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## MILITIA MAY BE HAD HERE

AT LEAST SUCH IS TONE OF PRELIMINARY ANSWER.

Many Discussing Merits of a Militia Company for La Grande.

Organization of an Oregon national guard company of militia in this city is being discussed in an informal way by many who are interested in such move, and judging from letters received from Adjutant General Finzer, it will be possible to find a berth in the regiments of the state. No final action has been taken by the general staff but it is probable, it seems, that permission will be granted to perfect the company here, if the public so desires. One of the men who have been discussing the matter in all its phases is L. C. Pratt of the firm of Black & Pratt, and he, like many others, sees the necessity of La Grande falling in line with the militia the same as Pendleton and Baker already have. Speaking of the present status of the incident Mr. Pratt said today:

"For a number of years past, until I came to La Grande, I have been a member of the Oregon national guard. I have that institution very much at heart, and finding no organization of the guard here, I wrote to Adjutant General Finzer some time ago, requesting his advice as to the organization of a company of the guard here. Today I received a reply stating that the matter had been referred to the general staff for action. His letter had something of a hopeful tone, and I believe that with a little effort we can secure a company for this city.

"We really ought to push for this. Being the metropolis of Eastern Oregon, we ought not to be outdone by our neighbors on the east and west—Baker and Pendleton—both of which places have a company of the guard, and hence get a little state and government money which we miss."

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## PORTLAND AGOG OVER WAGE WAR

BELIEVED THERE WALKOUT WILL COME AT ONCE.

Mess Houses to Be Built Within Stockades to Feed Employees.

THE PORTLAND SITUATION.

Demands of shopment, which means expense of \$344,000 additional payroll annually, refused by General Manager J. P. O'Brien.

More than 120 shopmen laid off so far out of full working force of 800.

Payroll in general offices in Wells-Fargo building cut \$4,500 a month by laying off employees.

Stockade completed around Al-bina carshops and bunk-houses, mess-houses and complete camp for new men being arranged for in case of strike.

International official here to confer with shopmen with reference to strike.

Strike may be called any time.

(Portland Telegram.)

Plans were fully made for calling out the 700 shopmen employed by the Harriman lines in Portland this morning, but the drastic action was delayed owing to the arrival here of a representative of the International Order of Railway Machinists, with whom the local men are in conference today. Upon the result of such meetings the whole future hangs.

General Manager J. P. O'Brien in charge of the northwestern jurisdiction, has refused to grant the demands of the shopmen which would mean an added annual payroll of \$344,000 and the two roads, the Southern Pacific line in Oregon and O.-W. R. & N. (first district) are making rapid and sweeping preparations for a strike and are preparing for a protracted seige, if the emergency demands it.

It developed today, when the heads of the unions represented by the shopmen in the Harriman service all over the country asked for a vote of the local shopmen in all jurisdictions, that the Portland machinists, boiler-makers, pipefitters, car-repairers and blacksmiths voted in favor of striking by a decisive majority of 80 per cent. When this information reached the company officials here, General Manager O'Brien, believing that most of the men did not understand just what the new demands would mean, sent to all the shop employees under his jurisdiction a letter of explanation in which he shows the new increases would cost the O.-W. R. & N. \$257,000 a year, and the Southern Pacific \$87,000 a year or a total of \$344,000. He also

calls attention to the substantial increase in wages which the men had been given in recent years.

That the company believes that the strike talk has been instilled into the rank and file of the men is shown by the fact that more than 120 of the shopment who were regarded as the leaders in the disturbance, were laid off last Saturday, and that reporters are now engaged in the shops and yards getting tab on all those who are trying to arouse dissension with the existing shop conditions and wages.

Harriman officials no longer make any pretenses of hoping for peace. Every move made with reference to the yards and shops indicate vigorous preparations for trouble. Today, a force of carpenters is completing the few remaining gaps in the big stockade around the plant. Huge timbered gates are being set into place at the various entrances to the shops, and a force of guards has been placed on duty so that nobody except those who have company business to transact can get into the plant.

It is also stated officially that the company is prepared to install a complete system of bunkhouses, mess-houses and other living accommodations for new men who may be called to take the places of the striking unionists as soon as the crisis arrives. With the shops thoroughly protected by stockade and pickets, from interference from the outside, and with establishment of a complete camp for the new men the company feels that it is in a position to maintain its position for an indefinite length of time.

"It seems that the men were not satisfied with demanding nine hours' pay for eight hours' work," said Assistant General Manager J. F. Graham, today, "but they ask for a horizontal increase in wages of seven cents an hour, the present scale being 42 cents. Besides all this, the shopmen are endeavoring to force a strictly closed shop on us, and want to dictate whom we shall employ and whom we shall not. The report that we have 49 or 50 new engines housed in the yards, to be used in case of a strike instead of repairing motive power now in use, is unfounded. The new engines are those which we ordered more than a year ago, and which are just being delivered. The unusually large number of engines idle in the yards now is due to the fact that there is not business enough in sight to keep them busy. It is because of this stagnation of conditions that the Harriman roads have been compelled to adopt a policy of retrenchment."

Along the line of retrenchment, the shops are not alone affected.

This week about 30 employees in the various departments at general headquarters in the Wells-Fargo building have been laid off. This preliminary pruning of expenses means a monthly saving of \$4,500 in salaries and is but the beginning of further economy. The departments so far hit are the general manager's office, the chief engineer's, telegraph operators, auditing, and it is said plans are on foot for abolishing the entire passenger accounting department and combining this work

with another branch of the general accounting department.

The shopmen themselves are withholding all official information as to their plans. H. A. Cunningham, secretary of the local Order of Railway Machinists, o. 433, refused to give out the name of the international delegate now here, as well as all other matter pertaining to the proposed strike. He refused to say whether a walk out would be ordered when the men report for work tomorrow morning.

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