

A Question and Answer Page for Foreign-Born

Questions on Americanization, Naturalization, Citizenship, Civil Rights and all matters of importance in regard to the necessary adjustments for foreign-born who have come here for the purpose of remaining permanently, will be answered promptly and as fully as possible, By Judge J. A. Buchanan, President Astoria Americanization Council in Astoria, and by H. J. Langoe, Editor The United American. Anyone asking a question may request that it be published under such pseudonym as he desires but the questioner must in all instances sign his correct name and address to the letter that accompanies the question. Anonymous questions will not be published or answered in this forum. People who are living in Astoria and vicinity may address their questions directly to Judge Buchanan.

Q.—I have been told that I must wait five years from the date on my Intention paper before I can apply for citizenship. Is that correct? —Billy R.

A.—No. You have to wait only two years after date of the First paper, but you must have been in this country fully five years. Your Certificate of Arrival will best prove your claim to having been here five years. —H.J.L.

Q.—I have been in America little over one year, will I be permitted to go fishing on the Columbia River this summer? —Eldor. F.

A.—If you have been residing in Oregon for one year you can obtain a boat-pullers license, but you cannot obtain a license to operate a boat and net in your own name until you become a citizen. —H.J.L.

Q.—How can I obtain instruction in citizenship this summer? —Ivan T.

A.—If you live in Portland, communicate with the Superintendent of the Public Night Schools. One public school,

at least, will be kept open all summer for that purpose. If you live in some remote district where there is no school for that purpose, you may write to the Naturalization Examiner at Portland and obtain his advice as to what books you should buy. You may also obtain assistance in your studies from some American citizen where you live. —H.J.L.

Q.—I am an old man now and to my sorrow I neglected to apply for citizenship when I was younger. I should like to tell all young people to avoid being as foolish as I was. It should be the most important business of every man and woman to become a citizen as soon as possible. No one said anything to me about it when I came here, many years ago. There were no schools then for immigrants and I didn't think it of any importance any more than most of my friends who went regularly to the churches and lodges of our nationality. I never learned to read or write the language of America well enough to do me any real good. My grand-daughter is writing for me what I want to say. I can talk fairly well, of course, with a little mixing with my native tongue and an accent that bothers me much. I have always read my native language papers and books in the old language, but if I had spent less time among my own people and reading foreign languages, I know that I should have been able now to read American and feel more at home here among my children and grandchildren than I do. I am a stranger among my own people and in the country where I have lived most of my life. But it would not do me any good to go back to the old country, things have changed over there too, and all those I knew when I was young are either dead or gone away. I should like so much to become a citizen before I die, but they would not have any pity on an old man, I suppose, and as I can not learn all what they expect now-a-days. I guess it's my punishment for being a fool when I was young, that I must die a citizen of no country. —Andres. P.

A.—Your case is one in many, many thousands. Negligence is one of the terrible sins we often suffer from. No, there was no incentive in the group with which you were affiliated then any more that there is in that same nationality group of today. It's the same sad old story. When the group herding stops we shall have done away with the cause that is making cases such as yours so common. Your inability to read the American language is going to be your

greatest obstacle in acquiring the knowledge necessary to become naturalized. If you are in good health, it would be well to try. Many old people are today making the grade who did not believe it would be any use, but who were willing to try. —H.J.L.

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