

Wash Post 1955 July 13

Citizenship

On July 3, 1955, you printed a story by Leo E. Sullivan about Mr. Bela Kornitzer, the biographer of the Eisenhower brothers.

The story stated that Mr. Kornitzer is "now a United States citizen by a special act of Congress." I have read similar statements in other stories pertaining to Mr. Kornitzer, which leads me to believe that they probably emanate from a source interested in obtaining publicity for the author of a book recently put on sale.

Mr. Kornitzer was not made a United States citizen by an act of Congress. The Congress does not enact private legislation granting citizenship to aliens. Such legislation is deemed unconstitutional, in view of the Constitution's "uniformity" rule pertaining to naturalization (Article I, section 8, clause 4).

From time to time, the subcommittee on immigration and nationality of the Committee on the Judiciary, recommends private legislation designed to grant permanent residence in the United States to certain aliens who are unable to obtain such residence under the general immigration laws. However, in the case of Mr. Kornitzer, no such legislation was ever enacted by the Congress.

The records of our subcommittee show that in 1951, Mr. Kornitzer became—with more than 6000 other aliens — the beneficiary of a well-known general law, namely, the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 as amended. He applied not to Congress, but to the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the United States Department of Justice, under section 4 of that law, for the status of a displaced person, and was granted that status.

There has been a great deal of misunderstanding concerning special immigration bills or "special acts of Congress" having to do with citizenship. Among these misunderstandings is that Congress awards aliens United States citizenship for some outstanding service to our country. Because your story of July 10 on Mr. Kornitzer carries that strong implication, I feel you would want to have the true facts on how he eventually acquired his United States citizenship.

MICHAEL A. FEIGHAN, M.C.
Acting Chairman, Subcommittee on
Immigration and Nationality.
Washington.