

Editorial

Soliciting Restriction Opposed by 2 Groups

Regulation changes intended to bar the Mattachine Society from soliciting contributions were criticized at a public hearing yesterday by the Civil Liberties Union and the Federation of Civic Associations.

Zona Hostetler, speaking for the National Capital Area CLU, said the amendments were proposed for no other apparent reason but to harass the Mattachine Society, an organization set up to defend the civil rights of homosexuals.

William H. Thomas, first vice president of the Civic Federation, protested that the

proposed amendment also would stifle neighborhood fund-raising efforts intended to help a family in an emergency.

One of the amendments would eliminate an exemption under which organizations that collect less than \$1500 a year in contributions are excused from obtaining a charitable solicitation permit.

Other amendments would require permit applicants and holders of solicitor's cards to list their home addresses and employers.

The exemption under the \$1500 provision was claimed by the Mattachine Society after the District proposed to revoke the group's permit on the grounds that some officers did not use their true names on the application.

Earlier, a bill had been introduced in Congress to revoke the permit.

Thomas pointed out at the hearing that neighbors sometimes collect funds to pay burial costs when a bereaved family has no money, or to meet other emergency expenses.

This would be impossible if the exemption is erased and the neighbors must post a \$25 fee and wait the required 15 days before obtaining a solicitation permit, he said.

Assistant Corporation Counsel Robert F. Kneipp, who conducted the hearing, will submit a recommendation to the Commissioners.