

LETTERS *to the Editor*

Taiwan and China

Sir,— Reference the criticism of the Federal Opposition Leader, Mr Whitlam, by the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Senator Gair, in *The Canberra Times* of July 12:

If Senator Gair does not agree that Taiwan is a province of China, perhaps he could explain for my benefit and the benefit of your readers, the following:

- (a) By what right or authority did the Government of the Republic of China transfer its headquarters from the China mainland to Taiwan?
- (b) By what right or authority did the armed forces of the Republic of China move from the China mainland to Taiwan?
- (c) By what right or authority does the Government of the Republic of China and its armed forces continue to remain on the island of Taiwan?

L. J. CHANNING

Red Hill.

Denigrating

SEATO

Sir, — Whatever our private opinions might be about SEATO, is it the action of a responsible and patriotic Australian, let alone a man aspiring to the Prime Ministership, to denigrate to the world a treaty still honoured by Australia and its proven friends in Asia?

Mr Whitlam, in treacherously denouncing SEATO as "moribund" to his new-found "friends", has proved himself either plain naive or remarkably frank; a frankness it would be refreshing to detect in his Oriental colleagues if only he could pause long enough in his smile-and-struggle-with-chopstick program to reciprocate with a few questions about the Red Guards' rape and subsequent equally barbaric crushing of the rebellion in Tibet in 1959. I do not recall the Tibetans being treated to Chinese politeness and hospitality such as meted out to Labor Party members these days.

Then again, could Mr Whitlam's noticable silence on embarrassing questions stem from the Labor Party's desperate efforts to scrounge political capital, irrespective of national costs? We have already wit-

costs? We have already witnessed that sort of irresponsibility in their attitude to the Papua New Guinea independence question. It was gratifying to see Mr Whitlam's pathetic efforts backfire when some of the indigenes told him exactly what to do with his much-vaunted but premature "independence". What cost, political capital?

Perhaps that well-matched loquacious pair Messrs Whitlam and Hawke will prove two of the best vote-catchers the Liberals ever had. The next election will tell.

N. H. BLAND

Barton.

Refund delay

Sir, — I have received a query on my taxation return asking me to produce receipts or other evidence verifying gifts to charitable bodies totalling \$18. My income is in the vicinity of \$9,000 and the amount of my refund is quite substantial. I have replied, sending the necessary evidence.

I believe that once a query such as this is made, under the computerised system many weeks can elapse before the reply is processed and the assessment and refund finally issued. In the meantime of course, with interest rates hovering around 8 per

cent rates hovering around 8 per cent per annum, the Treasury is doing pretty well in holding back my money.

This is surely a paltry query and an abuse of the taxpayer's rights. The Taxation Office should be required to provide an explanation as to why in circumstances such as this the refund cheque could not have accompanied the query with an appropriate adjustment if thought to be warranted. I am not complaining about producing the evidence asked for, although this still seems to be unreasonable bearing in mind the tax involved relative to the refund due.

The Commonwealth has already had the use of my money for a full year and should not employ devices such as this to hold it longer. If Mr McMahon is short of money this is a pretty unfair way of getting it.

PUBLIC SERVANT

Canberra.

A look at the House

Sir, — I am most gratified to your paper and to Malcolm Mackerras for the review of my

Mackerras for the review of my book 'How Representative is the House of Representatives'? (The Canberra Times, July 5).

Mr Mackerras may well be right that the DLP vote would go up under quota-preferential conditions. Balanced against that is that the disgruntled Liberal voter that now votes DLP might well pick and choose between Liberal candidates rather than vote DLP under these conditions. No one really knows.

However, I think I am on safer ground in suggesting that ALP, Australia Party and DOGS would tend to remain as a bloc, and that any extra seats won by the DLP would be at the expense of the Liberals rather than of the ALP. Under those circumstances, the ALP would still gain a majority in terms of the 1969 figures and the DLP would splinter the anti-ALP group rather than hold the balance of power.

It is an intriguing as well as an inexorably logical proposition that the only prospects of representation in the House of Representatives for the DLP is for it to support the ALP were the latter to advocate quota-preferential voting. Hope springs eternal.

Might I refer specifically to the electoral situation in the ACT? Effective voter participation and choice can only be

maximised in the ACT when it

maximised in the ACT, when it returns two Members, if these are returned from a two-member electorate rather than from two single-member constituencies.

Over to the Minister for the Interior.

KENNETH N. GRIGG

Canterbury,
Victoria.

Sightings of UFOs

Sir, — At a friend's place last night (July 7) we watched the ABC television program 'Flying saucers and the people who see them'. From the title of the film one should have been on one's guard for the expected "explanation" that "flying saucers" or unidentified flying objects (UFOs) are in most cases, mistaken observations or figments of the imagination. Under the guise of scientific respectability, the program seemed heavily biased towards this latter view, but even more unfortunately, it missed a few significant points.

First, it is just not good enough to accept, uncritically, the United States Air Force statistics on "explained" and "unexplained" phenomena. United States Air Force Regulation 200-2 concerns the reporting of UFOs and the release of findings to the public. Paragraph 3c is titled "Reduction of percentage of UFO sightings" which re-

... titled "Reduction of percentage of UFO 'unknowns'", which requires that "unknowns" be kept to the statistical minimum.

Paragraph 9 states that information regarding UFO sightings "in the vicinity of an air force base" shall not be released unless the UFO has been "positively identified as a familiar or known object".

If the air force is prepared to admit to 695 "unknowns" then the actual figure of "unknowns" would be much higher (refer paragraph 3c mentioned above). Furthermore, air force "explanations" of UFOs quite often

The witnesses in 288 of these 575 cases were trained or experienced observers (scientists, professional pilots, etc) and in a further 125 cases were good (private pilots, police, etc),

would not stand up to logical analysis: meteorological balloons travelling against the wind, or pilots chasing the planet Venus when it would have been behind their aircraft, are, presumably, not possible.

Secondly, the program overlooked the importance of organisations formed specifically for the investigation of UFO reports. In 1964, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP Washington DC) published a 184-page, 200,000-word report on the subject of UFOs. The study detailed 746 of the more reliable reports after examination of 5,000 reports they had received, and the main chronology listed 575 cases. The witnesses in 288 of these 575 cases were trained or

while the remainder were classed as being "average" observers. None of these 575 reports has ever been explained in terms of natural phenomena.

Third, the program played down the fact that on many occasions the US Air Force has ordered aircraft to attempt to intercept UFOs if possible, and in some instances the radar has "locked on" to the UFO. For example, on July 26, 1952, when an Air Defence Command F-94C aircraft was "scrambled"; the crew also reported seeing the object as a "large yellow-orange light".

Fourth, the program barely mentioned the significance of radar and radar-visual reports. In 1948, for example, both Canadian and United States Air Forces radar tracked a UFO over Goose Bay, Labrador at 9,000 miles an hour and at a height of 60,000 feet.

One has the impression therefore that the ABC-TV program was very thin in its analysis of the subject. Not that one should assume that every "unknown" is necessarily extra-terrestrial or whatever; quite obviously some reports have been either sincere mistakes or hoaxes. But one would have thought that a study

of the subject should be logically sound and not be, evidently,

ally sound and not be, evidently, just a smear campaign against those people who claim to have seen UFOs.

K. A. SUTTON

Page.

Daylight saving

Sir, — I am old enough to remember our own previous experiment in daylight saving, and I have lived in two other countries which use it, the United Kingdom and USA. I am old enough not to offer to lead a protest organisation but I am prepared to offer moral support and a subscription of funds to someone who will. My objections to daylight saving have been expressed in your columns last year. Briefly a country which suffers from too much dust and heat, with consequent illnesses of skin cancer, etc, should think of ways of keeping out of sunlight in summer, not of a means of increasing the problem.

D. R. O. COWEY

Weston

Escaped dragon

Dragon

Sir, — As members of the Saint George's Day Observance Society we were interested to note in Pickering's cartoon (The Canberra Times, July 9) that a dragon is being kept as a pet in a Canberra residence. During the hunting season, lately closed, we were aware that one of these creatures had escaped our chase. Would you please inform us of the location of this dragon? Sunday's fire on the slopes of Mount Ainslie should convince all responsible citizens of the need to avoid further bushfires in the ACT. Failure to locate this dragon now could result in disastrous fires on the nallowed slopes of Black Mountain. It could lead to unbelievable and fearsome problems following the mating season in the coming spring.

JOHN F. ATCHISON
Knights of the Dragon

Acton.



