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National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) records – Bellingham, WA: General Material, 1950

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 1950

9:00 A.M. Committee Meetings in Parlors 1 and 2, Bellingham Hotel

12:00 Noon Lunch.

1:30 P.M. President Johnson called meeting to order and asked for committee reports.

REPORT BY GEORGE P. LAVATTA, ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET COMMITTEE:

President Johnson and fellow members of the National Congress: Every organization must have a staff of officers and must have funds with which to operate. You have heard of a number of times before--at every Convention--that we are in need of funds. I wish that everyone who was here yesterday were here today. What I have to say affects the future of our organization. Your President told you last night that there have been a number of so-called Indian organizations, but they have all gone out of existence as far as the Indian is concerned. They went out of existence because the Indians didn't support those organizations. Somebody else provided the money; somebody else wanted the glory. There was very little benefit the Indian himself got. When we started the National Congress of American Indians, we decided we wanted an Indian organization, supported by Indians and for Indians. I have found out you can't get anything in this world unless you pay for it. Those of you who have been hiring attorneys know that. It takes money to operate. I belong to two organizations on the outside and one of them costs \$20 per year. I get no benefit from it personally, but a lot of enjoyment because it helps underprivileged boys. We have a lot of Indian boys who are underprivileged. That is the only way an organization is able to function: through funds and membership. That is the reason I am here today to explain the procedure that we have outlined for the National Congress of American Indians. We have had a hard struggle with not many Indians supporting the National Congress. We have had only a few Indians and Indian tribes that have been supporting this organization. It has been hard sledding. Sometimes I wonder how they have been able to get the Bulletin and retain the Secretary. Too few people have been carrying the load.

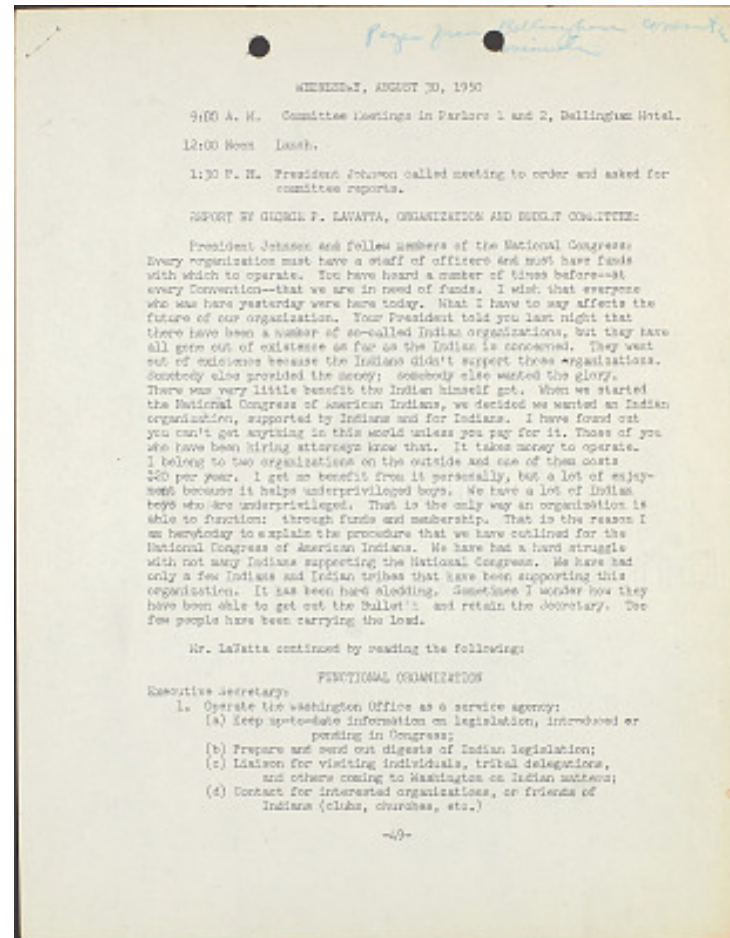
Mr. LaVatta continued by reading the following:

FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

Executive Secretary:

1. Operate the Washington Office as a service agency:
 - (a) Keep up-to-date information on legislation, introduced or pending in Congress;
 - (b) Prepare and sent out digests of Indian Legislation;
 - (c) Liaison for visiting individuals, tribal delegations, and others coming to Washington on Indian matters;
 - (d) Contact for interested organizations, or friends of Indians (clubs, churches, etc.)

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