

Letters to The Times

Removal of High School

All Considerations Said to Favor Proposal to Shift Site

The writer of the following letter is President of City College.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

The Times of Feb. 16 gives new impetus to discussions regarding long-considered proposals to relocate the High School of Music and Art in the Lincoln Square cultural center.

On the face of things, the suggestions detailed in your news story appear reasonable and sound; but I do not presume to pass judgment on matters which are rightly within the province of the Board of Education. At the same time I emphasize the fact that if the proposed relocation of the High School of Music and Art is judged to be sound for educational reasons there are very strong arguments which support the move.

Campus Area

With the acquisition of the former Manhattanville College campus in 1952 City College now extends along the brow of St. Nicholas Heights from 130th to 141st Street—but the building occupied by the High School of Music and Art cuts the campus in two at 135th Street. Technology and Natural Science students on the north campus take many classes in Humanities and Social Studies on the south campus—and vice versa for students majoring in the Humanities and the Social Sciences. To go on foot from an upper floor of a building at one end of the campus and arrive on time on the upper floor of another building several blocks away within the ten minute interval requires students to be eligible for intercollegiate track meets. But if several of the departments which serve both wings of the academic life could be located centrally, this problem would be removed and educational effectiveness greatly increased.

Moreover, not much adaptation would be needed to make the auditorium of the present high school building suitable as a theatre, thereby saving the construction costs which will otherwise have to be born by New York City taxpayers in providing a home for drama and speech work, presently unhoused at City College.

Necessary Expansion

Finally, City College will be forced to expand its classroom capacity in the next immediate years to take care of its proper share of the population bulge. This can be accomplished painlessly with the acquisition of the high school building at 135th Street. The alternative is to condemn a neighboring block of apartment houses, with accompanying problems of tenant relocation and site costs—not to mention sizable construction costs as well.

These concerns have long been felt and recognized by the Board of Higher Education, which two years ago endorsed in principle the plan to move the High School of Music and Art to the Lincoln Square project and to transfer the present building to City College.

If the removal of the High School of Music and Art to the Lincoln Square project meets with no sound educational objections all the practical and financial considerations of the City of New York and its taxpayers strongly support the move; and all of the educational needs of the City College and the city's youth who study here cry out for it.

BUELL G. GALLAGHER,

New York, Feb. 18, 1957.

Finances of President Taft

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

I read with interest your editorial of Feb. 8 "Pensions for Ex-Presidents," and I agree heartily with your conclusions. But one reference needs correction.

You speak of "the late Senator Robert A. Taft, son of a relatively wealthy President." This is an opinion often held but completely erroneous. When Life magazine did a piece on the Tafts of Cincinnati some years ago, in 1952 I think, they straightened this out completely.

William H. Taft was not wealthy by any financial standard. He accumulated only what he was able to earn professionally. He was able to live in reasonable comfort, prior to being inaugurated as President, only by reason of financial help from his half-brother, Charles P. Taft. He saved while he was in the White House. From 1913 to 1921, when he was appointed Chief Justice, he had modest compensation from Yale as a Professor of Law, and earned by what we all know is very hard work, lecturing, especially in railroad days as compared to air travel, perhaps a maximum of \$40,000 a year.

The wealth in the family was on the side of Charles P. Taft Sr., who married Anna Sinton of Cincinnati, and the side of Peter Taft, another half-brother, who married Matilda Hulbert of Cincinnati.

My brother and I inherited from our father and mother only the house at Murray Bay, Canada, now, unfortunately, burned.

CHARLES P. TAFT 2d,

Mayor of Cincinnati.

Cincinnati, Feb. 18, 1957.

Compensation for Internees

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

During World War II a great number of American nationals were held as internees by the Japanese and German Governments. The ones who were in Japanese custody have been duly compensated for the loss of liberty they suffered, but the ones

that were held by the Germans have never seen a penny of compensation for the loss of liberty and in many cases loss of property as well. The writer, who with his family was one of the victims, has made numerous requests to the various agencies that are supposed to handle such matters, but has received nothing but evasive replies. This after twelve years since the end of the war.

Getting the run-around from Washington has created serious doubts as to the sincerity of any efforts made to see that justice is done to those Americans who suffered at the hands of the Nazis.

LOUIS DE BEER.

New York, Feb. 18, 1957.

Dutch-Indonesian Dispute

Arguments of Claimants to Rule of West Irian Reviewed

The writer of the following letter is a Dutch journalist who recently visited Indonesia. He is now attending the U. N. sessions in New York.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

The seven-year feud between Indonesia and the Netherlands over the last Dutch colony in the Far East, Netherlands New Guinea (West Irian), will come up once more before the United Nations General Assembly. Ever since sovereignty of the former Netherlands East Indies colonies was relinquished to the Republic of Indonesia (80,000,000 people), West Irian has been the main cause of irritation and dispute between The Hague and Jakarta.

According to the letter of the law, Holland is entitled to rule West Irian, although the so-called Round Table Conference agreements dated 1950 speak of a mutual settlement within the next year. Indonesia, on the other hand, continually quotes Queen Wilhelmina's famous speech of 1942 in which she stated specifically that "colonialism is dead." Since West Irian was for 350 years of colonial rule undeniably a part of the former Dutch East Indies, the Indonesians argue that the territory should be turned over to them. The Dutch argue that the Indonesian Government has a large enough job on its hands to settle its own affairs and would only be burdened by Irian.

Last year's U. N. resolution "hoped" for a settlement of the dispute through negotiations. They were held in Geneva, but ended in deadlock.

Source of Resentment

In Indonesia West Irian is the cause of the greater part of feeling against the Dutch for their refusal to yield one inch.

The Netherlands Foreign Office states repeatedly that it will not discuss the sovereignty of a part of its territory, as Irian is, according to the Dutch Constitution. The Dutch say, furthermore, that they will never agree on a conference with Indonesia on Irian as long as Jakarta states beforehand that Irian will eventually be Indonesian.

But many Dutch citizens believe that our Government should negotiate and keep the door open to discussions with this important Asian power, Indonesia. Dutch churches have protested against the Government policy, and some months ago 116 Dutch intellectuals signed a statement of protest. Only a few weeks ago 300 Dutch citizens, living and working in Indonesia, sent a petition to the Dutch Parliament to reconsider its position and questioned its justification for postponing ultimate self-determination of some hundreds of thousands of Papuans in Irian for an indefinite time and maintaining colonial rule at least for a number of years.

Aspects of Problem

Can the colonial "sacred mission" of the Netherlands in Asia, irrespective of its moral and material value in the past, be further pursued in tranquillity and confidence? International law offers no useful remedies to Holland. International politics turns in favor of Indonesia. Asian and African countries, inspired with the spirit of Bandung and united in their political struggle against Western white colonialism, form an increasing front in number and influence.

Whatever the U. N. decision may be, apart from "hoping" Jakarta and The Hague will find the means to continue discussions, may they both receive the actual moral support of their fellow-members in the U. N. to agree and come to terms over these deplorable causes for the worsening of relations between Indonesia and the Dutch.

WILLEM L. OLTMAANS.

New York, Feb. 20, 1957.