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"My Country 'Tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty."

Senate Bill No. 43 a Vicious Measure.

What is characterized by local members of the Oregon Guard as one of the worst political bills, as well as one of the most offensive bills in attempting to mislead the legislature and the people of Oregon, that has been introduced into the legislature for years has been recently introduced by Senator Howell as Senate Bill No. 43, which, if passed, will prevent the reestablishment of the National Guard in this state. In the way in which it may prove misleading this bill ranks with the abortive attempts of the single taxers to foist their system upon Oregon.

Senate Bill No. 43 attempts to provide for an Oregon Volunteer Guard, taking in the various Home Guard units as are existing (mostly on paper), and would thus do away with the Oregon Guard, as now existing, and also would destroy any chance of there being a National Guard in Oregon. The bill puts the various units under command of the local sheriff and subject to service only in their own county, and further provides that the various county courts may uniform and equip such units, and that the governor of the state is authorized to secure from the federal government uniforms, arms and equipment, by such a provision attempting to lead people to believe that the federal government would furnish such equipment. The real truth back of the matter is that the Multnomah Guard, which has become an organized political machine, is attempting by this means to dominate the military affairs of the state of Oregon. Outside of Multnomah county, the so-called Home Guards exist mostly on paper with no equipment, no uniforms and no organization of any force. In some places such organizations have had only one or two drills, but still exist on paper, with officers taking unto themselves the right to call themselves officers, and in some instances wearing the uniform of the regular army. The Oregon Guard, as now organized, of which La Grande has Companies A and B of the First battalion, Third regiment, is not to be confused with the Home Guard units, as it is on a different plane entirely.

There has been a continuous fight in Multnomah county as to the use of the money there, and the matter has now been carried to the courts. The Multnomah Guard wants not only to control Multnomah county, but also to dictate to the rest of the state. Neither the various counties of the state, separately, nor the state as a whole, can afford to, and cannot organize and equip an efficient military organization, and when all the needed equipment can be obtained from the federal government for an organization which will be recognized by the federal government, to try to create an organization along any other line or plan, shows that the persons back of such a move are not looking to the best interests of the state as a whole, but are desirous only of grinding their own little personal axe.

The United States government, through the militia bureau, will arm and completely equip recognized National Guards, and none other, and such organizations as proposed by Senator Howell will not and can not receive any recognition from the federal government. The National Guard is the only state organization that complies with the terms of the national defense act and thus is the only organization that can be recognized.

To the argument that the federal government is going to withdraw its support from the National Guard, it can be said that the state of Washington has recently had a complete regiment of the National Guard inspected and passed by the federal government. The regiment has had over \$200,000 worth of equipment issued to it, and will be armed with the new U. S. army rifle, 1917 model. The equipment issued includes underwear, socks, shoes, uniforms, overcoats, tentage and complete field equipment. Can the state of Oregon afford to buy this equipment, when the federal government has it ready to issue to National Guard units? The backers of the Howell bill even talk not in terms of a regiment or regiments, but in terms of brigades and divisions, when the state of New York is the only state in the union that has ever been able to maintain a division. But if they can make the state pay for their personal ambitions, what difference does it make to them.

It is about time that the people of the state of Oregon get away from the domination of a ring of Multnomah county politicians, and it is to be sincerely hoped that the said bill, or any other bill of similar nature, does not get any support among the thinking men of the legislature. The only plan for the legislature to follow is to pass only such measures providing for a National Guard as comply absolutely with the terms of the national defense act, and thus create an efficient organization, subject to the call of the governor, that will be properly equipped and maintained, and not listen to the harping of the political ring in Multnomah county, who attempt to saddle the state with an organization that has no national status, that may or may not get equipment, as each county court may decide, and which in any event will cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars trying to duplicate equipment which the federal government has and which is ready for issue to the proper organization, and to none other.

Recent news items show that surplus equipment of the regular army valued at \$135,000,000 is ready to be issued, and the only way that Oregon can get any of this equipment is through the National Guard.

Some of the further arguments put out by the supporters of the Howell bill are that the officers of a National Guard should come from the men now in Europe. This may all be well enough, but such an argument, when sifted down, reacts like a boomerang for unless the legislature takes the proper steps at this time to comply with the national defense act in the organization of a National Guard, there will be no National Guard for the men coming back to get into, or to get commissions in, and no way in which same could be formed.

Our legislators therefore should look into the future and consider the welfare of the state as a whole, and not the personal ambitions of any small political ring, desirous of obtaining offices and commissions for themselves.

The Observer has received expressions of opinion from a number of local officers of the Oregon Guard, which we add to the foregoing.

H. E. Coolidge, captain, Third regiment, Oregon Guard, says:

"The bill is absurd, and it is unbelievable that any thinking man in the legislature would even think of supporting such a measure. It is purely a Multnomah Guard measure, introduced to further the ends of the Multnomah Guard and none other. Probably one of the reasons the Multnomah Guard is so anxious for it is that the colonel of the said organization receives a salary of \$3000 per year, and while Multnomah county may be able to support such an organization, the rest of the state cannot do so. The organization, as proposed, is such that no man with any pride in his military standing, could afford to have anything to do with it."

H. E. Dixon, captain and adjutant, Third regiment, Oregon Guard:

"The bill is pernicious in the extreme and is an attempt by the politicians of the Multnomah Guard to control the military affairs of the state and to saddle the people with a useless expense in the way of furnishing equipment, regardless of what is best for the state as a whole, as long as their own ends are gained."

J. H. Penre, captain, Company B, First battalion, Third regiment, Oregon Guard:

"The secretary of war has made the statement that there is plenty of equipment ready for National Guard units, and to attempt to create any other organization is very foolish and smacks strongly of a purely political nature."

A. W. Nelson, major First battalion, Third Oregon:

"Union county at the polls last year said it would not tolerate expenditure as a county for any defense expenditure of this sort. The curious part of the Howell bill is that it lays the foundation for expenditures in each county as great as the whole state would be called upon to meet under the National Guard policy. It is presumed the legislature wants to economize. Yet it passes an arrogant, vicious and terribly expensive measure which the government would, if allowed to, meet of its own accord. The efficiency of the Oregon Guard, an organized militia, has been in the ascendancy and there is now going to be a deplorable jumble."

W. M. Nichols, first lieutenant, Company B, First battalion, Third regiment, Oregon Guard:

"Why have such an organization that you have to ask to volunteer for the protection of the state, in place of an organization that is always ready upon call for the defense of the state, whenever and wherever called."

More Uncertainty About the Flu Than Ever.

The "flu" is more baffling than ever as a result of experiments made on a certain "flu" gland. Naval surgeons, in their quest for a remedy for the epidemic, asked for volunteers to expose themselves under medical supervision. One hundred sailors responded. Then the experiment began.

Those "guinea pigs" were made to inhale flu germs. They were given flu germs to eat and drink. They had flu germs injected into their veins. And to the stupefaction of the doctors, not one man so exposed in any of the various ways developed any of the symptoms of the disease. They didn't even "catch cold."

If there is any scientific conclusion to be drawn, it is probably this: The flu will have none but unwilling victims. If this is true, the way to dodge the flu is to try to catch it. But the naval doctors do not recommend any such practice.

As for the hundred felled flu-seekers, they deserve distinguished service medals just the same. It takes a fine sort of unselfish heroism to do what they did, knowing that thousands of comrades had died of the disease.

One soldier boy went over the top three times without a scratch and then was sent to the hospital as the result of being kicked by a mule whose leg he was bandaging. He will have to console himself with the theory that it's sometimes better to be kicked out than struck out.

Congress is going to raise the tax on theatre tickets to 20 per cent, but will not raise it on amusement tickets costing less than thirty cents. There must be movie fans in congress, too.

The only trouble with the Irish is that so many of them confuse Pat riots with Patriots.

Liebknecht, the "Spartan" leader, was not a Spartacus after all. He didn't die fighting.

It's all right to "stabilize" the purchasing power of the dollar, as some

economic experts suggest—but please don't stabilize it at its present purchasing value.

"The reason that all these prohibition movements carry," said the man who ought to know, "is that all the voting is done in the morning." Just think! There is a generation coming who can never understand that joke.

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