

For Release Sunday, June 22, 1919.

June 21.

Austin, Texas

In an open letter addressed to Senator J. C. McNealus, of Dallas, Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, President of the Texas Equal Suffrage Association, has the following to say:

Hon. J. C. McNealus,
Austin,
Texas?

My Dear Mr. McNealus:

We are very much surprised and greatly hurt to learn that the Ferguson people are using a signed editorial of yours as a paid advertisement in a number of newspapers in an effort to prevent the Legislature from ratifying the Federal Amendment. We are at a loss to understand your position, since we have understood that you were a member of the Democratic Party of the state of Texas, and that you accepted the Platform of the Democratic Party as your pledge to your constituents, being bound in honor to carry out to success the policies of the Party as far as it was humanly possible to do. When you come to talk of "Embezzlement of Power," - is it not a fact that you asked to have the power of the Democratic voters of your District delegated to you rather than to your opponent in the race, on the tacit promise that you would carry out the wishes of the Democrats? The voters accepted your pledge in good faith and selected you as the Democratic nominee.

We can understand that you might be disappointed in the result of the election on May 24th, but to those of us who have spent the best years of our lives working for this cause, and the general good of the State of Texas, that result was not unexpected. The Suffrage Amendment was handicapped with an alien exclusion rider and, by some oversight of our friends and machination of our enemies, rushed to the vote while approximately 200,000 American men were out of the electorate in the United States Army. There are in this state nearly 130,000 men of voting age (United States Census 1910) foreign born, and the marvel is that even our most optimistic friends expected us to win with that handicap, since the American men themselves, with the weapon of the vote in hand, and while all the loyal men were at home, have twice within the past five years gone down to defeat in trying to secure the adoption of the alien amendment?

In our case, the women could not vote for their own enfranchisement, and we lacked those 200,000 American soldiers of having the full American voting strength of the state to draw on for support.

We do not feel that the vote on May 24th was a fair test of public sentiment on Suffrage because the matter was not presented as a clear cut issue, and we ask you to bear this in mind together with the fact that the Democratic Platform adopted at the State Convention in Waco last September has this plank in it: "We favor the submission of an amendment to the Federal Constitution to various legislatures giving the right of suffrage to women on the same terms as men and that the legislature ratify the same when so submitted;" and also that the Democratic National Committee, meeting in Chicago on May 29th, adopted the following resolution: "Whereas the Democratic party is on record as favoring women's suffrage, and it is the earnest desire of the Democratic party that all women vote in the elections of 1920, therefore be it Resolved, That the Democratic National Committee urges calling a special session of the State Legislature, wherever necessary, to bring about the speedy ratification of said Federal Amendment. "

The men who were elected on that platform stand pledged to the Democrats of Texas to redeem it. And the result of an election participated in by negro and foreign born men having a combined voting strength of over 300,000, the great majority of whom are not Democrats, cannot release that pledge. I feel sure if you will consider these facts carefully, - first, that there has been no vote on the Suffrage issue alone; and, second, the Democratic Party is committed to Suffrage in no uncertain terms, there will be no question as to your vote on ratification of the Federal Amendment in Texas.

Very truly yours,

Minnie Fisher Cunningham,

MFC-EHL

President.