

PROJECT 2000 DEDICATION
John H. Geiger's remarks, May 9, 2000
Lawrence, Indiana

G.O.C. Add Org
Nat'l Headquarters
BUILDINGS
FORT BEN

Thank you Ron, Commanders Lance and Miller, President Lib, distinguished public officials, past National Commanders, American Legion officers, staff personnel, and friends.

We all have come a long way since the early 1990,s when our leaders recognized that the splendid Nation Headquarters at 700 Pennsylvania was an inappropriate use of space and location for our catalog sales business, emerging electronic management systems, and the new independent marketing firm.

The National Executive Committee's approval of the required facility expansion program in 1998 started this TEAM on our mission to get it operational for the 21st century needs of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and the SAL.

Chairman George Boucek called us into the October 1998 meeting of the Finance Commission and "politely advised me" that I was to lead a special oversight liaison committee on Project 2000 representing Commander Butch and him. Luckily, we were able to secure the skilled and experienced Carl Levi, Vice Chairman of Finance and a long time member of the Emblem Committee, George West, Chairman of the NEC's Liaison Committee to the Internal Affairs Commission, and Ron Brooks, the energetic Executive Director of our Marketing Services Group.

Our work covered site selection, operational space needs, personnel requirements, functional flexibility, budget control and future growth forecasting. This process was rapidly and very successfully accomplished through the imaginative and mutual objectiveness of Ron's staff. We especially commend Chuck Krupa, Brad Pryor, Jeff Brown, Greg Roth and Holly Weinzapel for their studious efforts and dedication.

The choice of location for our new facility involved the study of operational and personnel logistics, costs of various sites, and the receptive attitudes of potential developers. That effort brought us to the newest growth community in this region, the Fort Benjamin Harris Redevelopment Authority. Their executives (regularly encouraged by General Brooks) gave The American Legion very generous consideration and assistance in planning, land acquisition and expediting permits.

We also appreciate the special partnership we have enjoyed with Mayor Tom Schneider of Lawrence, Mayor Bart Peterson of Indianapolis, and many government agencies in the area. They recognize and support the Legion's investment in construction dollars, business growth and employment opportunities for this community.

A special salute must be given to the Duke Realty team which was selected after a thorough evaluation of their qualifications, previous project history, and proposed management team. I am pleased to commend Jeff Stone, David Reed, Jim Tully, and "hard hat" Rob VanDame and all of their Architects and Engineers, superintendents and sub-contractors of Duke-Weeks Construction group for their constant attention to quality work, construction scheduling and budget control. Thank you for your expertise.

May I also advise you that throughout this project we have benefited from the professional guidance and support of our own National Adjutant Bob Spanogle, construction-experienced Judge Advocate Phil Onderdonk, financial wizard Treasurer George Buskirk, and the close oversight of George Boucek and Ken Danilson.

You will recall that the contract between The American Legion and Duke was executed on January 22, 1999, the ground-breaking ceremony was held on March 9th, and Duke started on-site work on April 5, 1999, and we are here 13 months later with a finished and operating facility. Our appreciation is sincerely given to all of those involved in the Project 2000 endeavor, which came in on schedule, at a cost of \$3,680,591 and about \$400,000 under budget.

Now, on May 9, 2000, your ad-hoc Project 2000 TEAM is sincerely pleased to present this completed facility to The American Legion :
To many it may appear to be just another building, but to each member of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion it constitutes a productive, efficient and profitable center of services to maintain our many fine programs for GOD and Country.

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Ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege and high honor to present this devoted and energetic Legion leader from Idaho, their distinguished Attorney General, and our friend, the National Commander of The American Legion, Alan Lance, Jr.