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## Amend the Amendment!

An otherwise qualified resident of this city, the Capital of the United States, is in precisely the same category as a citizen of Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas and Virginia who has failed to pay his poll tax. In other words, he cannot vote for President, Vice President or a Representative in Congress.

The great difference between the District citizen and the citizen of one of these States, however, is that the latter can remove his disfranchisement by paying the tax. In Alabama it is \$1.50; Arkansas, \$1.00; Mississippi, \$2.00; Texas, \$1.75; Virginia, \$1.50. But the resident of the District, no matter what he might be willing to pay for the great privilege of exercising his rights as an American, is a political outcast insofar as representation in his Government is concerned. He is disqualified because of his residence in Washington, heart of the Republic.

This really extraordinary contrast in voting rights leads us to renew our earlier suggestion that Senator Holland's proposed amendment of the Constitution, outlawing payment of the poll tax as a prerequisite to voting in the five States which retain that tax, be amended to extend voting rights to citizens of Washington as well. We note with pleasure that Senator Randolph of West Virginia, Senator Keating of New York and Senator Case of South Dakota have expressed approval of the idea. The hearings on the Holland amendment having been set for next week, we hope that they and other Senators will take that opportunity to present the case for the voteless citizens of Washington.

The vehicle provided by Senator Holland to remove one injustice can surely not be complete if it leaves untouched an even more glaring injustice here at the Capital of our country.

## Highway Green Light

The House Ways and Means Committee's compromise tax plan for financing interstate highways gives the green light to the far-reaching road construction program at a critical time. The program, accelerated by Congress last year as an antirecession measure and then slowed down by a serious fund shortage, has been threatened with complete stoppage by October unless the highway trust fund is replenished.

While the temporary one-cent increase in the three-cent Federal gas tax and the subsequent transfer to the highway fund of part of the excise taxes on automobiles and automotive parts would not produce all the money needed to operate the program at full speed, the plan would enable the States to make good headway in the immediate future. The threatened shutdown of construction would have had serious repercussions throughout the country.

The administration had urged Congress to raise the gas tax by 1½ cents a gallon and thus avoid any type of financing that would tap the general fund of the Treasury for highway purposes. Highway users' organizations fought this plan strenuously, however, and the Ways and Means Committee had shied away from the tax plan. In the end, however, it became convinced that there were no satisfactory alternatives. The arrangement for diverting part of the excise taxes back to the automotive field between 1961 and 1964 will deprive the Treasury's general fund of some income at a time of prospective fiscal stress. Under the committee's proposal, half of the revenue from the 10 per cent excise tax on automobiles and about two-thirds of the 8 per cent levy on parts would be withheld for road construction.

The committee's recommendation is a reasonable one, considering the forces at work for and against the tax boost. We hope there will be no further legislative tieups to threaten scheduled progress on the 41,000-mile highway network.

## Fairfax Gets Ready

With 26 Negro children seeking admission to white schools in Fairfax County, it is a foregone conclusion that there will be some integration in the near future. It seems to us, therefore, that the Fairfax School Board has done the sensible thing in preparing and adopting a plan of desegregation.

It is feasible to do this now because the courts have rather clearly defined the criteria which can be used in making pupil assignments. And since this

is the case it is better to have a plan ready against either the day of court-ordered desegregation or the date in March on which, under legislation recently enacted by the Legislature, the authority to assign pupils will revert to those localities which wish to exercise it. Nothing would be gained, certainly, by a refusal on the part of the school board to act until it is forced to act.

There has been some criticism of the board's unwillingness to make the plan public at this time. This, however, is a matter that is properly within the board's discretion, for it is the responsible agency and it has the right, if it sees fit, not to risk premature publication of its plan.

## Compromise on Housing?

It is not surprising that Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson has chided some of his "liberal" Democratic colleagues in the Senate for their unsuccessful drive to override the veto of the omnibus housing bill. He knew in advance, and they did too, that the effort was bound to fail for want of enough votes, but they insisted on having the show-down anyhow. They did so because they felt that it would be politically advantageous to them and their party—especially in our big cities—to go on record as having made the brave but futile gesture.

This is one of the chief reasons why Mr. Johnson went along with the foredoomed effort. However, although he himself voted to override, he has made clear that he does not believe that the Democrats are likely to gain any political ground as a result of the maneuver, which he has likened to a billy goat butting its head against a stone wall. In any case, the President's key arguments—namely, that the vetoed bill was extravagant and highly inflationary—have prevailed, and the time has come now for the "liberals" to forget electioneering considerations long enough to help in the enactment of substitute legislation. As Mr. Johnson has put it, with admirable succinctness, they must decide "whether they want an issue or want housing."

If they want housing, then something like the new bill just reported by the Senate Banking Committee should serve to get a sound and reasonable program started—an effective and non-inflationary program of the sort the country needs. In its present form, the bill contains certain features apparently objectionable to the President, but he has indicated that he is in a mood for fair compromise, and Congress should therefore be able to work one out that will be acceptable to itself, to him and to the American people in general.

## Appeal to Reason

In his address to the 21-nation Inter-American Foreign Ministers Conference, Secretary Herter has presented no magic formula for ending the Caribbean crisis. But he has effectively singled out the root cause of the turmoil, and he has proposed emergency action that could do much to pacify the situation.

The root cause, of course, is the fact that in the Caribbean during recent months "at least three countries have been attacked by armed expeditions coming from outside their borders." More than that, "Several governments have been menaced by viciously hostile propaganda attacks originating in other countries," and thus it is that "both internal and international tensions have grown throughout the region."

In saying these things, Mr. Herter has mentioned no names. Everybody knows, however, that the trouble has coincided with Fidel Castro's rise to power in Havana and his subsequent call (though he himself has yet to hold free elections) for the elimination of all dictatorships in the Americas. His special target, but not the only one, has been Generalissimo Trujillo's regime in the Dominican Republic, and in firing away at it he has been helped by Venezuela's Betancourt government.

Dictator Trujillo, in turn, has been deeply engaged in intrigues and unrestrained propaganda against Castro's Cuba and Betancourt's Venezuela. Inevitably, other countries have been affected by this fierce feuding, and the result is that the entire area is in a critically jittery state—a situation explosive enough to threaten peace throughout the Caribbean.

To cope with this threat, Mr. Herter has proposed that a special hemispheric committee be set up forthwith to investigate the crisis in all its aspects, including especially armed intervention and propaganda warfare. The committee, which might also play a conciliating or mediating role in disputes between states of the area, would report its findings at the next full-dress Inter-American Conference, which is scheduled to be held in February.

True, none of this will achieve much unless the chief feuders permit it to. But we must hope for the best.

## Music Hath Charms

When Nikita Khrushchev arrived at Katowice on his recent tour of Poland, a band of proletarian musicians played "The Stars and Stripes Forever." This struck us at the time as a singularly engaging incident in the cold war, but it seemed to be just an accident, an inadvertency, a mix-up of notes in no way intended to startle the Soviet Premier by greeting him with Sousa's 100 per cent American march. Now, however, we're not so sure about this. On the contrary, in view of the tremendous welcome given Vice President Nixon in Warsaw, we're rather inclined to suspect that the whole thing was done deliberately in a wry, ironical and slightly defiant effort to make clear to Mr. K. how the Polish people really feel as between his country and ours. Anyhow, in its own way, the story is charming enough to be recorded as a kind of footnote to the history of our perplexed and perplexing times.



'Oh, Well—It Isn't the First Roof That's Fallen In!'

## LETTERS TO THE STAR

### 'New Eisenhower'

We hear a great deal these days about the "new Eisenhower" who, it is said, has abandoned his former political posture of passive ability and now undertakes to provide strong political leadership to Congress and the country.

If this were true, it would be good news indeed. But the "new Eisenhower," as he appears in two of his most recent attempts to influence legislation appears instead as the truculent partisan of class interest, speaking in language that is not only misleading but calculated to mislead.

I refer to the veto of the housing bill and the speech on the pending labor union legislation.

It was the usually mild and temperate Senator Sparkman who, in commenting on the housing veto, exposed the "innuendo, half truths, error by commission and omission and the sly use of words more properly found in advertisements concocted on Madison Avenue." Republican Senator Capehart added that "some things in the veto message, at least," had been "written in a way to mislead the American people." Both charges were amply documented in the Senate committee hearings, which showed the administration and the President as its spokesman to be speaking in the interest of the builders and financiers of high-priced housing and against programs of low and middle-income housing and slum clearance.

The televised speech on the pending labor union bills was cut from the same piece. One would have to go back 30 years to find a speech from a high official so nakedly anti-labor in tone and content. It contained not even the most perfunctory recognition of the value of free, strong, responsible unions in a democratic society, or of the role of the labor movement in economic and social progress in the United States. It was as if the President were saying that since unions were condoned by law and were therefore inevitable, they might at least be honest—a view, no doubt, to which the President is frequently exposed by his exclusive social associations with important businessmen.

In deference to the office of the presidency, it is often said that the "President is being misinformed by his advisers." This may well be the case, since it is unlikely that the President has mastered the content of housing law and labor law. But certainly this does not exonerate the President from responsibility for "extorting leadership," he allows his office and himself to be used for demagogic service or narrow class interests.

Edward D. Hollander,  
National Director, Ameri-

Pen names may be used if letters carry writers' correct names and addresses. All letters are subject to condensation.

### cans for Democratic Action.

### Paying for Roads

Russell E. Singer of the AAA talks about highways, but it is the superhighways that are costing so much money and causing the tax problem. And who needs these superhighways? Surely not the average motorists who make up the membership of the AAA. No! These superhighways are built to serve the selfish interests in Detroit and elsewhere who are concerned only with producing longer and more powerful cars and trucks as big as freight cars.

Every day the papers report accidents on these superhighways, many caused by the jacking of these immense trucks, killing whole families, many of them members of the AAA, no doubt. Don't worry, Mr. Singer, the nonuser of highways will be soaked for the cost of the superhighways, too. In our tight little city, with already over 50 per cent of its area in streets, parks and tax-free property, he will have to make up the loss on the millions of dollars worth of property taken off the tax rolls to make way for inner loops and outer loops and freeways.

Mr. Singer is on slippery ground, too, when he talks about subsidies. The railroads get no subsidies, but have to pay taxes on their rails. I am told. And the trucks running on superhighways are fast putting them out of business.

And the only transit subsidy in Washington is the remission of taxes on motor fuel for the D. C. Transit System, the largest consumer in the city. And they are promised other favors when they complete the conversion to buses. This is a rank injustice to the average AAA member. And what have they ever done about that?

G. M. Koockogey.

### Johnson and Judges

It has been reported that Senator Lyndon Johnson is holding up many of President Eisenhower's appointments to judgeships until he acquiesces in Senator Johnson's demand that he reappoint Milton S. Kronheim, Jr.

If true, I feel this is an unconstitutional invasion of the executive branch's responsibilities and rights to which, I trust, the President will not succumb.

It reflects on Senator Johnson's qualifications for the presidency.

C. T. Hellmuth.

### Wary of Khrushchev

Commenting on the Soviet dictator's impending visit to this country, former President Herbert Hoover said that Mr. Khrushchev could bring with him "the greatest gift mankind has received in 1,000 years—peace." This brings sharply to mind the classical line in Virgil: "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes." ("I fear the Greeks even bearing gifts.")

In the past year or so, Mr. Khrushchev fished away so skillfully that many notable Americans who visited him had reported of his "shocking ignorance" about this country's "real strength." Thus, the prevalent view has been that Mr. Khrushchev will come here to begin a new education, in a new country and perhaps with a new purpose. The only trouble with this line of thinking is that it underlines Mr. Khrushchev's intelligence and it is a downright insult to his vast, efficient spy-rings in this country.

What is likely to happen is that he will come with a mission to exude all the charm and consideration in re-educating us to his brand of "peace," all artificially calculated to leave many converts behind to echo and re-echo his mellifluous words long after his return to Moscow. By that time, we will be debating against ourselves and among the Western allies. Are we really such mollycoddles and dupes?

Let us forget, Mr. Khrushchev's is a materialistic world and its dialectic will never wait for rational or compromised solutions. The better we remember this the better we will be able to deal with such a glibful and truculent man with inordinate ambitions!

Timothy T. Mar.

### Plea for Pets

Montgomery County's new dog-control law is making it hard on the dogs. Many dog owners apparently do not know that if their dogs run away, they will likely be picked up by the dog catchers and impounded at the Montgomery Animal Shelter. To get back a dog, the owner must pay \$5 and \$2.50 for each day the animal is held. Many persons will not or cannot pay to get their pets out, and after five to seven days the animal is destroyed. It is saddening to see so many nice dogs doomed.

Those finding a loose dog should take it home and call the shelter and ask if a dog of that description has been reported lost. I kept a stray dog in my basement and was happy to find the owner. The newspapers also are kind enough to run free classified "found" ads on lost pets.

Dog Lover.

## Undemocratic Hearings on Home Rule Issue Deplored

The leaders of the House District Committee have made it plain that this year's hearings on home rule are to be a repeat of the record of the years since World War II. It is clear, as Mr. McMillan recently said, that there will be no bill reported from committee as long as he is chairman. In fact, the stalled and intermittent hearings now being staged can only be described as a committee filibuster. Congressmen testifying before the committee in favor of home rule are being subjected to endless grilling, mostly about a constitutional "question" that clearly doesn't exist. I can recall no precedent for the treatment being accorded members of Congress by the committee.

By contrast, home rule advocates have continually over the years made patient and reasonable efforts to persuade the committee to act—all without success. They have offered a very moderate bill, without any softening of extremist opposition. And now, in deference

to the complaints of these uncompromising opponents, they have offered a new discharge petition of almost unprecedented liberality. I believe the people of Washington commend and support the Congressmen who, in seeking to restore our citizenship, are trying to bring the issue to a decision by the House under the fairest possible circumstances. But it is certainly ironic that so fair and reasonable an attitude should be met by the obvious tactics of the opponents who seek only to prevent a democratic decision.

The latest example of this was the staged complaint of opponents against the earlier discharge petition, which they pictured as an unprecedented limitation on debate. But, in fact, it was an exact duplicate of many discharge petitions of recent years—and they hadn't a word of complaint in those cases. Perhaps the answer is that they were unaware of these previous petition efforts. But, in fact, at least three of them

Walter Fozen,  
Legislative Counsel, Wash-  
ington Home Rule Com-  
mittee, Inc.

## VISTAS IN SCIENCE

By THOMAS R. HENRY

### Arctic Explored From Drifting Ice

Thirty-two Americans, including 16 Navy scientists, are drifting a few feet a day towards the North Pole on a 25-square-mile ice floe. This floe now is 500 miles north of Point Barrow, Alaska, northernmost spot under the American flag.

The station, Drift Station Charlie, is the second of its kind to be inhabited by this country for scientific observations. The first, Drift Station Alpha, was established two years ago as part of the International Geophysical Year program, but abandoned after six months because the ice started to break up.

### Joint Undertaking

The present project is a joint undertaking of the Navy and Air Force. The Alaska Air Command is providing the operating personnel while the Office of Naval Research administers the scientific program. The chief scientist, under Navy contract, is Dr. Kenneth O. Bennington, ice expert of the University of Washington. Several universities are participating in the program.

Of special interest to the Navy, says an ONR report, are relations of the sea and the atmosphere to the drift ice of the great Arctic pack. Previous determinations now are being studied and some curious paradoxes uncovered. For example, according to a report from Drs. Norbert Untersteiner and Franklin I. Badgley, of the University of Washington, who were members of the 1947 party, during clear summer days with bright 24-hour sunshine there is a tendency for the ice pack to build up with more freezing of melted puddles formed on the surface. On the other hand, on cloudy summer days when it seems colder, there is rapid melting. This is due, the report points out, to the infra-red, or heat radiation, of the sun to whose passage clouds are no obstacle. The corollary is true in the winter build-up period. Cooling of the pack is al-

most entirely by this long range radiation from its surface. Winds and condensation of water vapor, or frost, on the snow contribute relatively little. During this period long-wave radiation from the air and clouds is only occasionally large enough to balance the outgoing radiation.

During the summer, temperature decreases with altitude in the air layer immediately above the ice are so small they hardly can be measured. In the winter a temperature inversion is characteristic of this layer. The "heat" is coming from below—the ice itself—rather than from the sky. Magnitude of the temperature changes vary from almost nothing to as much as 80 degrees per meter.

### Curious Phenomenon

The observers report the curious phenomenon of "diamond dust." This is the almost constant presence in the air above the pack of tiny ice crystals. They evidently are formed by direct condensation of water vapor in the lowest few hundred feet of the atmosphere. Some possibly form at higher levels, the observers report, and fall very slowly, growing as they fall. They are always so small, less than a tenth of a millimeter in their longest extension, that they seldom can be seen unless strongly illuminated by a searchlight. This falling "diamond dust," it is calculated, adds about as much to the growth of the pack as direct condensation of vapor. The aggregate deposit seems to be made up of many tiny crystals bonded together with condensed vapor.

These studies will be continued during the fall and winter by the new team. In addition they have an extensive program, to start with the beginning of darkness, of observations of the northern lights and the electrical potentials of the earth.

## THIS AND THAT

By CHARLES E. TRACEWELL

### "SILVER SPRING, Md.

"Dear Sir:  
"I find it possible to make friends with birds even if one lives in an apartment.  
"I started putting out raisins on my window sill. The mockingbirds discovered them and soon become regular visitors.

"Catbirds and robins also found them. I put out a feeding station with seed, and chickadees and tufted titmice came. Cardinals enjoyed the sunflower seed.

"I won over bluejays by throwing out peanuts in the shells. They now perch on the telephone wires and wait for me.

"Doves come every day and fight each other with their strong wings.

"The mockers have been feeding their young with raisins. They eat one or two themselves and then pick up some and fly off with them.

"Now the young birds come and feed themselves. All I have to do to bring them to the sill is to whistle, and both parents and babies come to get their share.

"Cowbirds, grackles, starlings and English sparrows, white-throated sparrows come from time to time. Winter before last six bluebirds came frequently.

"I have been amused after I have thrown out nuts to see a jay and a chipmunk trying to get possession of the same one.

"I have seen a chewink and a partridge on the ground below my window.

"I have come to realize that if one is genuinely interested in birds, he can find them wherever he goes, whether in the city or country, in a garden, or on an apartment window sill.

"Birds are real friends that give us real pleasure wherever we see them.

"Very sincerely yours,  
E. D. B."

Helpful friends, indeed, are our songbirds. They do not wait to be asked, but come when we are well or ill. They stand on no ceremony, but arrive on schedules well known to most people.

Whether one is at home or in the office or in the hospital, there will be birds, if we look for them. Sometimes we must look, first, to be sure, but we will find them if we do.

Many a person has been entertained by the antics of

some old fat starling on a hospital roof, on the roof across the street.

We have told here more than once the story of such a bird, and have always felt it is a story worth repeating. Some stories are.

Our correspondent's letter points out that any one, anywhere, can have birds.

Sometimes, alas, there are difficulties, especially in apartment house living. One's neighbors are so close, all around, on each side, often below and above, and sometimes across the court.

Then one needs diplomacy, as somebody who has not yet felt the urge toward birds declares they are nuisances, and worse.

In times, even such little brawls may be ironed out, and the other person taught how to become interested in his or her turn. (Usually it is hers.)

Birds offer as many contacts with human beings, they come at dawn, or even before, and seek their beds only as night draws on.

They teach us many lessons, most of which we never learn, such as going to bed early and getting up with the chickens, which means the birds.

We are so used to thinking of wild birds as helpful to mankind that we seldom stop to think of them just as birds intent on their own lives.

They live their lives alongside ours, and the fact that they devour inimical insects, as we say, makes no difference to them.

The horned lark, sometimes seen hereabout, eats quantities of inimical insects, and does even better with weed seeds. He loves weed seeds.

Other species entertain us with their beauty and music and actions. Sometimes we call these actions "antics," a statement that elicits their entertainment value.

We cannot escape from birds, even in apartments. At one time the ugly but interesting buzzards roosted on a swank apartment roof on Connecticut avenue.

They got rid of the birds at last, but the watchers along the street are the poorer, as they no longer have first-eye views of some of the greatest gliders in history.

## Questions and Answers

By THE HASKIN SERVICE

A reader can get an answer by mail to any question of fact by writing The Star Information Bureau, 435 F Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. Please include return postage or self-addressed stamped envelope.

Q. When did sailing ships first have figureheads?—B. K.

A. The use of figureheads began so long ago that historians do not know who first used them, or when. The Vikings, the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Chinese and East Indians all used figureheads—which ranged from eyes painted on ships' prows to elaborate figures. Even the American Indians carved animal figureheads on the stems of their seagoing canoes.

Q. What and where is the Finley Walk in New York City?—K. A.

A. The John H. Finley

Walk is a promenade atop the East River drive, extending from 81st to 89th street. Dr. Finley, an editor of the New York Times and a president of City College, was a noted pedestrian.

Q. When did gypsies first come to America?—L. D.

A. In the latter part of the 18th century. They came from England where they had first appeared two centuries earlier. According to recent studies, gypsies are the descendants of the Sudras and Jat tribes of northwest India, which fled their homeland because of the invasion of Alexander the Great.