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1948

Musical-Literary Club Banquet Speech

Louis-Philippe Gagné

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FIRST, I WANT TO EXPRESS MY SINCERE APPRECIATION TO THE MUSICAL-
LITERARY CLUB FOR THE KIND INVITATION TO ATTEND THIS TESTIMONIAL BANQUET.
I TAKE THIS OCCASION ALSO TO CONGRATULATE THE ST. DOMS FOR THEIR GREAT ACHIEVEMENT,
AS CHAMPIONS OF MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE AND VERMONT, AND EVEN OF CONNECTICUT.
THEY HAVE BEEN A CREDIT TO THIS COMMUNITY, AND IN BEHALF OF OUR CITIZENS, MAY
I SAY TO EVERYONE OF THEM: "WELL DONE, YOUNG MAN!"

HAVING ^{witnessed} ~~ATTENDED~~ THE LAST GAME OF THEIR TOURNAMENT AT THE BOSTON
ARENA, I AM CONVINCED OUR BOYS WOULD HAVE WON THE NEW ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP
HAD WE HAD AN ARTIFICIAL ICE ARENA ~~RIGHT HERE IN LEWISTON~~. IT IS A WONDER
HOW THEY MANAGED TO MAKE SUCH A GOOD SHOWING AGAINST A TEAM LIKE ARLINGTON
THAT HAS PLAYED EVERY GAME OF THE SEASON ON ARTIFICIAL ICE, WHILE OUR YOUNGSTERS
HAD TO TRAVEL TO HEBRON AT SIX O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING SO THEY COULD PRACTICE
AND KEEP IN SHAPE FOR THE FINAL GAMES IN BOSTON. IF WE PROPOSE TO KEEP ON
SENDING HOCKEY TEAMS TO WIN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BOSTON OR NEW YORK WE SHOULD
GIVE THEM A BREAK AND BUILD AN ARENA SO THEY WOULD NOT HAVE TO BORROW ICE FROM
OUR GOOD FRIENDS AT HEBRON.

NOW, ~~LADIES AND GENTLEMEN~~, LET US FACE SOME OTHER FACTS THAT SHOULD
PROVIDE FOOD FOR THOUGHT TO OUR BUSINESSMEN WHO SPEAK IN TERMS OF DOLLARS AND
CASH. MORE MONEY HAS BEEN SPENT IN BOSTON LAST WINTER BY LEWISTON PEOPLE
ALONE THAN WOULD BE NEEDED TO BUILD AN ARTIFICIAL ICE ARENA. THAT MONEY WENT
FOR HOCKEY GAMES, ICE FOLLIES, MUSICAL SHOWS, FOOD, ~~GOOD~~ LIQUORS AND.....
SHOPPING! YES, SHOPPING WHILE IN ^{Boston!} ~~THE GREAT CITY!~~ DOLLARS AND DOLLARS HAVE
~~BEEN LOST FOR~~ OUR OWN MERCHANTS ^{have lost dollars and dollars. Still we certainly have} ~~BECAUSE OF OUR LACK OF CIVIC PRIDE OR, SHOULD~~ ^{some}
I SAY, OUR CIVIC ~~"DUTY"~~ ^{civic pride!}

^{And} DON'T WE OWE SOMETHING TO OUR HEROES? WHAT HAVE WE DONE FOR THEM?
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX OF OUR YOUNG MEN HAVE FALLEN OVER THERE, FIGHTING FOR
EVERYONE OF US, FIGHTING SO THAT OUR BOYS AND GIRLS COULD KEEP ON ENJOYING LIFE,
FIGHTING SO THAT OUR BUSINESSMEN COULD KEEP ON IN THEIR FREE ENTERPRISES.

WHAT HAS LEWISTON DONE FOR THEM? NOTHING BUT TO SEND ^A PENCILS.....
A PENCIL THEY PERHAPS USED TO WRITE A LAST GOODBYE. BUT THEY WILL
RETURN. SOON THEY WILL BE WITH US AGAIN. SHALL THEIR OWN BODIES
BE THEIR ONLY MEMORIAL? HERE IS A SPLENDID OCCASION FOR EVERY ONE
OF US TO HELP ERECT A UNIQUE WAR MEMORIAL AND ALSO BE OF SERVICE
TO THE COMMUNITY. LET US BUILD ONCE AND FOR ALL AN ARTIFICIAL ICE
ARENA, RIGHT HERE IN LEWISTON. LET US START NOT IN TWO YEARS, ^{not in one year} BUT
RIGHT NOW. ~~NOW~~ HERE IS HOW IT CAN BE WORKED OUT AND ~~K~~ I ASSURE YOU
THAT THE CITIZENS OF LEWISTON CAN AND WILL HAVE THAT ARENA IF THEY
WANT IT, AND I KNOW THEY WANT IT.

WITHOUT REVEALING ANYTHING TO* NIGHT AS FOR ITS FUTURE
SITE, MAY I SAY THAT BEYOND ANY DOUBT, THE CITY OF LEWISTON OWNS
THE LAND THAT WOULD SERVE FOR THAT PURPOSE. AS I HAVE ALREADY SAID,
WE DO NOT INTEND TO IMPOSE ^{such a} ~~THAT~~ PROJECT TO THE TAXPAYERS. THAT IS
WHY WE SHOULD EXPECT THAT THE CITY SHOULD AT LEAST PROVIDE THE
LAND FOR THE ARENA, AS ITS SHARE TOWARDS A WAR MEMORIAL. THUS
THE PROJECT WOULD BECOME A MUNICIPAL ENTERPRISE.

BUT YOU ^{too} WANT ~~also~~ ^{joint} TO SHARE IN THAT MEMORIAL, DON'T YOU?
THEN IT WOULD BECOME A MUNICIPAL AND CIVIC MOVEMENT.

THE PLANS ARE TO HAVE EVERYONE IN THIS CITY DONATE
WHATEVER HE OR SHE FEELS IS APPROPRIATE TO HELP. NO ONE WILL GO
UNSOLICITED. ^{too} EVERY LITTLE BIT WILL BE ACCAPTED. EVERY DONATION
WILL BE VOLUNTARY. THE PLAN WILL BE WORKED OUT WITH THE COOPERATION
OF THE LOCAL BANKS, SO THAT EVERY PENNY WILL BE ~~ACOUNTED~~ FOR. IN
OTHER WORDS, THE COMMITTEE MIGHT USE A SYSTEM COPIED ON THE
CHRISTMAS CLUBS OR THE VACATION CLUBS. *The campaign should start July 1st.*

FURTHERMORE, AS MAYOR, I BEG THE LOCAL CONTRACTORS TO
ORGANIZE THEMSELVES AND DONATE AT LEAST A PART OF THE LABOR WHEN
THE TIME COMES, AS THEIR OWN CONTRIBUTION. I KNOW THAT SOME OF
THEM HAVE ALREADY OFFERED THEIR SERVICES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MAY I ASSURE YOU ONCE MORE ~~OF~~ MY SINCERE
DEVOTION TO THAT PROJECT OF AN ARENA. ^{same} ~~YOU~~ MAY BE SKEPTICAL AND IN
DOUBT AS TO ITS ^{possibility} ~~REALIZATION~~ BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT ^{everyone} ~~YOU~~, MEN, WOMEN
AND CHILDREN OF THIS COMMUNITY CAN MAKE IT A SUCCESS IF YOU ONLY
WANT TO. PLEASE DON'T BE "PESSIMISTIC" BE CONFIDENT; ^{hopeful, cheerful.} ~~AT~~ LEAST SAY
A GOOD WORD FOR IT, ALWAYS, AND YOUR ARENA COMMITTEE WILL DO THE REST.

AND HERE ARE THE NAMES OF THOSE I HEREBY APPOINT TO GIVE YOU AN
ARTIFICIAL ICE ARENA THAT MAY SEAT 4500 PEOPLE AND SERVE ALSO FOR
BASKETBALL, BOXING AND OTHER ENTERTAINMENTS.

AS CHAIRMAN, A TRUE SPORTSMAN, MOST DEPENDABLE CITIZEN
MR. ALDRIK (BUCK) GAUDETTE ASSISTED BY SOME OF THE MOST CAPABLE MEN
IN LEWISTON:

CLIFF GOVE, YOUR SPORTS COMMENTOR ^{to}

JULIEN (CHICK) LEBLANC, ^{president of the committee in charge of this banquet}
^{in charge of sports at Bates Mfg. Co.}

LARRY CHAREST, AND MICHAEL BUCCIGROSS, ^{former Lt. in the Navy and a hockey fan.}

I URGE EVERY CITIZEN TO HELP THAT COMMITTEE IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE.

LET EVERYONE BE A GOOD SPORT. DO THAT FOR YOUR KIDS, FOR ALL THE
CHILDREN OF LEWISTON AND, MAY I SAY, OF AUBURN, BECAUSE WE MAY HAVE
A VERY PLEASANT SURPRISE FOR YOU IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ~~WHO KNOWS,~~

LEWISTON AND AUBURN ARE TWINS YOU KNOW.

^{My friends,} ~~LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,~~ ^{together we} WE CAN BUILD THAT ARENA. ^{build it!} LET US ~~HAVE IT.~~

THANK YOU.