

Having Heritage

Words & Music by Nick Maloof

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Having Heritage is knowing your past and making it last;
And Heritage is more than just living, it's endlessly
giving, of you and me.
Having Heritage is the young and old together in all kinds
of weather;
And Heritage is celebration and dance and drink to enhance
an evening.
Love is "real love" and life is "to life"; family is you.
You'll see the love — you'll see the life;
Grab hold of your Heritage. It's You.

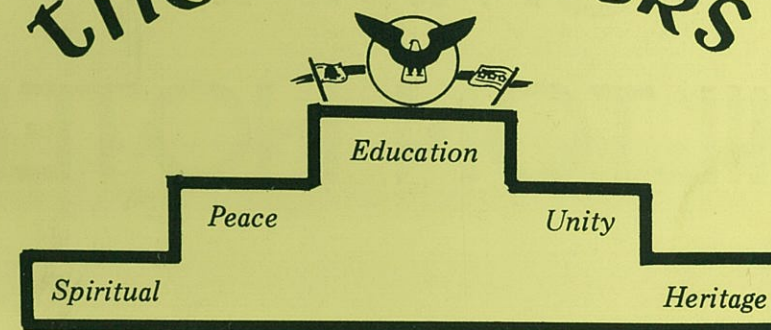
Having Heritage adds something to a greeting, that
says: "Hey, we're finally meeting."
And Heritage is children in succession, such a beautiful
expression, of you and of me.
Having Heritage adds meaning to your mission, when sharing
your tradition.
And Heritage is family to carry on, when Grandma and I are
gone, far, far away.
Love is "real love" and life is "to life"; family is you.
You'll see the love — you'll see the life.
Let's share the love — let's share the life.
It's Heritage. Grab hold.
It's beautiful and old.
Let your Heritage be told.
It's you, it's you, it's you

Illustration courtesy of The Southern Federation of
Syrian Lebanese American Clubs

39th annual convention

Midwest Federation of
American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs

the BUILDERS



convention

August 7 - 10, 1975

Hilton Hotel
Omaha, Nebraska

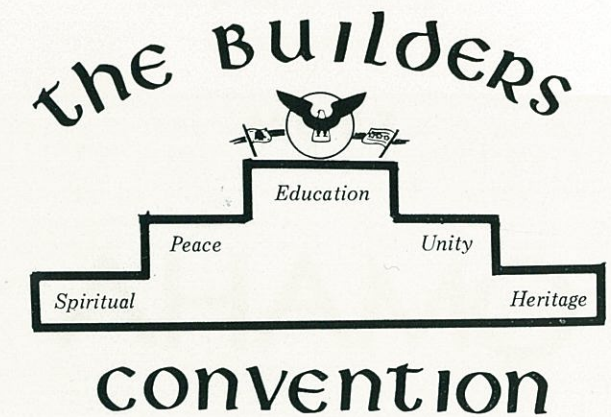
Welcome

FROM

OMAHA
HILTON HOTEL

Headquarters For The
MIDWEST FEDERATION OF AMERICAN
SYRIAN-LEBANON CLUBS
Omaha, Nebraska

Dedication Message



This souvenir program book is dedicated to The Builders of the Past, Present, and Future of Our Heritage in America.

As the young look upward, their thoughts are to the future. The middle-aged, the builders of today, look straight ahead. The elders, who built the foundation, think of how well they have done to benefit us all and serve themselves at the same time.

The elders have come to the conclusion that youth is not a time of life — it is a state of mind, a temper of will, a quality of imagination, a vigor of emotions. They realize that one grows old not by the number of years but by the desertion of ideals.

Our thoughts today are especially directed to those early builders, those of our people who came to this great land, who worked hard to sow the zest for adventure over the love for ease.

As the young walk in the paths of these great forefathers, may their work ever maintain the desire to construct their lives on the foundation that has been prepared — a strong foundation built with love and a rich heritage.

May the young, in the same manner as our senior citizens, continue building upward so our elders will never look downward with thoughts in the past and feelings of despair, but instead forward and upward to the continuation of their heritage in this great nation, the United States of America.



81-15-24012

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 23, 1975

The President sends his warmest greetings to the members of the Midwest Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs as you hold your Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention.

Your theme is appropriately reflective of the goals and constructive service of your fine organization. Across the nation, your Clubs have truly been builders. Your efforts on behalf of education, peace, national unity and spiritual enrichment are in the best tradition of the heritage we share as Americans.

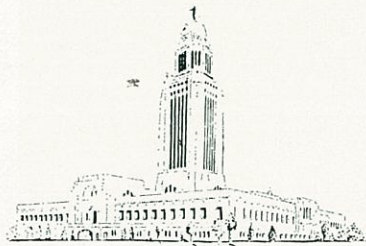
As we approach our Bicentennial observance, the President is especially mindful of your contribution to the vitality of our society.

You have his very best wishes for a successful and enjoyable session.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Theodore C. Marrs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Theodore C. Marrs
Special Assistant to the President

J. JAMES EXON
GOVERNOR



STATE of NEBRASKA
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
LINCOLN
68509

August, 1975

The Builder's Convention
Midwest Federation of American
Syrian Lebanon Clubs
Omaha, Nebraska

Dear Delegates:

Welcome to Nebraska!

We are pleased to have your convention return to Nebraska,
and we hope that you will enjoy our "good life."

We are hopeful that this convention will enjoy the success
of past meetings.

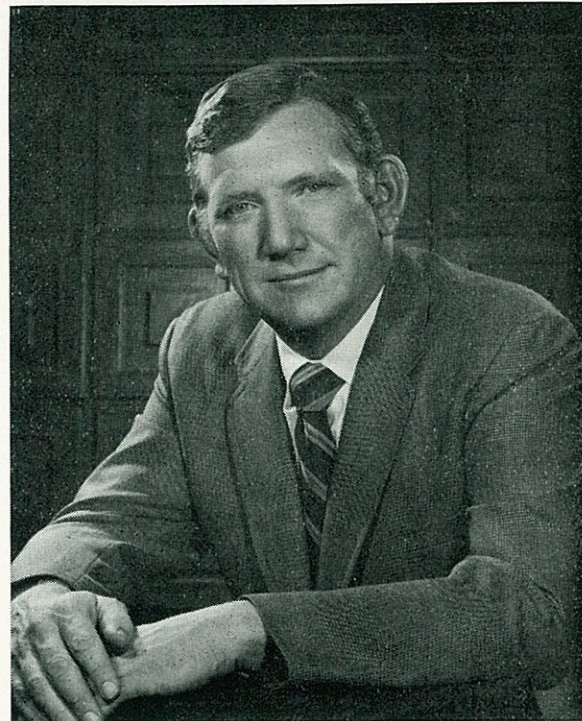
While in Nebraska, take time to visit our many places of
interest and get acquainted with our fine citizens. I know
they will show you the warm hospitality of the midwest.

My very best wishes to all of you.

Sincerely,

J. James Exon
Governor

JJE:f



CITY OF OMAHA

Executive Office
EDWARD ZORINSKY
Mayor

108 SOUTH 18TH STREET • OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102 • 402/341-8122

To the Delegates of the Midwest Federation
of American Syrian Lebanese Clubs:

WELCOME!

As Mayor of the City of Omaha, it is my pleasure to
extend greetings from the City of Omaha and myself personally
to all the delegates to the convention of the Midwest Federation
of American Syrian Lebanese Clubs.

We are pleased to be chosen as the host for the
convention and to welcome the delegates from Nebraska and the
surrounding states.

We know you will find the people of this city to
be friendly and sincerely interested in your welfare while
you are here. There are many advantages I might cite regard-
ing Omaha's attractiveness but I believe it sufficient to say
that we are privileged to be host to your distinguished group
and will do everything possible to make your stay pleasant and
rewarding.

My best wishes to all!

Sincerely,

EDWARD ZORINSKY
MAYOR

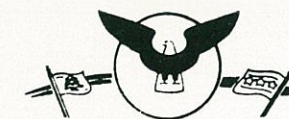
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Minor George

President

Midwest Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs



Midwest Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs

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Kansas - WINNIE RAZOOK
Kentucky - Vacant
Michigan - MIRIAM COSTANDI
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North Dakota - Vacant
Ohio - THOMAS JOSEPH
Pennsylvania - Vacant
South Dakota - Vacant
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JAMES J. BARROCK
EDWARD D. DEEB
† JAMES ARRIEN
* Deceased
† Honorary

"MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT"

I have been proud to be your President of The Mid-West Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs these past two years.

I want to express my thanks to all you delegates, members, and guests for coming to Omaha this year.

We have become aware and involved as "concerned Americans" looking out for America's best interests while being very proud of our heritage.

For too long we only "showed off" our dances, kibbee, and taboule. Now comes the time to flex our muscle by bringing all the numbers together. I only can hope you will continue your work in the Mid-West Federation and help bring into the fold many of our clubs and individuals who fell by the wayside.

At the same time, we must cooperate with all the other organizations of our rich and proud heritage.

Together in the civic, educational, charitable and political life we can do much more together than alone.

As we approach the Bi-Centennial celebrations, we as good Americans will work together to preserve the goal's, ideals, and traditions of this country. We as proud Americans have to do our part to keep United States "the light of the free world."

So, in closing let me thank all the officers and members for the support they have given me and remember "Now, more than ever, we must get together."

Minor George

Minor George, President

Mid-West Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs

WELCOME

From Our General Co-Chairman



From the onset of planning for this gathering, the thought foremost in my mind has been the great fortune we share in having forefathers who came to America and worked hard to build a strong foundation — a foundation on which all of us are able to keep building, hopefully, with positive attitudes and high ideals.

Each of us has our own "tools" with which to continue constructing an even stronger edifice. Each brings to a gathering, such as this, his and her own unique tools molded from background, personality, experiences, education, and ideals. Each has the power to use his tools artfully and skillfully to contribute to the present and future of our heritage and our country.

As we go forth, and Omaha's convention joins our other past adventures and experiences, let us all strive to construct stronger and higher floors for our existing structure. As we help this magnificent nation celebrate the 200th anniversary of its birth, let us all, especially the youth, dedicate ourselves to high ideals and goals.

Let our building be a tribute to all Americans of Arabic ancestry that will speak for all of us and say, "We are proud of who and what has gone before us and are willing to continue pledging allegiance to our heritage and our country today, tomorrow and always."

We extend sincere thanks to all who have participated in building this successful convention — to you who helped plan and work, and to all of you who attended.

IVAN ABDOUH
General Co-Chairman

WELCOME

From Our General Co-Chairman



To the officers, delegates, members and friends, a most cordial welcome is extended to you attending the Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention of the Midwest Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs in your host city, Omaha.

Heartfelt gratitude to all who have used their "tools", individually and collectively, to "build" this convention.

As our ancestors in both the Old and New Worlds used their God-given talents to build a firm foundation, let us in America continue to move forward in that same spirit.

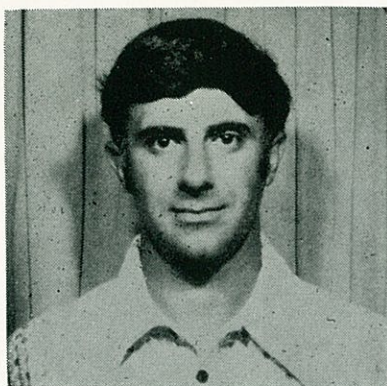
Let us never be ashamed of, or apologize for, our heritage. Instead, take its riches (of which there are so many) and continue building from there.

True respect will never come to the man who hides his heritage because of the human frailties of others who cause war. It can come only to the man and woman who accentuate the positive and work as individuals to continue making himself and herself and America stronger and deserving of leadership status in the world.

May the constructive spirit found during this memorable convention remain forever in your hearts. May you all be inspired to return home and use your "tools" (talents, personalities, experiences, intelligence) to "build." The world and America, on the 200th anniversary of its creation and in all the years ahead, need more who are willing to construct instead of destruct.

May God give you His full blessings, and may you return home safely.

TED HAZER
General Co-Chairman



It is my pleasure on behalf of the members of the Phoenician Club of Omaha to welcome each and everyone of you to this convention.

I would like to thank Ted Hazer and Ivan Abdouch, our convention chairmen, and all their committees for their efforts these past months in organizing such a fine program. Also my sincere thanks to members of the Phoenician Club and St. Mary's Orthodox Church who worked to make this convention a success.

Building upon our heritage through education, peace and harmony is the theme of this convention. The unity we experience here and the ideas we exchange are built upon the fine heritage that we all love. Our heritage is what this convention is based upon and is what we hope to preserve and continue to build. Your presence in Omaha truly proves the pride we take in being American Syrian and Lebanese people.

I would like to thank you all for your participation and may God be with you.

Delano T. Skaff, President
Phoenician Club of Omaha



Welcome!

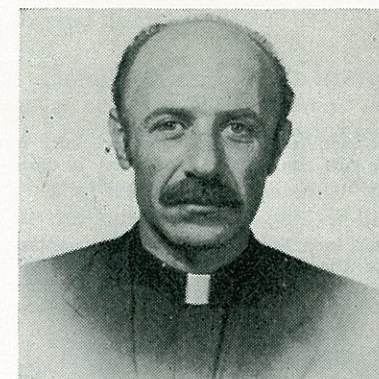
I am most pleased to welcome you on behalf of St. Mary's Parish Council and parishioners to the 39th Annual Midwest Federation of American Syrian Lebanese Clubs Convention.

This is a wonderful way to renew our friendships and to make new ones, to blend our customs and heritage with music and entertainment, to continue contributing notability to the United States, and pray that the purposes and aims of the Federation will forever stay alive for our future generations.

A special thanks to the Co-General Chairmen, Ivan Abdouch and Ted Hazer, and to the Officers and Committee Chairmen and Members of St. Mary's Eastern Orthodox Church and the Phoenician Club (Co-sponsors) who worked diligently together to make this convention a memorable one; and to the guests, those near and who have come from a distance, to be with us.

I sincerely hope you will find your stay in Omaha enlightened, progressive, friendly and rewarding, and that you will take with you many happy memories, and ask our Lord to protect all of you as you journey home, and pray we will meet again!

Sylvia Abdouch, Chairman
of the Parish Council
St. Mary's Eastern Orthodox Church



As Host Pastor of St. Mary's Orthodox Church of Omaha, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this City to participate at the 39th Annual Midwest Federation Convention, and to join us in worship at St. Mary's, expressing thankfulness to Almighty God for the privilege upon which we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, based on unity, honesty, love and devotion.

As St. John said, "It is Christ in us, the hope of glory." It is not only what we say, but what we are!

I pray your visit will be most happy and that our Lord, Jesus Christ, will save you all.

Rev. Father Jehad T. Michael, Pastor
St. Mary's Eastern Orthodox Church

1975 Convention Committee Chairpersons

Ted Hazer, *General Co-Chairman*

Judy K. Yacio, *Promotion*

Public Relations, Printing

George Hathoot, *Program Book*

Sadie George, *Arabic Food Preparation*

Lucille Hathoot, *Registration*

Esther Abdouch, *Registration Ass't.*

Gilbert Gibreal, *Hospitality*

Laurice Gibreal, *Grand Banquet*

Mary Nahas, *Decorations*

Duane Skaff, *Transportation*

Toufic David, *Special Services*

Ivan Abdouch, *General Co-Chairman*

J. D. Hattam, *Treasurer*

Carol Deeb, *Secretary*

Ivan Abdouch, *Mailing*

John Glen Hays, *Mailing, Assistant*

Tom Borne, *Reservation & Housing*

Wanda Skaff, *Food Concession*

Ken Shada, *Entertainment*

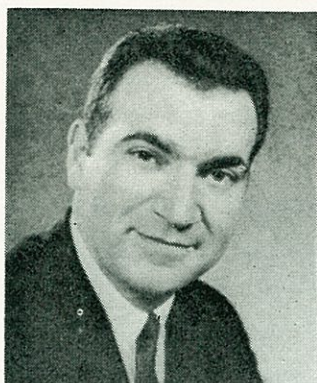
Philip Abdouch, *Entertainment, Assistant*

Vida Saigh, *Welcome Banquet*

Cleo Abrouch, *Beauty Pageant*

Margaret Nahas, *Dubke Contest*

Many thanks to the above chairpersons and to all the members of their committees who have helped make this a memorable convention.



OURS IS A RICH HERITAGE

SYRIANS, LEBANESE ARE FOUNDERS OF CIVILIZATION

by EDWARD DEEB

Since most Syrians and Lebanese tend to take their rich heritage for granted, only a mere handful of their American ancestors realize that we are the founders of what is considered modern-day civilization as we know it. A bold statement, yes, but nevertheless it is true.

Better known to scholars and intellectuals throughout the world as Arab history, culture and lore today, it also includes the ancient land of Phoenicia, Babylon and Mesopotamia of yesteryear. Present-day inhabitants of the Arab world often look wistfully backward in history to the time when their civilization and way of life was inferior to none, reaching its peak under the popular Harun Al-Rashid, central figure of the classic "Arabian Nights," the book itself acclaimed as one of the best literary works of all time.

Arab philosophy, law, mathematics, literature, medicine, astronomy and the useful arts, during the golden age of the Caliphates of Damascus, Bakhdad and Cordoba (Spain) were all but extinguished during Europe's Dark Ages.

Our ancestors were attributed the founders of Astronomy, the science which deals with the origin, composition, distance and motion of all bodies and matter in the universe. It is the most ancient of all sciences, recognizing a number of constellations as early as the year 3000 B. C. Recorded discoveries of astronomy were first contained in the book "Almagest," the basis of the Ptolemaic system of planetary motions. Mastery of astronomy eventually led to the discovery of Astrology, the science which forecasts events by fixed stars, the moon and sun planets. The Arabs were also credited with inventing the signs of the Zodiac (horoscope), which helped to provide better understanding and knowledge to the positions of the sun, moon and other planets in relation to the universe.

Invention of Arabic numbers led to a tremendous breakthrough in mathematics, simplifying the science greatly, while allowing use of the decimal system. A big advancement over the former Roman numeral system which was considered slow and confusing. Shortly afterward, an Arab scholar named Al-Jabr founded a still higher form of mathematics we know as Algebra, named after him, and the basis for such advanced math as geometry, trigonometry, calculus, etc.

In early history, man throughout the Middle East was governed by laws known as the "Code of Eshtar," a code which eventually was used as the foundation of Roman and English law. Eshtar was one of the great Phoenician goddesses. Later, Hammarabi, emperor of Babylon, ordered a revision of the Code of Eshtar. In his revised code, Hammarabi's preface stated that he, as a Phoenician, was honored to enforce the laws, which contained then what we know as the Ten Commandments, credited to Moses, who lived in a later era than the Babylonian ruler.

The revised code of Hammarabi also contained provisions outlining the belief in one God, Creator of heaven and earth, the existence of the soul, and the resurrection of both the body and soul in heaven and hell, according to author and attorney Joseph Sheban, an active Federationite. Thus, it established not only civil laws by which man lives among men, but also a code of conduct which would determine whether he would reach either heaven or hell. Hammarabi's code also asserted the right of the individual to own property, to lease it, or to sell it, all of these which in some form or another are contained in the U. S. Constitution.

Arabic music, highly emotional and extremely free rhythmically, has also left its impact on various other cultures of the world. When the Moors infiltrated and eventually conquered Spain, the intertwining of the Arabic music and dancing on the Spanish people led ultimately to a style we know as Flamenco. In addition, Arabic music allowed the first opportunity for a musician or a singer performing with an ensemble to improvise his own interpretation of a melody. It is my contention that the American form of Jazz today stems from the Arabs, and not from Africa, as is believed. To illustrate, when a singer or musician improvises in the Arabic band, it is called "taqsim" or "hejaz" hence ultimately leading to the English word "jazz."

Other interesting notes on our heritage are as follows. Not many people are aware that the wife of the Roman emperor, Constantine, one of the most popular of the Roman rulers, was a Syrian, born in the city of Homs. He met her while on a tour of Syria, asked her to return with him to Constantinople, then the headquarters of the Catholic Church. Also, the Arabs were the first to invent some form of air conditioning to provide relief from the hot desert sun. Bedouins would place dry ice atop their tents and pour water over it. The resulting chemical reaction would actually cause cool air to fill the tent. In addition, it was the combined efforts of Arab scholars in the 4th and 5th centuries which was responsible for preserving the now famous Greek philosophies of Aristotle, Plato and Socrates. All Greek volumes had been destroyed except those translated into the Arabic, which eventually reached all nations of the world. Finally, though the Greek doctor Hippocrates is credited as being the father of modern medicine, his teacher was an aging Arab doctor, who wished his theories be passed on to future generations. Ibn Khaldoun was his name, and Hippocrates was his best student.

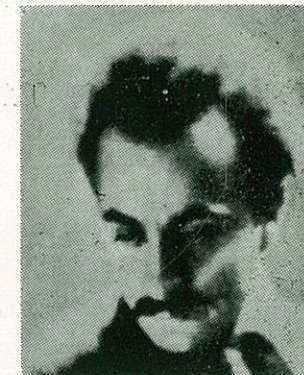
Of course all Arab contributions cannot be outlined in a single article, but you can now see that indeed we have a rich heritage which stems back to time immemorial. Unfortunately, for lack of time or knowledge, many parents have been negligent in teaching their children the important contributions made by the Arabs to civilization. It truly is a shame since we have accomplished so much of which we can be proud to say . . . "I'm an Ibn Arab . . . Syrian . . . Lebanese," or what have you. Above all remember however, we're Americans first!

(NOTE: Mr. Deeb was commissioned to write this article exclusively for the Lansing Cedars Club's convention booklet as host to the 1966 Michigan Federation convention. Persons or organizations are permitted to reprint the article, but must credit the Cedars Club of Lansing, and the Michigan Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs.)

Gibran's Message to Young Americans of Syrian Origin

By KAHLIL GIBRAN

Below is the classic written in 1926 by the famous writer, Kahlil Gibran. This message, reprinted exactly as it was first published, is directly addressed to our Youth.



Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931), born in present-day Lebanon, is remembered as a poet, philosopher, and artist. Most famous of his literary contributions is *The Prophet*. His poetry has been translated into more than twenty languages.

The winds of time and death cannot erase Gibran's footprints embedded in the sands of the souls of his Arabic-speaking brothers in the Near East and in the United States where he spent the last twenty years of his life.

I believe in you, and I believe in your destiny.

I believe that you are contributors to this new civilization.

I believe that you have inherited from your forefathers an ancient dream, a song, a prophecy, which you can proudly lay as a gift of gratitude upon the lap of America.

I believe you can say to the founders of this great nation, "Here I am, a youth, a young tree whose roots were plucked from the hills of Lebanon, yet I am deeply rooted here, and I would be fruitful."

And I believe that you can say to Abraham Lincoln, "The blessed Jesus of Nazareth touched your lips when you spoke and guided your hand when you wrote; and I shall uphold all that you have said and all that you have written."

I believe that you can say to Emerson and Whitman and James, "In my veins runs the blood of the poets and wise men of old, and in my desire to come to you and receive, but I shall not come with empty hands."

I believe that even as your fathers came to this land to produce riches, you were born here to produce riches by intelligence, by labor.

And I believe that it is in you to be good citizens.

And what is it to be a good citizen?

It is to acknowledge the other person's right before asserting your own, but always to be conscious of your own.

It is to be free in thought and deed, but it is also to know that your freedom is subject to the other person's freedom.

It is to create the useful and the beautiful with your own hands, and to admire what others have created in love and with faith.

It is to produce wealth by labor and only by labor and to spend less than you have produced that your children may not be dependent on the state for support when you are no more.

It is to stand before the towers of New York, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco saying in your heart, "I am the descendant of a people that builded Damascus, and Biblus, and Tyre and Sidon, and Antioch, and now I am here to build with you, and with a will."

It is to be proud of being an American, but it is also to be proud that your fathers and mothers came from a land upon which God laid His gracious hand and raised His messengers.

Young Americans of Syrian origin*, I believe in you.

* Lebanon was a part Syria at the time of the original publication of this message.

Official Program

Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention

Omaha Hilton Hotel, Omaha, Nebraska

August 7, 8, 9 and 10, 1975

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 1975

- 3:00 P.M.—Registration. Mezzanine, Second Floor.
- 3:30 P.M.—Seminar on Kahlil Gibran, beloved author of THE PROPHET. Open to the public. Joseph Sheban, lawyer, author who has received special citations for his literary works, and authority on Gibran, will present this seminar.
- 8:00 P.M.—Welcome Party. Swimming Pool Side, Fourth Floor.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 1975

- 8:00 A.M.—Registration. Mezzanine, Second Floor.
- 10:00 A.M.—Tour. Father Flanagan's Boys Town. Chartered buses will be available. For detailed information, check at registration desk. Be sure to see the world-famous "City of Little Men."
- 10:00 A.M.—Committee Meetings. A listing of meetings and rooms will be available at the desk in the Mezzanine.
- 12 NOON —Welcome Banquet. Main Ballroom. Included in your registration fees. Nick Maloof, professional entertainer from California, will present his own beautiful tribute to his Arabic heritage in song. Mr. Maloof recently appeared at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles, and the 4,000 members of the audience gave him a standing ovation for his performance. Well-known national and local personalities will also be present to greet you to Omaha.
- 1:30 P.M.—Tours to Boys Town and Strategic Air Command. Chartered buses will be available. SAC Tour is available to first 50 persons who sign up for it. Detailed information on all tours at registration desk.
- 2:00-5:00 P.M.—General Assembly. A listing of the meeting room will be available at the registration desk in the Mezzanine.

5:00-7:00 P.M.—Relaxation. On your own to rest and prepare for an evening filled with beauty, food and fun. Or, to rest so you can participate in the Dubke Contest.

7:00 P.M.—Dubke Contest. Main Ballroom. Followed by dancing for everyone.

9:00 P.M.—Beauty Pagaent. Main Ballroom. Beautiful, charming young women (ages 18 to 25 years old) will vie for "Miss Midwest Federation 1975."

10:00 P.M.—Sahira. Main Ballroom. Nationally-known Amer Kadaj will offer you the finest in Arabic music.

11:00 P.M.—Delicious Arabic cuisine will be available in Main Ballroom. Choose your favorites at reasonable prices.

10:00 P.M.—Combo & Dancing. Room location will be posted by registration desk in Mezzanine.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 1975

9:00 A.M.—Registration. Mezzanine, Second Floor.

10:00 A.M.—Committee Meetings. A listing of meetings and rooms will be available at the desk in the Mezzanine.

11:00 A.M.—Presidents' and Governors' Brunch. Main Ballroom. Purchase tickets at registration desk. Outstanding awards presented.

1:00-5:00 P.M.—General Assembly Meeting (official business session of the convention). Main Ballroom. Please attend.

6:00 P.M.—Cocktail Hour, Mezzanine.

7:00 P.M.—Grand Awards Banquet. Main Ballroom. Included in your registration costs. We are honored to have as our guest speaker Dr. Clovis Maksoud, a journalist of international acclaim who now represents 20 Arab nations.

10:00 P.M.—Arabic Entertainment with Amer Kadaj. Main Ballroom. Amer's music promises fun for all ages.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 1975

Church Services—Schedule is posted at the Registration Desk on Mezzanine with times of worship services and addresses of churches.

Thanks for Coming. It has been a pleasure renewing old and making new acquaintances. We look forward to hearing of the constructive jobs you pursue after returning home from "The Builders Convention." Your host clubs—the Phoenician Club of Omaha and St. Mary's Orthodox Church—hope you have enjoyed your stay. May God grant you a safe journey home. We sincerely hope you will return to Omaha soon.
