



## THE TALK OF THE TOWN

WE were delighted to learn that the Herald Tribune agrees with our recently advanced thesis that language should develop as freely as the hermit crab, which moves on to a larger borrowed shell when it outgrows the one it had borrowed previously. But we were chagrined to find that the Trib had gone us one better—instead of merely talking about hermit crabs, Mr. Mr. Whitney went out and hired one to write a leader entitled “Filibusterers,



Keep Out of the Way,” which plumps for private ownership of a government-sponsored space communications system. We were not surprised at the position the crab took, hut we had a little difficulty following the argument down the trail of discarded conventional meaning. The Tribune’s commentator believes that filibusters are all right when used by senators to guard “the vital interests of their states or regions” (like the South) against an “unsympathetic” majority but that they are wrong when used by a public-minded minority that has no strictly local axe to grind. Flicking sand in the face of that “willful little band” of liberals who have delayed Senate action on the Telstar hill, our neologistic crustacean says, “The fruits of government research ought to be in the public domain, not hoarded by the government -- which has no right to keep such fruits from the people.” He adds, “The ‘giveaway’ cry can hardly by itself support an argument that public ownership is in the public interest. This can only be supported by a basic distrust of private ownership -- and if this distrust is to be reflected in pub-

lic with phenomenal success, by a private corporation, then where is it to stop?” Since we feel somewhat responsible for the hermit-crab theory of semantic drift, we would like to offer the following tentative explanation of the new language used above. First of all, A.T. & T. -- the “private corporation” referred to -- is clearly in the public domain because it is privately owned and despite its status as a public utility. In fact, as a public utility, it is subject to government regulation, that avowed enemy of the public interest. On the other hand, as a legal monopoly, it can at least operate free of the shackles of public competition, and it would therefore be included under what the Trib calls “the genius of American free enterprise.” Of course, since A. T. & T. is a monopoly, the average telephone user has no alternative if he is dissatisfied with the rates or service he gets, hut, as a private citizen, he obviously makes up a part of the General Public, and we don’t have to be either hermit or crab to know what a devious, narrow-minded, self-seeking lobby that is.

THERE is a hole in the ground between Fifty-second and Fifty-third Streets on Sixth Avenue that has been wired for sound in *extenso*. Twenty-four loudspeakers, perched on an eight-foot-high Plexiglas fence that runs along the avenue: and flares out for a few feet into the crosstown streets, pro-claim in assorted voices -- those of Ed Sullivan, Carol Burnett, and Bud Collyer, among others--that here will develop a mecca of culture, for eventually this will become the headquarters of the Columbia Broadcasting System. “Wonderous,” say the voices. “All those handsome, rugged men at work. How can it be described? Eero Saarinen, who designed it, called it the simplest sky-5craper Statement in New York. It will rise thirty-eight stories. It will have four elevators to the top. That might raise

an eyebrow at having his work ballyhooed over loudspeakers aimed at strollers already dismayed at the general racketing that goes on in New York. It would seem to us that C.B.S. and its retainers might pause and reflect that blowing about one more building under construction is piping a poor tune in this metropolis. What this city needs, we are convinced, is a little less noise and a little more of the substantial stuff that makes life, indoors and out, tolerable. We are writing this in a nice old, substantial brownstone where the fenestration is terrible, the plumbing haphazard, but the walls solid. The man who built this place didn’t need loudspeakers. When he built, he built.

### *Music in the Square*

EVERY Monday night during August an orchestra takes over the turf of the Sunday-afternoon folk singers in Washington Square, so that several thousand people may enjoy



chamber music rendered by professionals. These concerts have been a hot-weather divertissement for the past ten years, and the other evening we attended one of them, which was described as a memorial to Dag Hammarsjöld. The performers -- a couple of dozen -- were assembled on a platform just west of the Arch, and before they began lining out selections from Vivaldi and Bach ( Mr. Hammarsjöld’s favorite composers), and also Britten and Bartok, we had a chance to talk to Mrs. Peggy Campbell, a plump, bouncy woman, who, together with her late husband, Courtney Campbell, has-

been connected with Campbell said. "The musicians all play for the union minimum, and we've had the very best. It was quite a job organizing these concerts, and it still is tough to get them under way. But it's been worth it. What started me in this line was the fact that I was so sick of hearing about Village beatniks and hopheads that I thought something should be done to protect the neighborhood's good name. After all, I not only live in the Village but, as a real-estate agent, I'm responsible for a lot of property down here. My husband and I didn't have any surplus cash, but we got busy and, by God, we did it." As chairman of the Music Committee of the Washington Square Association, Mrs. Campbell has to have a lot of cooperation to get her show on the road. Each program costs about three thousand dollars, and this expense is defrayed by local banks and business houses, foundations, private donations, and a grant from the Recording Industries Trust Fund, through Local 802 of the American Federation of

Musicians. Mrs. Campbell gets platform, music stands, and lights from the Parks Department, and has her concerts broadcast over the city station, WNYC. In 1959, one concert, arranged as a salute to WNYC, was attended by ten thousand people. "Not bad going for a little girl out of Iowa," said Mrs. Campbell when she mentioned that crowd. "My husband was also Middle Westerner by birth." At this point, the orchestra, under Henry Lewis, who is a twenty-nine-year-old guest conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, embarked on a Vivaldi concerto, and we said so long to Mrs. Campbell and took a stroll through the throng gathered around the platform. They were a variegated lot--ancient Italian ladies, kids guzzling ice-cream cones, girls in toreador pants, beatniks in red sweatshirts, smooth-looking Madison Avenue types, cops looking abstracted as Vivaldi swirled around them, men with beards down to their belt buckles, and women in pretty, fluffy gowns. By a pillar supporting a bust of Alexander Lyman

Holley ("foremost among those whose genius and energy established in America and improved throughout the world the manufacture of Bessemer steel"), we came upon a handsome, buxom young lady who was poring over a score. It turned out that she was Marilyn Horne, the soloist of the evening and the wife of Mr. Lewis. "I just flew in from Honolulu," she told us. "I was doing a Rodgers-and-Hammerstein concert out there with Andre Kostelanetz. My husband and I like to do these park concerts; he conducted here last year. Mrs. Campbell is very good about rehearsals. Besides the usual five hours, there are always one to three hours more, and the Music Committee pays for them. The musicians here were assembled by Jack Glick, the first violist and orchestra manager, and they are all first-rate." Miss Horne, who was the off-screen voice of Dorothy Dandridge in "Carmen Jones," remarked that she'd better get up on the platform to do a bit of Bach, and then departed, informing us, in passing, that Bruno Walter had once said there were two great conductors in each generation and that her husband was one of the two great conductors in this generation. While Miss Horne sang Bach, we noticed that Mr. Lewis is an extremely graceful conductor, and that the music he was getting out of his orchestra commanded the attention of everyone in the park. Somewhere around five thousand were on hand--sitting on folding chairs or park benches or sprawling on the grass, which is usually forbidden. In the course of the concert, a girl standing near us murmured to her escort, "I'm so glad Moses didn't manage to put that high-way through this park!" With the air full of Bach, and happy people all around us, we couldn't help but agree.

