

EDITORIAL

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES THAT CALL FOR UNITED SUPPORT

THE AMERICAN Legion in its decisions, recorded from year to year in its national conventions, reiterates some very specific purposes for national unity progress, but whether or not the local posts and state departments are putting their shoulders to the wheel, backing up these resolves, is a matter of considerable doubt.

This is not said for the purpose of creating an unfavorable impression, for the United American believes in the Legion as an agency for the development of a constructive Americanism, an agency that is exercising a great influence for constructive and tolerant citizenship, but the Legion members, as citizens of the community, are apt to be very much like the members of most organizations — too prone to record their good intentions and, retiring from the assembly rooms, become too absorbed in the every day matters of personal interest, leaving it to George, as the saying goes, to advance the cause of altruistic activities.

Among the objectives put on record in the last national convention, as matters of special Legion concern, we find this important subject of public welfare:

Urging state and local school departments to provide adequate education for immigrants.

In this tersely stated purpose the Legion reveals that it is conscious that this grave problem which confronts the nation should be dealt with without delay and that its chief concern is **ADEQUATE** education for immigrants, as **part and parcel of our state and community system of public education.**

If we have a common concern that the children of our land shall have the benefit of specially trained teachers, who are required to spend years of preparatory training in recognized institutions of learning before they can obtain certificates to teach, even in a remote rural community, is there any reasonable defense for our unpardonable indifference as to standards of training and **adequate** preparation of teachers to train and educate **adult immigrants?**

Volunteers may be fine citizens, but if the finest of citizens are denied permission, without special education, to teach our children, native-born and foreign-born, there are equal and even more weighty arguments why **they should not be permitted to teach adult immigrants before taking a special course of training in the studies that have been definitely prepared for adult immigrants' teachers.**

To have **adequate** education there must be **adequately** trained teachers. Those who brazenly profess to be so trained and who venture forth discrediting those who have been adequately trained, yet have themselves never taken any course in adult immigrant education and Americanization, have been put on the shelf elsewhere, until they acquire the specified training. If adult immigrant education and Americanization in Oregon is to return a benefit commensurate with public concern and public expenditure, no

matter how limited, it is high time that we concern ourselves with the specific standards that are now applied in the eastern states where adult immigrant education and Americanization has become an interlocking branch of public education, directed and handled only by qualified and thoroughly trained supervisors of public education.

The standard set by the American Legion as a national organization should be adopted by the State Department of the Legion in Oregon and make this department a strong influence for the introduction of definite standards for adult immigrant education in Oregon, on the basis of the standards set in the eastern part of our country.

ATTEMPTED INFRINGEMENT ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

THE INTRODUCTION of a bill in this session of the Oregon State Legislature making Bible reading compulsory in the public schools in Oregon naturally caused considerable discussion, pro and con, in and out of the legislative body.

The author of the bill argued that inasmuch as the bill provided that there should be no interpretation allowed there could be no infringement upon the principle of religious liberty. That there was no logic in this argument was readily conceded by those who well knew that this was impossible. A child in school cannot very well be told that, for reasons not explainable, it must not ask the teacher for information and explanation of historical and other subjects given attention in the class room. More harm than good would result from such procedure. Few grown people can diligently pursue the reading of the Bible without seeking information and explanation from Bible authorities, and it would certainly be impossible to have Bible reading in the class room and deny the children answers to their questions.

The bill passed the Senate, but the House took an opposite view and all but the intolerant citizens will agree that the House acted wisely and saved the state from becoming further entangled in religious intolerance and dangerous controversies over constitutional rights.

If the proposal was made in the interest of bringing religion into the hearts and minds of the children of America, for the purpose of restoring the spiritual concept in citizenship, the better plan would be to arrange for straight religious instruction, as an adjunct to public education. To carry out this idea it would be better to set aside a certain number of hours each week for such studies, at designated places, where the children could attend strictly denominational classes of the faith to which their parents belong or, at the option of the parents, the children could attend such denominational classes as the parents should designate. Credits for these studies could be either arranged for with the school authorities or entirely omitted.

If we are concerned that the children of America shall have spiritual equipment for life, let this undertaking be free from religious intolerance.

The people of America have guaranteed one another the right to worship God according to the dictates of individual conscience. There can be no immunity for