

# Answering Questions From Readers

By Drew Pearson

Here are the answers to some of the questions asked of a Washington columnist:

Joseph Borkin, Washington—It's not true that my recent column about LBJ being a pushover as a father was inspired by LBJ himself so he could tell his daughters, "If you push me too hard Drew Pearson will write us up."



Pearson

Smith Kline and French Laboratories, Philadelphia—Figures regarding drug prices used in the recent Jack Anderson column came from the Senate Finance Committee. Gordon Lange, Swarthmore, Pa.—Vice President Humphrey has used an Air Force plane to fly to his Minnesota lake-side summer place every weekend throughout the strike. He also made trips to Fort Worth July 15, New Orleans July 18, New York July 26, and Columbia, Mo., Aug. 8, all courtesy of the Air Force and all during the strike.

Mrs. Alfred Cross, Pennyfield Lock, Travilah, Md.—Secretary of the Interior Udall has been advised by his water experts that it may be necessary to build that high-rise dam on the Potomac River after all. The dam, according to present plans, would be just

above your house. It would not be inundated.

Mrs. Donna Hall, Westfield, N.Y.—President Johnson paid for Luci's wedding out of his own pocketbook. The taxpayers paid for only infinitesimal amounts, such as the use of Secret Service agents as doorkeepers to check wedding guests. This is necessary at any large gathering when the President's safety is involved.

A few days before the wedding the Defense Department took movies of Pat Nugent's brother, Lieut. Jerry Nugent, in South Vietnam and rushed them to the White House for the benefit of the Nugent family. White House limousines were sent to pick up six hair stylists at the Jean Louis beauty salon and drove them to the White House to fix the bridesmaids' hair, but it was only a few blocks.

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Drew Pearson will predict whether the Senate Ethics Committee is going to bury the Dodd investigation, over Radio WTOP, Saturday at 6:40 p.m.

## Communication

Paul D. Bethel, executive secretary of the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba, replies to charges made in this column on Aug. 12:

I wish to correct some of the inaccuracies about the trip to Miami by Sen. Thomas Dodd last September. Pearson-Anderson write: "In Sep-

tember, 1965, Dodd and his assistant, David Martin flew to Miami to interview General Wessin y Wessin, the Dominican strong man, billing the Senate Internal Security Committee \$153.72 each for travel."

Pearson-Anderson go on: "Meanwhile, they had already been furnished plane tickets for the same trip by the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba, which also picked up their hotel bill at the fashionable Eden Roc Hotel on Miami Beach. In addition, the Cubans gave Dodd two more tickets, which he used to bring two sons, Tom Jr. and Jeremy, to Miami with him."

Pearson-Anderson continue: "Dodd simply cashed the ticket the Cubans had given him and pocketed the proceeds. Martin transferred his ticket to his wife's name and brought her to Miami with him." Pearson and Anderson did not check with the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba before they wrote their story, nor did they even check with the Cuban community in Miami.

If they had done so, they would have learned that the Citizens Committee is not Cuban at all. It is an American organization, something which is known to most reporters.

Second, if they had checked their story before writing it, they would also have known that it was not the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba

that invited Senator Dodd to come to Miami, but a Cuban organization called the Cuban Representation in Exile, the RECE.

More important, if they had checked, they would have found that Senator Dodd did not, as charged, cash in the plane ticket sent to him from Miami and "pocket the proceeds." He did not do so for the very simple reason that although the ticket, number 283-395-210, was purchased, it was not used, and the money was refunded to RECE. Thus, Senator Dodd couldn't possibly have pocketed the money, could he?

Furthermore, we didn't "obediently" mail the Senator a check for \$150, as the Pearson-Anderson column has it. The Senator generously insisted on paying for a dinner to which we the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba, had invited him to attend, while he was in Miami.

As I said in my letter to Senator Dodd, a copy of which is in the hands of the Senate Committee on Standards and Conduct: "I had arranged in advance that the Committee would pay for that dinner Friday night. Your generosity in picking up the bill, and your insistence that you pay it is certainly appreciated. But the account had already been taken care of, so I thought it best to let it go for the moment and then send you back the money."