

## 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 Anonymous questions will not be published or answered in this forum.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 read with much interest The United American's proposal for a change in the present fishing law in Oregon, which is affecting thousands of honest, clean immigrant fishermen living in the lower Columbia River sections in Oregon, who are now unable to fish on account of this law. What happened to the proposal? Was it considered in the session just closed?  
—Hans E.

A.—Illness prevented the editor of The United American from taking the matter up in person during this session and inasmuch as no member of either House had any interest in presenting the issue for modification and adjustment of the obnoxious clause, still in the law, the legislature had no chance to pass upon it. Legislators are sometimes interested in measures that are for the common good, but chiefly they seem to be interested in measures affecting the business of friends and patrons. When interests of a nature involving the legislators themselves crop out in measures and bills, there is little hope for anything, no matter how important, that is lacking a strong lobby. Legislation that passes nowadays is usually supported by a strong and influential lobby. The immigrant fishermen had no money, for lobby representation. Had the editor of this magazine (who constantly, and for years has fought this issue without compensation) been able again, in person, to lobby for a further amendment of this law, been able to see the bill introduced, and then, been there to follow it up, it is possible that the suggested remedy now would have been law. When the 1929 legislature meets, let us hope that the voters will send down to Salem a larger number of representatives and senators who are actuated by public interest only. If the voters learn to keep at home the boys who go down to the capital with nothing but personal axes to grind, we may get some lawmaking done for the common good.  
—H.J.L.

Q.—I recently witnessed an incident where an officer addressed a man speaking with a foreign accent, evidently suspecting him of being a thug. I recognize that the officer had the right to stop and question the man, but the language he used was to my mind all wrong. The man was clearly unable to give a satisfactory account of himself, because he lacked fluency in the English language, but the officer got him rattled, and his questions on nationality were so distinctly uncalled for that the man's answer in self-defense was justifiable, although that perhaps gave the officer

the reason he wanted for running the man in, which he did. I never heard of the case and what happened at the station, but I have been thinking a lot of what I chanced to overhear. Doesn't it tend to "take the heart" out of a man to be openly ridiculed for his foreign birth, his accent of speech and his nationality? Don't you think the officer made a mistake?  
—Francis T.

A.—Whether or not the officer made a mistake in making the arrest, I cannot say, but you are unquestionably on the right track when you feel that the officer acted a part less becoming to an American. But such things as you describe are not uncommon, perhaps chiefly due to the fact that we are still, to some extent, employing men for police duty who are so uncouth and often so rough that they forfeit respect and are a disgrace to the uniform, and the star of authority they display. There is yet much of the rough self-appointed frontier authority in evidence in our country, particularly out West where the "Whisky Gully" and the "Dead Man's Creek" communities of the pioneer days are but institutions of a recent yesterday. It is regrettable that we still, in spots, have the rough uncouth, intolerant, man in the police uniform who abuses the very insignia of American police authority, but in justification to the present day American police authority, it can truthfully be said that, as a body, it is thoroughly Americanized and measures up to the standards of kindly firmness and fairness that we all believe in as an essential element in our democratic institutions. Check, on the other hand, for the thousands of acts of kindness, helpfulness and self-sacrifice, which are told of the man in the police uniform, whose name oftentimes is never learned, and we feel a reconciliation in the thought that our democracy is functioning and that there is a fair measure of human consideration to be found everywhere to take off the sting of just resentment created by the thoughtless misfits whom we frequently encounter in positions where they misrepresent the very intent of the station they occupy. The incident you recite is not uncommon and will be told by the foreign born who speaks the language of America with difficulty, as long as the human bully can worm himself, through pull and cheap politics, into a police uniform. There are several of them in Portland, some are old timers and some are of a younger generation. The higher type police officer with special training, and temperamental qualifications to back it up, is gradually

forcing the bully out of the uniform. Then, again, right often the man on "the force" represent the type of man the citizens pick for town or city mayor. If he is of the clown and tin-horn politician variety, the men below, who carry out his orders, will either do as the big overchief wants things done or they are disciplined off the good jobs on the force and given "grave-yard" shifts in the most outlying and sparsely settled sections of the incorporated town area. There is only one thing that will remedy abuse in every form: in Russia they call it revolution, but in America we call it intelligent voting. When our people study the essential elements in good citizenship and learn how to create good government, the tin-horn mayors will be out of jobs, and forever more wonder how it happened, and the ugly bully in the police uniform will be looking for a job where he can have no chance to exercise authority over anybody.  
—H.J.L.

Q.—I have an aged mother in the old country whom I should like to bring to America to live with me. She is hale and hearty and would not be any bother to anyone. I am married and have a good home, moderately situated and well able to care for Mother for the rest of her days. What steps should I take to get her over here?  
—Mary P.

A.—Apply to the Immigration authorities in the Post Office Building, Broadway and Glisan Streets, Portland, Oregon, and obtain the blanks you will be required to fill out. The government is obliged to ascertain all the facts in the case before an immigration permit in the quota exempt classifications can be obtained.  
—H.J.L.

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