
Pre-Political Career

Louis-Philippe Gagné

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o-American Club To sh Night School Move

Com. Gagne Annoyed—Wonders Why
Club Doesn't Censure Auburn for Closing
Night Schools—Will Push Clause to Limit
Says Cloutier

Louis Philippe Gagne, Democratic member of the Lewiston School Board, took it onto himself Saturday to answer the Franco-American Republican Club on its protest vote taken Friday night against the closing of night schools. In a statement made public he claims it strange that the Club should pick on Lewiston, normally Democratic, while Auburn, Republican, closed its night schools three years ago and is not mentioned.

On the other hand Harris M. Isaacson, recorder of the Lewiston Municipal court and Republican member of the School Board, announced today that he was much opposed to the closing of night schools when that measure was before the board, and to this day does not know why economy could not be practiced in some department of the city to enable that branch of education to be resumed.

Eugene Cloutier

Eugene A. Cloutier, a member of the Republican Club, stated today that the organization would push its cause to the last ditch.

"I know what night school means," stated Mr. Cloutier to The Journal, Saturday. "I am its product. I started to work at the age of 13 and attended night school until I was 19. In a community like Lewiston especially in a time of depression like the present when every member of the family is sent to work when any can be found, night school is the only means of obtaining an education for many". In his statement Mr. Gagne stated that \$4,000 is needed to carry on the night schools and that during the past two years attendance has dwindled so that teachers receiving \$3 a night had to go out among friends to recruit pupils in order to maintain classes of eight, minimum number under which a class could operate.

Gagne Statement

"The Franco-American Republican Club at its meeting Friday evening has entered a protest against the closing of the night schools in Lewiston, according to the report in the Daily Sun this morning.

"The club, it is said voiced its 'indignation', especially against the closing of the night high school.

"I am not speaking for the Lewiston School Board members for I am not authorized to do so and every member can speak for himself or herself. But I do make this statement as chairman of the Committee on Teachers and Education.

"It seems very strange that the Franco-American Republican Club has not seen fit to protest against the closing of the evening schools in Auburn during the past three years. Is it because Auburn is a normally Republican city and Lewiston a normally Democratic one?

"Where are the taxpayers willing to pay \$4,000 this year for night schools in Lewiston? Are the members of the Franco-American Republican Club well aware of all the facts concerning the evening schools in this city? Do they know that the State Board of Education does not give one penny for the night high school?

"Do they know that last year as well as on the preceding years the attendance in the Americanization classes was so small that those classes had to be closed after 25 or 30 nights instead of the limited 60 nights period? Do they know that the teachers in Americanization schools were paid \$3.00 per night and some of them had only 3 or 4 pupils and were dismissed when it became apparent that the registration in their classes was not what was expected to be? Do they know that at the high school, last year and the year before, the registration for the Miller's Course (Advanced English) was over 100 at the start and dropped to between 10 and 13 in February? Do they know that some teachers in the night high school had to do a personal canvassing among their friends, after a few weeks of instruction, so that they obtain the required attendance of at least 8 pupils for three consecutive nights?

"Those are facts that would justify the closing of night school this year in Lewiston, but none of them was taken in consideration by the Board. The night schools would certainly have been open this year as usual if the City Government, knowing that the taxpayers were asking for drastic reductions in every department, gave to the Lewiston School Board so much money for the ensuing year and not more. As a result, every single person connected with the School department had to take a reduction of 18.6 per cent in salary, from the Superintendent to the janitors. No other department in the City of Lewiston has suffered so much.

"It is a mighty good idea for the Franco-American club to 'protest' or to voice 'indignation,' but there is more than one person to-day that protests against the unusual state of things created by the old man Depression. Every one has to suffer and the Lewiston School Board has cooperated to the extreme limit in order to protect the taxpayers' money.

"Let us hope that the Franco-American Republican club of Lewiston and Auburn will also send its protest and voice its 'indignation' to the School Board members of Auburn. . . ."

LEVASSEUR PRES. FRANCO-AM. GOP

Joseph Levasseur, Republican candidate for Alderman in Ward 7 last March, was elected president of the Franco-American Republican Club Friday night. Levasseur is well known in Lewiston where he is employed as a motorman on the A. & K. railway. Other officers elected were Alfred Perreault, vice-president; Archie Touchette, secretary; Charles Lacroix, assistant secretary; Adelard Janelle, treasurer, and Pierre Lavoie, assistant treasurer.

The organization went on record as being opposed to closing the night schools in Lewiston which had been open for the past 50 years. The protest will be brought to the School Board and in turn to the city council. In the event that neither body offers any action it is planned to take the matter to State officials.