

bringing along, it is said, twenty dollars for each of the five applicants, and handing it to the official, he is further said to have pledged that his friends, upon receiving their "papers," would pay him the balance. The price was to be one hundred dollars from each. Believing the examiner to be a man of honor, as he understood it, the go-between took no notice that the government official was not alone, but that a stranger was with him in the place of the appointment.

What in the news item was called "a dramatic" scene ensued. The man offering the money was taken along into court where the examiner laid bare the details of "the plot" and three of the applicants who were on hand admitted to the judge that they had entrusted their friend to give the examiner some money to "make things easy" for them. The two others admitted talking to their friend about it, but being a little wary, they denied having given him any money. The friend who had offered the money admitted his part and told of the arrangement made with the government official the day before. The examiner is alleged to have admitted that he had feigned willingness to arrange the matter for one hundred dollars for each and had suggested the morning meeting so that he could have a witness present, and march the go-between to court to face the judge and to bring the awaiting applicants upon the scene.

Andrew Kiljis, the go-between, was promptly placed under arrest on charges of bribery under the Federal statute. Vincent Rusinovich, Joseph Burich and Nicala Gruich, the three applicants who admitted being parties to the trade, were told by the judge that their applications were dismissed with prejudice for five years. The applications of Matteo J. Stanovich and Juray J. Butovich, who admitted having talked to Kiljis about it, but denied having given him any money for the examiner, were held up pending further investigation.

Some days later the matter was heard by the Federal grand jury in Portland and indictments were returned against the applicants and their friend, the go-between. Each of them will now have to stand trial on a charge of felony, which, upon conviction, is punishable with both fine and imprisonment. An alien who has been sentenced to a term in prison automatically forfeits the right to remain in this country and, upon his release from prison, he becomes subject to deportation. These are the anything but bright prospects facing the misguided people of the little fishing hamlet.

Maybe the alien fishermen at Clifton are a wicked lot. Maybe Mr. Thomas, the deputy examiner from Seattle, is a sincere honest citizen and official who sits at the gate of the naturalization court as a jealous guardian who deserves the praise of the nation for this diligence and zeal to prevent anyone with an impure thought from entering the high and lofty plane of citizenship. We don't know.

As citizens possessing equal rights with Mr. Thomas, we have the right to analyze his actions and review the results.

Perhaps Mr. Thomas is one of those punctilious officials in the service of Uncle Sam who are incor-

ruptible, discriminating and exacting to the extent that they know only the letter of the law and little or nothing about that unwritten code of this land that has given us renown as a people that are just, yet merciful, and disposed to put a fellow-being right, where we can, who shows unmistakable evidence of ignorance of the law in a far greater measure than a wanton intent to commit a crime.

Fairness should be the basic principle for all our dealings with the immigrant people. When an alien appears to have a wrong idea the way to introduce an Americanizing influence into his life would be to put him right, show him where the American distinction lies between right and wrong.

The American official of community, state and nation, assumes an implied obligation when he takes the oath of office, to give guidance to the alien people who, having been legally admitted, are entitled to protection, information and advice. The American official who fails to perceive it his duty to his country to render such assistance as he can to those strangers within our gates, giving them a fair idea of America and her institutions at every opportunity, without being unduly severe, is a misfit in office whether he be the policeman on the beat, the judge on the bench or the president of our nation.

Had the deputy from the Seattle naturalization office had that broader grasp of the duties of his office he would have used the opportunity to the fullest extent to show those simple people with a foreign viewpoint and an unfortunate early training, that an Amer-

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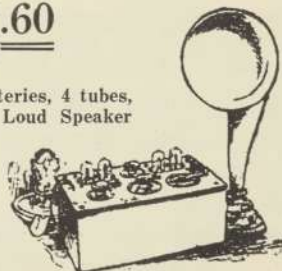
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