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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Survival of orchestra a matter of self-respect

During the 1980s, when I was a member of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, I often performed with Orchestra London to fill out the bassoon section for performances of the larger orchestral repertoire. I always looked forward to working with the exceptional musicians of the London orchestra.

When I used to drive into London, I was impressed with the size of the downtown area compared to that of Kitchener-Waterloo. I learned the headquarters of many corporations made their home in London. I presumed that Orchestra London did enjoy the long-term financial security that a city like London would offer in view of its relative prosperity and a well-informed population.

Rumours are now filtering westward that Orchestra London is burdened by an inappropriate and punitive tax ruling, a substantial drop in funding from the province and insufficient support from city council. It is a sad day indeed when the city of London allows an important cornerstone of its cultural life to slowly starve into oblivion.

I am sure the citizens of London, who are known to have an educational level above the national average, understand the presence of an orchestra in any city has a multiplier effect on the economy of the community that pays dividends in an amount far greater than the initial monies invested.

I would ask the citizens of London to consider what their city, however prosperous, would be like without the highly talented musicians of the orchestra in their midst. Who would play the music so necessary in our environment? Who would teach music to the children?

Present and future Londoners deserve better. It is a matter of respect and dignity.

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