitive salaries so that you can keep good teachers, because quality Native teachers are in high demand and can name their price. They may not stay with you out of sheer dedication to the community or the program. Even more basic, you will have a hard time hiring Alaska

Native teachers in Alaska today when too few are graduated, and those that are have the choice of many good jobs, few as rigorous as teaching public school, or teaching in our isolated villages. You will need to support programs that attract village residents who intend to stay to teach in villages. These are not typical urban campus based programs. That was just one example. If we want to change the situation for Alaska Native students and the rural unemployed, more resources have to be directed into viable programs.

I could go on, but part of my message is, we won't get quality education for rural Alaskans until we are willing to pay for it. However, right now Alaska is not in the best shape economically as everyone knows. We are looking at reduction, not expansion, of some fairly good programs with measurable successes. The problem of reducing resources is compounded in rural Alaska, where we don't have the numbers in enrollments, and never will. Rural Alaska cannot compete in the numbers game, and we are losing ground in the competition with other powerful constituent groups in Alaska. The recent legislative reapportionment will intensify this. Also, the Alaskan citizenry as a whole, still living on the fantasy of the "boom years", do not accept that to have services from the state they must pay for them. At Northwest Campus, we have not yet been seriously threatened with closure, despite the economic gloom, because there are many groups who still feel an obligation to try to bring rural Alaska out of its third world economy, and believe that locally available training is part of the answer. But Northwest, and every other rural program, is each year being gradually being cut further and further back through inflation and outright reductions, so that speaking of internal reallocation as a strategy for new initiatives is not to be taken seriously.

One thing I want to stress here today is that no positive changes in rural Native education for adults of significant size, and I stress the size factor, are going to happen in the next years without increased attention from the federal level. The boom state is a memory, and the economic environment which gave us large advances--first the state-operated schools, then the community colleges, then the Molly Hootch village high schools--is no more. The urban sector is calling the shots. The economic and social situation in rural Alaska for young adults is now getting worse again. Why? The annual capital projects that injected cash into weak village economies are a fraction of what they were. The projects and programs that are the result of those wealthy years now have to be maintained with shrinking dollars. Meanwhile, the state has cut way back on revenue sharing to the small cities and to special programs like community schools. That the blessing of the land claims is a mixed one is now more clear as village corporations have not been able to develop profitable enterprises

in most cases. The economy of Nome as a regional center has been going down for years, with no basic industry but one gold mine to draw on. Fisheries have not developed in most of the region, nor has tourism come close to its potential.

Meanwhile the baby boomer generation in the villages now has its own children going into high school, and the birthrate remains high. Every village is crowded with unemployed young adults who want very much to become a respectable part of the socio-economy, and who must have some cash to participate in the subsistence economy of their village but have little opportunity. AFDC is heavily utilized, and while it aids, also adds to the problem. Young men, especially, have fewer viable roles to move into in their communities.

Despite the fact that large numbers of young people leave the village for urban centers, or are lost through unnatural early deaths, their numbers in the villages keep growing. The resulting frustration and depression, and accompanying alcoholism, suicide, homicide, and family deterioration are huge problems despite state, local and tribal efforts to turn these around. The report from AFN in 1990 titled "A Call to Action" goes into this phenomenon in detail. Another important recent document is Harold Napoleon's book, the Way of the Human Being. So, the next key point I want to make today is that the Native young adults of rural Alaska are in a crisis situation that is getting worse, that Alaska does not seem to be able to devote adequate resources to combat this, and that federal help is needed to turn this crisis around.

I want to emphasize that although we can point to many failures in our years of effort in adult training and education, we also have a few notable successes. The trouble is, the socio-economic problems in the rural regions are compounding faster than we can alleviate them. This is partly because of false starts, partly because of lack of resources, or unstable resources to do the job that's needed, partly because of the complexity of the situation. Our programs are generally not yet completely adapted to the realities of life for village residents. The profile of a typical Northwest village student is a far cry from the traditional urban campus dorm resident. Our student is female, over thirty, head of the household having one or more children, working part-time, unable to easily leave for an urban or even regional campus, low-income, having developmental courses to cover before she can get into fully credited classes, having a strong motivation for regular challenging employment, and in the case of the academic student, fully expecting to spend over 10 years in the attaining of a baccalaureate degree, as she will average between one and two courses per term till she gets close to the finish, at which point she will jump in all the way for nine to twelve credits. During

these years of study, she will experience all manner of extended family responsibilities, crises, tragedies, and more positive demands on her time and will develop incredible strengths. Some of these students will also get considerable support from family, but not all.

The more numerous vocational students are much like the former, except that this group will contain more men, and they will have chosen programs which are more short term with more guaranteed assurance of cash returns in the next time period of a few days to several months. Since in all but one of off-highway system regions, the University is the only institution available for vocational programs, we must be able to answer to the needs of both types of student, but usually do the vocational programs in cooperation with other agencies or employers for better sharing of resources. We have partially solved the problem of rural access through audioconferenced classes, but these are not appropriate for hands-on vocational training, and this is where most of our students would choose to be. New child care block grants have recently solved one of the largest problems -- that of child care for students. Still, enrollment in available programs is not what we'd like it to be. Why? For the above described student to make the energy investment in a program, there has to be a fairly solid assurance of a position hire at course completion. Rural Alaska does not have those positions available except for the fortunate few, and they must compete with outsiders who also seek work here.

For significant change in our present situation, more attractive incentives, such as easily developed OJT positions and funded mentorships for locals, must be made available, and for the private sector too. Federally funded public works projects could take the place of state projects which have dried up, and provide training situations, work experience, community improvements, and cash income. Furthermore, any training activity that is longer than one week must recognize that the trainees are most likely playing an important role in an extended family which must be taken over by some else, or let go for a period. Though they may have no wage income, they are part of an economy. A training stipend, or opportunity to earn cash while in training, is essential, and is also an important status indicator in our modern village society, especially for the men. They are not part of the noble "starving student" tradition, and are not going to be viewed that way by their families. It is difficult for most of our students to leave their communities for long. The longer and more demanding the training program, the more important are the financial need considerations. (The only time these have not been so important has been in the teacher training program for those people who were already employed at regular part-time jobs in the local schools.) Yet today, very few funded programs include stipends.

I believe the best way to know the answers about what is needed in training programs is to look at some specific ones which we all recognize as successful, and not the elements. For this, I am going to list briefly the obvious strengths of the Community Health Aide Training program, and conclusions can be drawn from there as to how far we can go in emulating it. First, the need for these professional primary care providers is recognized by each community where they are assigned, and the role is respected, though often subjected to criticism. Second, the program is on-going (since the early 70's) and has stable funding (Public Health Service supplemented by the state.) Third, the community is involved in the planning for and evaluation of the program and the health aide, through the regional health corp board. The community approves the selection of the health aide. Fourth, the health aide is hired before she is sent to training, and is on salary while she is in training. Fifth, the longest period of time she is away from home is three weeks. Sixth, the salaries are among the best in each community. Seventh, the training sessions maintain a positive, strict training environment. And eighth, the trainers are well-respected by the students and care about their students and their success, the course work being a contribution of classroom and practicums.

This total collection of attributes would be difficult to find in many other programs, but if we want similar success, we do have this chart to follow and can then ask ourselves, how much are we willing to commit to make other programs fit this model as much as possible?

In conclusion, I believe that despite our best efforts that we are falling behind in rural Alaska, that the answers are available as to what needs to be done to remedy the situation for Alaska Natives, but for many reasons, change adequate to make a real difference will be resisted. A very energetic battle will have to be fought to overcome this crisis. The University of Alaska must play an important part in this, as must the state government and the private sector, but because of the particular economic and political situation in which the state of Alaska now finds itself, the federal government is going to have to find appropriate ways to increase its assistance which can gradually be taken over by the state and the private sector and not lead to more chronic dependency. I believe there are ways to do that. Thank you for giving me this time to speak.

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT #2 - TESTIMONY OF LORETTA BULLARD

STATEMENT BEFORE THE FEDERAL STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF ALASKA NATIVES

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Alaska Review Commission. My name is Loretta Bullard. I am President of Kawerak Incorporated, the regional Native non-profit corporation which provides social, economic, employment and other services to the residents of the Bering Straits Region of Alaska.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on the policies and programs of the United States and the State of Alaska and to explain how I believe these policies and programs should be modified to promote positive change in the lives of Alaska's Native and rural peoples.

Government should be by the people - for the people and reflect the values and morals of the people. Unfortunately, in many instances, federal and state policies do not meet the needs or reflect the values of Alaska's Native people.

Three years ago I had the opportunity to attend the Inuit Circumpolar Conference in Sisimuit Greenland. This past summer, I attended the Inuit Circumpolar Conference in Inuvik, Northwest Territories. These two trips were a real eye opener for me in that I had never realized how extensive an impact governmental policies can have on the lives of aboriginal populations.

In Greenland, the Danish Government did not implement termination policies against its aboriginal populations nor did they force the Danish language upon its people. Instead in 1953, the Inuit residents of Greenland were extended Danish citizenship. According to Conrad Steinpol of Greenland who spoke at the most recent ICC conference, the Danish Government recognized that because Denmark was 4000 kilometers away, it was in their best interest to establish a home rule government. Conrad stated they received a lot of support from the Danish Government, negotiations were friendly, on an equal basis and they achieved home rule government without a drop of blood being shed. In 1980, a Home Rule Government was established in Greenland. Today, the Inuit population (which comprises 75% of the Greenland population) fully participate in the Home Rule Government as equals. The everyday language in Greenland is Inuktituk or a variation of Inupiaq. Children routinely learn Danish as their second language in school and many have picked up English as their third language.

The Canadian Government is in the process of amending the Canadian constitution to recognize tribal government as the third legitimate form of Government in Canada. They are in the process of creating "Nunavut", an Inuit homeland in the Northeast Canadian Arctic.

Contrast the Canadian and Danish Governments policies with those of the United States. The assimilationist policies, the termination era where the United States Government consciously sought to terminate tribal governments throughout the United States.

Even today, when we are in the era of Self-Determination, the United States Government continues to refuse to recognize and support the tribal governing authority of Alaska's Indian Reorganization and Traditional Tribal Governing Bodies. I've looked at the IRA constitutions which were signed off in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's by the Assistant Secretary of the Interior -which recognized the tribal governing authority of Alaska Tribes and been struck by the similarities between the tribal and state constitutions. It's ironic that one form of federally recognized government is unwilling to recognize an equally legitimate federally recognized form of government.

The State continues to refuse to recognize tribal court authority or tribal jurisdiction. The Federal Government actively supports the State in their undermining efforts by it's unwillingness to clearly recognize the status of Alaska Natives. This situation results in valuable resources being spent trying to resolve this situation - resources which could be better utilized addressing the problems in rural Alaska. Who established the policy of the State of Alaska to actively oppose the recognition of Alaska's tribal governments? The Governor?

The Federal Government is not fulfilling it's trust responsibility to the Alaska Native people. Right now, we're placed in the position of trying enforce federal laws which were designed to promote the well-being of Alaska Natives and other Native Americans, when this responsibility clearly rests with the federal government. A good example is the Indian Child Welfare Act. The Federal Government does not insure that the State of Alaska fulfills its mandated responsibilities under the act.

Another example is the Native Preference Clause (7b) of PL93-638 which mandates Native American preference in employment and contracting opportunities in federally funded projects which benefit Native Americans. As you know, the IHS is now planning the construction of a new Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage. Construction will start in the spring of 93. Yet the IHS has been unwilling to contract with an Alaska Native Organization to work with them to ensure adequate language is included in the bid

documents, which in turn would ensure the Native Preference Hire provisions are met. Instead, IHS's position is that they cannot fund any of these activities until after the construction bid is awarded, in which case the tribal contractor would spend a great deal of time in enforcement activities which could have been avoided if the appropriate language were included in the first place. It's stances like these which we find incredibly frustrating to deal with.

Alaska's Native and rural people are incredibly over-regulated in their daily lives. Present state fish and game regulations prohibit sharing and impose a sport hunting mentality on subsistence activities. I think it's only a matter of time before a way of life which has existed for thousands of years will be regulated out of existence.

Actions taken by the urban dominated Alaska Legislature continue to undermine the viability of the subsistence lifestyle. The recent entire special session on subsistence highlights the problem. The net result of the special session was a law allowing the Boards of Fish and Game to declare parts of the state "non-subsistence use" areas. Yet we are supposed to regard this as progress.

During the Federal EIS process on subsistence, we had recommended that subsistence users be appointed to the Federal Subsistence Commission. Instead, somewhere, someone made the decision to appoint the heads of federal agencies in Alaska to serve as the Federal Subsistence Commission for federal lands in Alaska. These same federal management agencies in many instances seek to actively curtail and undermine the rights of Alaska's Native and rural people. A good example is the USF&WS attempt to curtail use of sea otter pelts in arts and crafts. Another example is the recent sting operation conducted by the USF&WS which received national press. Thanks to the publicity activities, we now face an uphill battle in the re-authorization of the marine mammal protection act. No doubt the entire nation thinks Alaska Natives wantonly slaughter walrus and trade tusks for drugs. At no point in watching the publicity issued by the USF&WS, did I ever hear the USF&WS acknowledge the many, many Alaska Natives who prudently hunt and utilize our marine mammal resources.

Yet, these are the agencies which are now making decision regarding the subsistence use of resources. The individuals serving on the Commission, with the exception of one individual, have never lived a subsistence lifestyle. What this management action tells me is that the Federal Government does not trust Alaska's Native and rural people to make the right decision when it comes to subsistence, or perhaps they feel we're not capable. Either way, the federal government has again imposed another management structure

on us, one which effectively excludes the equal and meaningful participation of Alaska's Native people. One which turns the federal government into an enforcement agency. This when they had the opportunity to join in partnership with Alaska's Native and rural people, to safeguard the animal and other resources which we are so dependent on.

We're tired of fighting to protect our subsistence lifestyle. We're not going away, our subsistence lifestyle is not going to cease. I think the Governor and the state legislature needs to recognize this and get on with setting in place protections which we need now and will continue to need in the future.

Present state policies or lack thereof effectively deny Alaska's rural and Native people equal access to common resources. A good example is the False Pass situation and the lack of an effective and enforceable mixed stock fisheries policy. I know the federal government has really clamped down on high seas interception of Alaska bound salmon - but when the policies of the State of Alaska allow for massive interception of salmon stocks bound for our area, the result is the same - the salmon are not returning. Subsistence fishing for chum salmon was greatly restricted again this past summer here in the Nome area - and we haven't had a commercial fishery for years.

There seems to be an increasing levels of racial intolerance. Rather than promoting that we're all in this world together, that we need to recognize, appreciate and support the diversity of our many ethic and cultural groups, the federal and state governments seem to continually adopt policies hostile toward it's ethnic and minority citizens. Even in Nome, it's surprising how many non-Native parents are opposed to having their children exposed to Native culture and language in the school curriculum. This in a school district which is 71% Alaska Native.

A lot of time and resources has been spent studying Alaska Natives to determine "what's wrong with them, why do they have such high levels of alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, homicide, all these social problems?"

My personal opinion is that the well-being of Alaska's Native people is directly tied to their ability to control what happens in their life . . . which right now is minimal and getting smaller. Because we're such a minority, we're powerless, even in the political process. We're regularly outvoted and short changed. Urban needs always take priority over rural needs. Powerlessness as a people translates into massive social problems.

In exchange for taking away our rights as aboriginal people, we have been given the opportunity to compete in a larger society which does not respect or value us as human beings, except perhaps as ethnic oddities. Our rights are continually compromised or regulated away. We have lost the majority of our lands, our religion, our language, our culture, and if the State and Federal Governments have their way, the right to govern ourselves. It's only natural we want to continue our culture, language and lifestyle.

I propose that this commission seek a response from the federal and state government as to why they feel the need to suppress and remove all authority from Alaska's Native people - except that granted by themselves? Why won't the state government recognize and support our tribal councils and tribal courts? Why are many non-Natives so reluctant to incorporate our language and culture into the school curriculum? Why is the Governor unwilling to set in place long term protections for the subsistence lifestyle? Why won't the federal and state governments deal with Alaska Natives as equals? As an Alaska Native, I would be very interested in their responses.

In discussing this, we thought the answer was probably related to fear. For some reason, Alaska Native autonomy is threatening to western society. I think it's time to quit operating from a platform of fear and move on to a platform of partnership and the policies of the State and Federal Governments should reflect that partnership.

There are some bright spots. I don't want to sound completely negative. Kawerak as an organization has been contracting with the federal and state governments for years to provide services to region residents and I think we do an excellent job.

Several years ago the Congress initiated what is called the Tribal Self Governance Project. Two years ago, Kawerak was one of ten tribes/tribal organizations selected nationally to participate in the Tribal Self Governance Demonstration Project. This demonstration project is a big step towards true self determination. Through this project, Kawerak and the region's Indian Reorganization Act and Traditional Councils have the authority to redesign BIA funded programs and services and direct resources to more fully meet the needs of tribal members. This is one step toward Self-Determination where we were authorized to contract to provide Bureau services and programs. In this project, the region's Tribal Governing Councils truly have the authority to make decisions.

In closing, I believe that on policy could truly make a difference in the status of Alaska's Native people. All of the problems and

issues previously mentioned could have been avoided had this policy been in place. That is, I believe the federal and state governments, when developing policies, programs, and regulations affecting Alaska Natives, needs to consciously implement a policy of empowering and supporting it's Native peoples. Federal and State programs which do not empower Native people but which purport to solve our problems for us, have not and will not work. By empowering us, you lay the responsibility back in our hands, where it rightfully belongs.

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT #3 - TESTIMONY OF GARY LONGLEY, SR.

September 21, 1992

Mike Irwin, Executive Director
Alaska Natives Commission
4000 Old Seward Highway
Suite 100
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Mike:

I would like to take this opportunity to testify before the Alaska Natives Commission on Federal and State programs and policies affecting Alaska Natives.

I know that you know my background, but just to help the Commission understand where I am coming from, I would like to state that I have over thirty years experience working for the BIA as the Nome Agency Superintendent, the State of Alaska as a Local Government Specialist, Alaska Area Native Health Service as the Chief of the Office of Native Affairs, at Kawerak Inc. as President and a long time Board member, and as Executive Director of Bering Straits Native Corporation in addition to working at several other lessor positions elsewhere. This experience makes me qualified to speak on Native matters with some accuracy and knowledge.

Three of the top priorities as far as Alaska Natives are concerned have to be as follows:

1. SUBSISTENCE -This will probably show up statewide as the top priority. An understanding needs to be reached which is acceptable to the Native population, the State of Alaska, and the Federal government. I believe that the main group which can facilitate this "agreement" as far as the Federal government is concerned is the Alaska Natives Commission. The State and the Native population is at an impasse and perhaps your group can get this issue moved off of dead center.

2. HOUSING - Safe, sanitary and adequate housing to me is the second priority and will also rate very high on a statewide basis.

I would like to recommend that you secure a copy of two studies that were recently published. The first one is BUILDING THE FUTURE: A BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE which was issued in 1992 and is the final report of the National Commission on American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Housing. The second publication which I am sure that you are fully aware of, is the 1988 Rural Housing Needs Assessment Study issued by the Department of Community and

Regional Affairs, State of Alaska. We really don't care who does the building of the houses as long as they are safe, sanitary and of adequate size to accommodate the rising Native population. I personally believe that BIA and the Regional Housing Authorities both should be involved due to the fact that Natives are in different financial statuses. BIA does not charge for their houses. The Regional Housing Authorities do. Not all mutual help homeowners can afford the payments, so there is a definite need to consider low income rental projects, which I have not seen yet in Rural Alaska.

Perhaps another method of paying for the homes would be "sweat equity" which also has not been practiced in Alaska to date. My understanding of this procedure is that a person could get credit for as much as \$30,000 or roughly 30% of the cost of a decent home in Alaska by working on their own home as basically a down payment and then pay the balance off over a period of time.

3. EMPLOYMENT - This is a very general area and several other needs are an integral part including securing the education and/or vocational training to be in a position to qualify for higher paying jobs. Presuming the above houses are stick built, carpenter, plumbing and electrical training plus LABOR would fit in quite nicely.

Obviously the previously listed needs are not all inclusive. I would venture to state that health (including alcohol abuse) would also rate quite high. Another high priority item would be Federal and State recognition of Tribal Sovereignty. I realize that this process is fairly well understood on the Federal level but we need help in getting the State people to recognize this status. Perhaps the way to at least get this studied on the State level is to establish a commission on a process for recognizing various levels of local government so that perhaps a "new" type of entity could become eligible for State Revenue Sharing (for instance) without quite so many strings attached. Several months ago, I was asked to submit my name and a brief resume to the State DCRA to be considered for a Commission of this type but there apparently was no follow-up.

There are many other priorities that Native people will have statewide but I believe that the ones that I have mentioned will make the top ten list.

Hopefully your Commission will help to bring about some of the changes needed in a timely manner. I am sure that you are well aware of the strong movement that is taking place in Northern Alaska on the possibility of breaking off and forming a new State. This is not a new idea. Fred Notti brought this up at an AFN Board

meeting back in 1971 or 72 and several people laughed at him. Little did we know!!!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Alaska Natives Commission. We look forward to seeing the results of this study and recommended specific actions that will be presented to Congress.

Respectfully yours,

GARY LONGLEY, SR., retired
P.O. Box 1051
Nome, Alaska 99762

Telephone: (907) 443-5715

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT #4 - TESTIMONY OF LORETTA MUKTOYUK

ATTEN: Beverly Masek

Loretta Muktoyuk
P.O. Box 59
Nome, AK 99762

My name is Loretta Muktoyuk originally from King Island and my residency is in Nome.

I would like to make comments on The Education Task Force.

Educational philosophy should begin within the family home when the children are young and nurtured as the children are growing. Teaching children to learn at a young age at home would enforce good learning habits before they enter school.

Parents should get involved with their children with homework and set time for them to complete their homework. Or ask for tutors to help with subjects they are having problems with, if parents can not help them.

Before school starts teachers should get themselves involved with community activities in small communities, so they can get to know the people.

The school should work more closely with Kawerak, Inc., Regional Corporation, Colleges, Universities and BIA to find out more about training centers, colleges, and universities to prepare the students for training or higher education. Invite the agencies as guest speakers.

Teachers, administrators, parents need to work together to understand each other in order to have good working relationship. And I think good working relationships make better educators.

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT #5 - TESTIMONY OF STANTON KATCHATAG

Mr. Chairman, Members of Alaska Native Commission, Special Guest, Visitors, Spectators, Mr. Mayor of Hosting City of Nome, AK., Ladies and Gentleman:

My name is Stanton Katchatag of Unalakleet, AK., which I feel is one of City of Nome's very close neighbor in this Region which make me feel qualified to participate in this hearing.

I have been involved in various organization in Local, Regional, and State wide level that has been striving to promote, and to improve our standard of living in the same categories that this Commission is now seeking to focus on, as they undertake to perform the purpose of this task, which is long over due, but by all means necessary and still in demand.

Health, Education, Economics, Governance, and Social and Cultural matters are indeed the core, and central demands relevant to all urban and rural society. Therefore, as one of many identified native leaders I express my whole hearted support, and Blessings as you join our endeavors to establish meaningful and effective services to our people in our environment. The health of our future will be the result of the mechanism of tomorrow so we must find ways to stay healthy, physically and politically and spiritually.

The education of our generation will rely on how well we use and prosper in performing our responsibilities today in this important field rapidly changing situation for survival in all walks of life. The achievements in Education is like a tool box in skills of any trade. They must be utilized to perform their purpose.

The base line of Economy changes no matter where a person, family, or a group chooses to live along with the changes of time and challenge. Example when I was growing up subsistence, hunting, trapping and trading were the basic economy. The commercializing of most of these resources are effecting most people in our region in adverse conditions. I strongly believe change effecting economy should first find alternative to meet the demands effecting the economy. The same applies in Governance. Any Governing system has people behind who relies to perform in their favor and their life style. To me this is a reasonable Government because there is no Government without the people behind it, and not only are the people behind but they are the structure, so to have a strong and

effective Government, people must be committed to live for, and even die for their Government or the Government will not stand.

I have seen this happen with my own political eyes, and I'm sure you have. The social and cultural matters are tied in and are the Bonds and Frame work which hold any and all Governments together.

Finally in closing, IRA and Traditional Councils are sovereign not only in nature but, Grandparents of all after born Government whether recognized or not, we may at times seem ancient but we are struggling to keep up with Jones' for the sake of our country, its' adopted people and our resources, we are not anti-Government, we simply ask fare share in Government to Government Relations with all Government.

Thank you and God Bless.

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