

8/9/18.

Mrs. John Davis, Recording Secretary
Texas Equal Suffrage Association,
3801 Holmes St.
Dallas, Texas.

My dear Mrs. Davis:

The Board meeting in Austin could take no official action upon any matters up for discussion because we lacked one of having a quorum. Present were Mrs. Moore, Mrs. McCallum, Mrs. Ames and myself. We regretted your absence, not only because we lacked a quorum and could not dispose of the business that we had come weary miles in the heat to attend to, but because, having raised the issue that trust moneys are being improperly expended and having declined to accept the Board's usual method of disposing of business between regular meetings and having asked that a Board meeting be called in the summer when travelling is hard and some of our members are out of the state, it seemed only fair that you should have attended that Board meeting, suffered the discomforts of summer travel along with the rest of us and discussed the issue frankly with us.

Your letters were read to the Board as you requested and while no official action could be taken, we were unanimous in believing that those bills which you have disapproved should be paid. And we expressed our deep regret that Mrs. Moore, who is a trained nurse and could at any time have commanded a salary of one hundred and twenty five dollars and expenses, but who had chosen instead to give her services to the Cause of Equal Suffrage, not only because it needed her sorely but because in so doing she felt that she was working shoulder to shoulder with her husband who is in France, in the Cause of Democracy, should have, in her unselfish service, received such discourteous treatment at the hands of our organization. Naturally I have not kept from Mrs. Moore your action in regard to her expense accounts, tho I have personally paid both hers and Mrs. Leagues which you denied. Because having authorized them I held myself personally responsible for their payment.

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We regret too, that Mrs. League should have been subjected to this humiliation. Mrs. League has worked most days over time and many nights far into the night when we have had a stress of campaign work on hand. Her service to the Cause of Equal Suffrage in Texas can no more be measured than can that of any other unselfish person who has served a great Cause loyally and consistently thro fair weather and foul. And I would not willingly have had her hurt and certainly will never see her financially at loss when she has gone upon the legitimate business of the organization at my request.

I am enclosing these bills herewith and since the Board, with the exception of yourself has by letter voted to have them paid, and since that vote was informally ratified by what would have been a Board meeting had you been present, I hope that you will so endorse them and send them to Mrs. Ames for payment.

Now replying to your letter of Aug. 1st., I will say that I took this letter up with the Board paragraph by paragraph, because if I have been at fault in the discharge of my duty to the organization I want to know it and I want the Board to know it and together I want that we should correct it. I will give you the result of our deliberations.

1st. We discussed your statement that the Constitution gives to you an equal authority with me in ordering the payment of bills. We are agreed that technically upon a surface view of the situation you may be justified in that statement. But that you surely cannot really believe that is morally correct when you have never done one single days work in State Headquarters and I have worked there or some where else in the state for the good of Suffrage every single day for over three years. It isn't possible for you to have matured the judgement of the advisability of an expenditure which is the only thing that would make it at all just for you to have a veto power over my work.

It is our judgement that no such anomalous condition was ever intended and looking back into the history of the organization we find that the "ok'ing of bills was originally invested in the corresponding secretary, with the tacit understanding that she would be elected from the same town that the president was elected from and that a woman would be chosen free to work in the Headquarters with the president. When Miss Brackenridge was President Miss Fenwick was Cor. Secretary and helped her. When Miss Finnigan was President Mrs. Wallis was Cor. Sec. and helped her. My first term, Mrs. Shannon was Cor. Sec. and worked in the office with me. Then at the Dallas Convention Miss Adelaide Stuart was elected as a compliment to Corsicana, and when she was married a few months later, and went out of the state for a period of time, I switched the "ok'ing of bills to you

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for the convenience of quicker action and because some bills were lost following her around in her travels. The members of the Board who were at the Austin meeting were unanimous in believing that it would be wise to return this function to the Corresponding Secretary, and I shall do this on the first day of September.

2nd You make the statement that all bills have not gone to you for your approval. If the Board minutes have been properly taken and kept there is a record of an agreement, to which I am sure that I thought you were party, that it should not be considered necessary to send to you, month after month bills for non-fluctuating expenses, such as rent, telephone, salaries and etc., but that the Treasurer should have a standing order to issue checks for these items without notice from you or the president. This I believe is a usual business custom and saves time, labor and postage.

3rd. You ask that we discuss all unpaid bills. There are no unpaid bills except these which you have disapproved; and these were discussed and are enclosed herewith.) And one expense account of Miss Engle's for the last two weeks of July which is not yet in hand. There are of course the current bills which have gone to you for approval.

4th. You ask that I make a report to you of all work being done or planned at the State Headquarters. We are agreed that this is something which it is not possible for me to undertake without another professional secretary, and even without I doubt if I could do it since by your action we are deprived of Mrs. Moore's help, and will have to try to take care of her work somehow.

Permit me to illustrate the impossibility of this with the matter of the Legal Defense Committee which you mention. My information came to me by wire and I at once telegraphed to the men who served on that committee asking their help, and confirmed this ~~by~~ by a personal letter to each one which went out in the evening mail and was available for each gentleman with detailed information with their morning mail. To get out these wires and letters Mrs. League and I worked over time. Would you have had us then to have stayed still later into the night to inform the Board what was being planned? In order, as you say, that you might be prepared to answer the questions "of reporters and politicians". And as to "having no secrets", you may not have, as you say, but I will have to acknowledge that much information is at my command for the good of the Cause, which would not be accessible to me if it were also available for answering the questions of reporters and politicians.

Very truly yours,

President.