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## Baseball Banquet Speech

Louis-Philippe Gagné

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*Sept. 4-1947  
Balt. Hotel*

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to your committee for the kind invitation to attend this gathering. The chairman of your committee, Mr. Rosario Dube, asked me, in his letter, to be the principal speaker. Well, I am afraid the choice could have been much better, and I would hate like the devil to disappoint you. First I never was what you may consider an orator. Such qualifications rather belong to <sup>others to</sup> ~~men like Cliff Cove and John Robinson~~, who could certainly deliver a speech with <sup>more</sup> vigor and punch.

However, I shall try not to deceive you. I would like to bring to you some facts that might interest you as sports fans.

*Engle*

Let me congratulate your baseball players on their achievements during the season just ending. This testimonial banquet to-night should be quite an inspiration and an incentive to them so they may win the championship. I like that kind of sportsmanship, that true fraternal spirit that you are showing to those or your members that prove worthy.

Sportsmanship, what a great thing! What a great teacher! If all the nations in the world had that same kind of feelings towards each other when they meet ~~at~~ international conferences, there would be no need any more for peace pacts or agreements, because peace would always prevail and there would only be friendly contests, inspired by good will towards everyone, with malice to none.

My friends, you are witnessing the end of a perfect season. I mean perfect, as far as scores and victories are concerned. But I surely appreciate the fact that improvements are in order. Improvements, not in your conduct, not in your spirit or your determination to win, but in the condition of our own municipal ball fields and playgrounds.

I hope you realize that a Mayor, whoever he may be, is not in a position to perform miracles during his first five or six months in office. Before his inauguration day, most of the work to be done during ~~the year~~ ~~the year~~ the year has already been planned and budgeted.

However, let me tell you, my friends, that before I quit as Mayor,



the sports fans of this city will certainly witness something that may seem a pipe-dream to some people at this very moment. And I mean exactly what I say.

DETERMINATION is our watchword. The future of our beloved City is our ambition. The welfare of our youth is our aim. And nothing, remember that, nothing shall interfere with it, if you have the same will power, and I know that you possess it.

You need new playgrounds. New playgrounds shall be developed. You need, we all need a new diamond, a new ball field. That will come ~~too~~ also. You may want a new football field, a new gridiron. That too is in the cards.

No doubt some of you might wonder at this moment what I am talking about. Well, my friends, I only speak your own language, the language of young veterans who fought to live a better life, the language of youth, the language of any citizen who believes in to-morrow and is ready ~~to~~ and willing to wake-up. I speak the language of all those who realize that the day has come when our young element should be better taken care of.

I regret not to be able to reveal to you <sup>everything that</sup> ~~what~~ is in stock for you all in the near future. I am bound to secrecy and shall keep that pledge taken by every member of our Memorial Committee. I know that you would like to hear about the proposed Memorial Arena or Civic Center. I would like to tell you all about it. But, for your own sake and our own sake, it is better that we all keep it secret. *I regret that the Lew. Journal published a picture of the proposed Civic Center. Newspapermen also were bound to secrecy. However, that news is - might was premature and all plans might be changed.*

~~But, may I say that before long you shall hear of a news that will be the beginning of a new era in all the history of Lewiston, a news that is going to thrill you. The only thing I may perhaps be permitted to tell you is this: that new artificial ice memorial arena will be built and we hope to have it completed for the winter of 1948-1949. You can bet on that!~~

Our committee of which Cliff Gove is one of the most active members is still at work. My only participation was to select the members of that



committee. If there is any credit to be given, give it to the members of that splendid group who are working their heads-off for you, for the City, for the men and women of to-morrow, the young people of to-day. They are working so that we may have better citizens; they are working so that cases of juvenile delinquency become a thing of the past in our community. They are working because they love sports and sports fans. Please give them your entire support when the time comes to put your shoulder to the wheel.

Until then, my friends, the only thing I may ask from you, <sup>is, and</sup> ~~and this is~~  
 I close with these words, ~~xx~~ : For your own sake, be confident, be  
 enthusiastic, ~~xx~~ let each and every one of you be a good sports~~man~~. Thank you.