

January 31st, 1918.

Hon. Charles A. Culberson,
United States Senate,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Culberson:-

As one of your staunch supporters and admirers, may I take the liberty of telling you how I, and I believe a majority of your friends here in Texas, feel about the National Amendment for Equal Suffrage, which will soon be before the Senate.

It seems to me that this Amendment ought to be passed for three reasons:

1. It is right.
2. Whether you agree personally to the above view or not, a very large majority of your supporters, and of the thoughtful democrats of Texas, are heartily in favor of this Amendment being put up to the States, and they feel that you should vote for this Amendment as their representative.
3. If this Amendment is lost because of lack of democratic support it will mean that the Democratic Party will be swept from power at the next election, and this Nation lose a large part of the splendid gain which it has been making under the present democratic administration.

On the first point, I know that many good men regard this Amendment as contrary to the last Democratic Platform, and as contrary to the general Democratic doctrine of State Rights. A more careful study of the matter, it seems to me, shows clearly that this is not the case.

When the last Democratic platform was adopted, this Nation had not made up its mind to wage a world war for democracy, and circumstances had not yet forced a decision. Equal Suffrage was then a state issue. As soon as the United States declared as a nation that the world must be "made safe for democracy", and pledged its wealth, its word, its honor and its life to fight for democracy at home and abroad, at that minute equal suffrage ceased to be a state issue and became a part of a sacred national pledge

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to the world, which the National Congress is in honor bound to redeem or expose this nation to charges of insincerity, which simply cannot be met before the bar of intelligent opinion of the civilized nations of earth. We cannot lead in this war for democracy abroad and be the last great nation to establish democracy at home.

Likewise, when the last Democratic platform was written nothing like a majority of this nation desired equal suffrage for women. The suffrage plank was at that time a truly democratic plank, representing the will of the majority and the spirit and purpose of our nation, as far as it was then conscious of its mission. Since that platform was adopted, under the stress of war and the inspiration of our President, this nation, along with the rest of the civilized world, has become so conscious of the meaning of democracy and sensitive to the injustice and danger of government without the consent of the governed that it has determined well nigh unanimously that political slavery shall cease, both at home and abroad. The nearly three hundred thousand reversal of the suffrage vote in New York recently is symptomatic of the change in American public opinion everywhere during the past two or three years. The Democratic platform represented the Democratic majority when it was written. It now represents the views of only a fast declining minority, and is no longer truly democratic.

It was also against the will of the majority in St. Louis and against good democratic principle, as then understood, to compel men to serve in the army, to fix prices on the necessities of life, to nationalize railroads, and to abolish the liquor traffic by national action, but, under the pressure of a before-undreamed-of situation, a broader view has shown that certain forms of local democracy must give place to a larger democracy, or else democracy, both local and national, may perish from the earth. Similarly, a broader view now shows that this nation must establish democracy at home without waiting for slow state action.

In short, three things are now clear: (1) the stern logic of necessity has forced us to recognize that certain aspects of local government and individual control must be exchanged for larger liberty and the national power to maintain liberty, both local and national; (2) equal suffrage has passed from a minority to a majority measure; and (3) equal suffrage

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has been changed from a state to a national issue by the well-nigh unanimous action of Congress and the nation in determining to fight as a nation for democracy the world over. The nation, and not the individual states, pledged itself to democracy at home and abroad, and the nation is in honor bound to redeem that pledge now.

On the second point, I recall that you, yourself agreed to vote for prohibition, regardless of what your own personal views were on the subject, if you were convinced that the majority of your people wanted that. You thus expressed your own approval of the view that the Representative elected by the people should represent the people who elected him. If you have not been about in Texas since the war began, and since the quickened sense of democracy has gotten abroad in our land, you can have no idea how strong the sentiment of this state now is in favor of woman suffrage, by either state or national amendment.

On the third point, it is needless for me to tell you that a Democratic President to be elected must either carry New York State or carry those Western states which this year elected Wilson. Both New York and those Western states have declared themselves in no uncertain terms for woman suffrage, and they would without question sweep from power the Party that was responsible for the defeat or delay of this already long delayed Suffrage Amendment. When one thinks of how much would be lost in the prosecution of this war, and how much would be lost in the building up which must be done immediately after the war, should the democrats be swept from power, it would seem that almost any honorable measure which could prevent such a calamity should be adopted. If the democrats will put their shoulder to the wheel and help the women to secure their political freedom, I believe it will mean that the Democratic Party, and the virtues which our Party stands for, will be saved to the nation for many years to come.

I remain, with high regard, and with every good wish for you,

Sincerely yours,