

12/23/18

Mrs. E. B. Reppert, President  
Dallas Equal Suffrage Association,  
Dallas,  
Texas.

My dear Mrs. Reppert:-

Your letter, enclosing one from General Crane to hand. Thank you for sending me this, I am glad to see it, the I am profoundly depressed by the nature of it. For, if the leading Democrats of the state see the women of Texas resting under obligation to the Democratic Party, it is indicative of a complete failure to envision and appreciate the work which the women did to rescue and regenerate the Democratic Party in our state.

Think, for instance of the fight of the women in the 23rd Senatorial District against the Jim Wells-Archie Parr combination ----- the house to house canvassing in the brutal heat of June and July in that sparsely settled region and the holding of meetings in season and out. I had the honor to speak in that campaign just prior to the War College in Austin the latter part of June and I know somewhat of the sufferings that they were enduring.

That district, as we both know, is not the only one where heroic work was done by the women and the day saved for decent American government, when without them the old ring would surely have gone back into power. Therefore, if there is to be any question of "Favors", or gratitude, which does not for one minute meet my ideal of equal rights and responsibility, but if the word are to be bandied about, I, for one, believe that the gratitude, the whole hearted and sincere gratitude of the state of Texas should be, and is accorded to the women for "Services rendered" in 1917 and 1918.... Not that we did more than we should, but simply that we did our best, we withheld nothing of service or sacrifice that the hour seemed to demand, and that with our help was accomplished that which the men alone had failed to be able to accomplish.

As to our enjoying the right of Primary Suffrage by favor of the Democratic Party, General Crane knows, if he remembers, that when we went to the Convention of the Democratic Party in 1916 asking only the endorsement of the principle of Equal Suffrage, that we were made the objects of much ridicule. Also he may remember that we found no man, in all that throng,

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and we asked many, including himself; willing to introduce our resolution on the floor of the Convention, in order that we might have the educational and propaganda advantage to be derived from that action.

The women of Texas enjoy the right to vote in the party primary or convention of the party of their choice, not by grace of any party, because no party took official action on the matter. Had the Democratic Party taken official action at the Convention next preceeding the granting of this right to women, it would have been hostile action, due to the influences in power in the democratic Party at that time.

That General Crane is moved to mention "The All Highest" James E. Ferguson and his activities in connection with my own necessary effort to obey the will of the organization with whose leadership I have been entrusted and by the official acts of which I am of necessity bound, is a matter of great surprise to me. All things considered; things of which he and I are advised in the recent political history of our state; I honestly do not see how he can have brought himself to giving me that "Unkindest cut of all" behind my back. I'll have to acknowledge that, because of my tremendous admiration for the man, it hurts me beyond words to express.

His statement that I agreed with him in the Waco Convention surprises me also. And it convinces me that I failed utterly to make him see our position. So utterly as to make me think that he didn't listen to what I was trying to say, which isn't surprising because he was full of important business, his mind was already made up on this point, and I talk very poorly, especially when I feel anything as keenly as I do this.

But had he listened he would know that the women delegates refused to accept the plank as written with the demand for the state referendum and that a substitute was finally adopted with the demand for the Federal Amendment and the state referendum a recommendation. It is a matter of record that had this not been done in the Committee, the so harmonious Convention would have seen a fight on the floor and an overwhelming majority would have put it in then.

Now as to the endorsement of Suffrage by the counties, as a matter of practical fact they didn't "Just happen" like Topsy, they were worked for somewhat. That they developed in many instances as endorsements of submission of the State Amendment, was due in some cases by failure of our own women to understand and stand by the action of the Convention, in others by failure to understand the Federal Amendment but in most it was due directly to a telegram sent out by Mrs. Curtis just prior to the County Conventions urging the women to demand this very thing.

It is not a violent assumption to say that in the hearts of the men in those Conventions was a generous desire to give us the thing we wanted, and which we had just proven our worthiness to have. And that in practically no case was there a desire or intention to bind the women down or force them to a line of action, previously examined and pronounced

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the hardest, most expensive and most dangerous to success. And not our success alone enters into this. The winning of full Suffrage in Texas would add little to what we already have in the way of power, and practically nothing to our ability to help the National movement. But the losing of it would give it to our enemies to say that the Legislature had gone beyond the will of the people, and make ground which does not now exist for a campaign to repeal our law. And it would come, at a time when the Federal Amendment would need all of our help either here or in the states for ratification, as a set back which would be felt all along the line.

It is good of you to say that you are counting on me to devise some way out of this most embarrassing position which some of our really good friends are forcing us into. My previous letter to you takes up a possible line of action and I shall hope to hear from you on that. How is Mrs. Mahoney going to stand on this? With the well developed policy of the National Board of which she is a member and the State Convention, of which she was a delegate I have no doubt, since she as well as I would be bound by the official action of the majority whether we personally agreed or not. But I would like awfully well to know her personal views too, if you are at liberty to tell me.

Your telegram to hand today. That is awfully good work, I hope that you are sending to us the full editorial. Mrs. Park asks that I express her appreciation also. The business of passing the Amendment is held in abeyance here for the next week by the holiday recess. Here is hoping that Santa Claus brings us that needed vote or two.

I have taken up the points in General Cranes letter at length, because they are the things which will be said at all times and places by our friends who feel as he does. I hope that I have not wearied you out of all reason. I am enclosing the original, but have made a copy to send to Mrs. Catt since you suggest that she see it. I am glad to have her do so.

With again repeated good wishes for a happy Christmas for you and yours, I am

Sincerely,

President

MFC\*