

Carrie Chapman Catt, President
171 Madison Avenue, New York

PRESS DEPARTMENT
Rose Young, Chairman

May 7, 1918

INFORMATION SERVICE

OVER THE TOP

Extract from Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt's Speech in Indianapolis,
April 17, 1918

"It was because the American Ideal of democracy-- the democracy that means equal votes -- was threatened that this great country went into war, and if the question of woman suffrage is set aside now it would mean that our country is living a lie", declared Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt of New York, president of the National American Suffrage Association, at the dinner given at the Claypool Hotel in April in connection with the convention of the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana.

"Over the Top" was the subject of Mrs. Catt's toast. She declared that no country which is professing an ideal that it is ready to fight for abroad and yet is living a lie at home, can go "over the top".

"The reports we have had from abroad have emphasized the power of the terrible enemy", said the speaker, "and I believe our nation is going to receive the greatest test over here and over there and the outcome is dependent entirely on the stuff of which we are made. But I refuse to believe that the Hohenzollerns shall ever rule over this country quite as firmly as I refuse to believe that the Senate and the legislature will deny the American women the freedom for which we are offering our men and our fortunes. I believe that no matter how great the struggle, that democracy must win in the end because there is a divine law of progress that is based on truth and the liberty of the people. But every woman who has any realization in her soul of what is coming should rise now and say to the men that they shall give the patriots of this country the right to vote.

URGES REAL PATRIOTISM

"But if the men should not respond then let the women of this land hand on to the children who shall come to learn the history of this country, a heritage of which they may be proud. Let us have a kind of patriotism which means pride in country, as well as love, because that country has measured up to its ideals. We women have for years been trying to show the country the danger of putting the vote into the hands of the ignorant foreigner. The men should have had such schools as the women are establishing to show the women voters how to use the ballot and teach them American ideals, instead of giving the foreigner his only lesson in politics through a two-dollar bill. We are fifty years too late in beginning Americanization now and we are paying the penalty by realizing that we are sitting on the top of a volcano here at home. Every woman must put her patriotism first, for the world is calling for the women of this nation to put their biggest visions and warmest prayers into the ballot box, where they may be counted."

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NATIONAL AMERICAN WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION
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DR. SHAW'S CALL TO ARMS

Extract from Dr. Shaw's Speech in Indianapolis, April 16, 1918

"Combine all the organized force of your state back of the chairmen of the woman's section of your state council of defense.

"Our government, profiting by Great Britain's mistake organizing our women at the beginning of the war," she continued. "We have no thought but that which should be given to our country."

"The coming registration of women is important because women are going to be called upon more and more to take the places of men who go to war. For a time we thought rolling bandages and scraping lint was the only thing women could do. Many women like spectacular stunts. They seem more military. I never knew there were so many women who wanted to go to France. Every woman over forty-eight years old who was never taught to do anything and can't speak French wants to go to France."

"I'd be glad if this country would take every kernel of wheat in the country and not ask us anything about it. But I do object to seeing hundreds of acres of the most fertile wheat country in New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut being used to raise tobacco."

"Our country needs the army of women at home just as much as the army of men in France. It needs the same kind of devotion from its women as from its men. It is because I love my country so much and because I am so anxious to give ourselves entirely to the great service of winning the war, that I want the freedom of American women now. We women would be thrice traitors if at this time of the great struggle of the world for democracy we should fail to ask for the fundamental principles here which America is trying to help bring to other countries."

Dr. Shaw spoke three times a day in Indiana to huge audiences and always in the interests of the Liberty Loan.