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SOLDIERS WILL GET THE BALLOT

There has been a lot of discussion about the so-called soldier vote bill before Congress, the question being whether the Federal Government or the States should take charge of the program and arrange all the details.

The dispute has been enflamed by news from the battlefronts, all to the effect that men in the service expect to cast their ballots in the next Presidential election. Really, it doesn't make much difference whether the Federal Government or the States carry out the details. But, there seem to be distinct limitations on the amount of mailing matter that can be supplied to the men in the field and on the ships.

Apparently the responsibility rests upon Congress, and as the air clears of arguments and controversy it begins to look as though the practical way is for the government to conduct the election. If the states can help well and good.

The obligation rests upon the home front to supply the battle fronts with ballots as well as bullets. Methods and means to do it will be worked out. That seems to be a settled fact.

RATS

Rats, moles and gophers are getting bad again. Damages done by rodents in this section at the present time is probably the worst in years. Many merchants and farmers complain that rats and gophers won't be tempted by poison and are hard to trap. Gophers and moles have literally perforated the land around many farms.

The present campaign to exterminate rats in some localities, particularly Eugene will be watched with interest. If successful we ought to borrow their remedy. Perhaps some civic organization will want to get behind a move of this sort. We have enough organizations to do the job.

THE SERVICEMEN CAN

The servicemen can prevent an aggressor from invading our shores and can preserve democracy in so far as the danger exists from Tojo and Hitler, but to prevent inflation and turning too far to the right or left in our social ideals—that's our battle too. There isn't any use of scrapping nazism or fascism on the battlefield, if we permit these ideas to win on the home front.

RUNNIN' RUFUS

According to the Medford Mail, Senator Rufus Holman is a political phenomenon and can't be counted out yet. The Oregon voter is inclined to agree with this view that although you can't find any Holman voters before the election, old Ruf emerges about two lengths ahead when the votes are counted. It was this way in 1932, 1936 and 1940 and the inference is that it might be this way in 1944.

FRANK'S GOT IT

Frank Sinatra's got something Hitler never had. Frank can sing and the gals swoon and cheer. At his height Hitler could harangue for hours and get cheers, but nobody ever fainted trying to get to him. The moral of course is that if you aspire to be a dictator, especially with the women, take singing lessons.

Washington Letter

(By Harris Ellsworth)

Member of Congress from Oregon Washington, D. C.—The question of how best to provide a vote for those in the armed forces is the hot issue in Congress as this is written. I mentioned this problem in a weekly letter back in November when the Lucas-Green Federal ballot bill first appeared.

After six days of debate, the senate rejected the Lucas bill. Press and radio commentators were generally unfair in their report of the senate action claiming Republicans had united with southern democrats to defeat the bill. As a matter of fact the parties divided sharply. Of senate republicans present when the roll was called on the bill, 12 voted for it and 18 voted against it. The democrats were divided about even.

The substitute bill passed by the senate was hastily drawn. It had several outright errors in it and was both incomplete and inadequate.

The bill the Senate passed was definitely open to criticism as to detail but was correct in principle. It recognized the fact that the congress does not have the right to over-ride state election laws. The Lucas-Green proposal, which the senate rejected, simply ignored the plain language of the constitution of the United States which denies the right of Congress to pass such a piece of legislation.

Even before the senate acted, the house committee on the election of president, vice president and senators and representatives in congress, of which I am a member, had this legislation under consideration. A companion bill to the Lucas-Green senate bill had been introduced in the house by Eugene Worley of Texas, the chairman of our elections committee. Our committee tabled his bill and it was evident that it would not report out a federal ballot bill. That was early in December. Consequently Chairman Worley simply refused to call the committee together. When we were about to force him to do so, he called the committee and pre-

mented what was supposed to be a revised version of his bill, with, as he said, all of the objectionable features removed. He must have been joking because it seemed to me his "compromise" bill was even worse than the original.

Meanwhile, I had been working with several members of the committee to endeavor to improve and perfect the senate bill (S. 1285). Tuesday after congress reconvened following the holidays, our amendments to the senate bill were taken up and Friday of that week our committee again tabled Worley's bill and reported out the senate bill with amendments.

Then the real fireworks began. The curtain was drawn aside, so to speak, and the real form and nature of the opposition and its plans were revealed.

For some reason, the president and his organization are waging an all-out drive to block the passage of the state voting bill and to force the passage of the federal ballot plan. Our committee has been smeared and slandered. Every trick in the book has been used and some new ones invented. The rules committee of the house has been ordered to stall the bill and prevent its consideration on the floor. There has been some hot debate on the floor about this delay these last few days. The hope apparently is that enough heat has been put on the senate to make it reverse its previous action and pass the federal ballot plan—and they wanted that done before the house had a chance to vote on the original senate bill. My guess is the vote in the house will be close.

The last half of this week has been devoted to the consideration of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation agreement and authorization for appropriations up to one billion three hundred fifty millions for that undertaking. The plan is called UNRRA (pronounced unrah).

The congress was not invited to take part in making the agreement. It was worked out in several state department and executive conferences and signed. Now the congress is asked to approve it and provide the money. This method of handling the problem is resented by a great many members of congress but that is the way it was done and it will have to be passed to back up the word of our officials in their dealings with other countries.

FHA Urges Property Owners To Remodel Now

The national housing agency has made available ten priority units for conversion of houses and buildings at Cottage Grove into additional accommodations for in-migrant war workers and their families, Folger Johnson, state director, Federal Housing Administration, emphasized today.

In making this statement Mr. Johnson pointed out that the units to be provided through the conversion program of the national housing agency are not included in the quota of dwellings to be provided by new construction, either privately or publicly financed, and owners of suitable properties, as well as lending institutions, builders and material dealers, are being urged to take part in this program.

"The need for immediate family accommodations for workers in war plants cannot be over-emphasized," the FHA director pointed out. "The easiest and quickest way to provide these accommodations is through the use of existing structures."

Special financing arrangements are available under the federal housing administration's title I loan insurance program. Loans financing conversion projects producing added living accommodations for war workers and their families in critical housing areas may be secured under the Title I program in amounts up to \$5,000, to be repaid in equal monthly installments over a period up to seven years.

"There are many properties in Oregon that are perfectly suited to the conversion program," Mr. Johnson said. "In many instances with a comparatively small amount of repair and remodeling work they can be transformed into apartments providing housing accommodations for essential war workers and their families. The

important thing to remember about the conversion program is that these badly needed dwelling units can be provided quickly, and with the use of a minimum amount of critical materials."

As the result of new policies developed by the War Production Board and the National Housing Agency, applications for priorities assistance in obtaining materials for privately financed war housing remodeling have been brought within the same procedures controlling new private construction for war workers.

Those owning properties suitable for conversion, the director said, should address a letter to the Federal Housing Administration, Platt Building, Portland 5, Oregon, for particulars as to how conversion may be achieved through the priority system with the aid of insured loans.

Miss Dorothy Gierau, S. K. 3-C stationed at Pasco, Washington spent a week with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gierau, returning to Pasco Tuesday. Other recent guests at the Gierau home were Mr. and Mrs. William Habinek of Klamath Falls, parents of Mrs. Gierau.

Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Reed visited relatives at Roseburg over the week end and attended church services Sunday morning.

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Timber Cruiser Is Given Stiff Fine

B. J. Howser, timber cruiser, formerly employed by the Douglas county court, charged with "acceptance by a county employee of consideration in connection with the sale of county owned lands," was sentenced in circuit court at Roseburg Monday to one year in the county jail and a fine of \$1,000.

Howser pleaded guilty when arraigned before Judge Carl E. Wimberly and offered no statement.

Howser was accused, according to the statement of District Attorney J. V. Long, of representing to the county court that a tract of land near Drain did not contain merchantable timber of a value of more than \$500.00. Basing its action upon the report, the court sold the land for the offered price of \$500 and learned later that sale had been negotiated to a Drain logging concern for more than \$9,000.00.

The county has since recovered title and has taken over the sale contract, Howser paying to the county the amounts, exceeding \$2,000, already paid on the contract.

Lettuce Leaves

Though the inside leaves of lettuce may look prettier, the outer leaves have greater mineral content and should be included in the salad.

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to express our thanks to our many friends for their kind sympathy to us in our bereavement, also for the beautiful flowers. Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Haynes. 24-1tp

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