



WEAVERS
by Dale Freeman

*Behold the weavers – red and brown
And nondescript and yellowcrown –
In clustered nests hung upside down
Through many a millenium.
Along with termite, wasp, and bee,
As anyone can plainly see,
They've modeled there for you and me
Our modern condominium.*

*(*Lines inspired by a visit to the aviaries
of L.W. Swan.)*

Los Angeles City Council Hears Motions to Ban Birds

Responding to a complaint of an escaped reptile, Los Angeles City Councilman David Cunningham has submitted two proposed ordinances to ban the keeping of birds and reptiles within city limits.

The first ordinance claims birds are a threat to public health and calls for a moratorium on the issuance of permits to all commercial outlets for birds and reptiles, as well as for aviaries (all aviaries in Los Angeles are required to have exotic bird permits, though Mr. Robert Rush, Director of the Department of Animal Regulations has stated that the law in not being enforced, and will not be unless Cunningham's proposal is adopted). Further, the ordinance calls for the abate-

ment of all existing commercial and private bird facilities.

On February 14, 1979 the Los Angeles City Council Committee on Public Health, Human Resources and Senior Citizens conducted a hearing on the public health issue. The A.F.A. appeared to testify against the measure presenting several expert witnesses including Dr. Ralph Cooper, Veterinarian in Charge of the California Department of Food & Agriculture's San Gabriel Laboratory, and Robert Ruiz of the L.A. County Public Health Department, Veterinary Section, both of whom stated birds presented absolutely no threat to human health and cautioned against any banning of birds.

The Committee also heard from the Department of Animal Regulations and the City Attorney's office, both describing the proposal as unworkable, unnecessary, and probably unconstitutional.

The Committee Chairman, Robert Farrell recommended the proposed ordinance be noted and filed, an action that generally signals the end of the road for further action. However, representatives of Cunningham's office indicated the matter would be brought before the full Council for further consideration and vowed that birds would be eliminated from Los Angeles.

The second proposal submitted by Councilman Cunningham would revise the zoning code to prohibit birds, again on the grounds that birds are hazardous to public health. This proposal is being developed by the Los Angeles City Planning Department, and will be presented to the Planning Commission for approval at some future date before moving on the City Council Planning Committee for consideration. Los Angeles area aviculturists will be kept informed via local clubs and/or more direct means. Their support and attendance at upcoming hearings will be needed if A.F.A.'s effort to defeat these measures is to succeed.

On Friday, March 9th, 1979, the 1st proposal was resoundly defeated by the Los Angeles City Council with a vote of 10 to 1. The second proposal has not been heard yet.

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