

Nat'l. American Woman Suffrage Ass'n.
Burrell Bldg. - 171 Madison Ave. N.Y. City.

February 18, 1916.

To Presidents of all Associations Affiliated with
the National American Woman Suffrage Association:

I have just returned from a ten days' trip to Chicago, Des Moines and St. Louis. Congressional Conferences were held in Chicago and St. Louis but the chief object of my visit to these cities was to invite the local suffragists to become hostesses for grand demonstrations in behalf of suffrage at the time of the great National Conventions to be held in their respective cities. I went to Des Moines to meet with the State Board and to make a general survey of the State in order to determine its chances. I now report to you the results of all three visits.

CHICAGO: The National Republican Convention will open in Chicago on June 7th. It is supposed that the Progressive National Convention will also be held in Chicago on the same date. The women of Illinois will form a large committee representative of all organizations for suffrage and including many other organizations. Among these will be the Republican and Democratic women's organizations. Mrs. Harrison Munro Brown, President Illinois Equal Suffrage Association, 604 Tower Building, Chicago, Illinois, is Chairman of this Committee. It was decided to have a great national parade in Chicago. Unless you learn to the contrary the date will be June 7th and the time afternoon. We are ambitious to have not fewer than 40,000 women in line and as many men as will be willing to join the march.

We hope that every state in the Union will be represented. There are people living in Chicago from every state and it is well for the suffragists in each state to communicate with those known to them in Chicago and to invite them to join the state ranks. We are hopeful that all the better organized states will send at least one car-load of women to Chicago for the parade, and a hundred if possible. The conditions are that each state delegation shall wear a uniform costume. White is preferable but not obligatory, but all marchers from each state should wear the same color. A sash bearing the name of the state and a uniform hat are necessary to give a good appearance in the march. If the delegation from a state is large a band would be necessary. All the banners any state desires may be carried, but the form, color and slogans should be submitted to the Chicago Committee in order to avoid duplication.

All expense for each state section must be borne by the state. A special feature will be made of the women from the suffrage states. Those states which are well enough organized to warrant it, are strongly urged to march under Congressional Districts and to have, if possible, a few women for each district provided with a banner, shield or pennant indicating from what district they come. As the Republican Convention comes first our very strongest appeal should be made in Chicago.

ST. LOUIS: A demonstration as effective as that of Chicago is necessary lest the Democratic Convention will misunderstand our motives. Yet it was necessary to have a different demonstration from that of Chicago.

I presented to the St. Louis women the need of a demonstration and asked them to devise the plan. They were unanimously of the opinion that a parade was impossible and that a pageant would not be feasible in view of the fact that St. Louis is giving one great pageant just before the Democratic Convention and another

shortly after. They therefore conceived a wholly unique plan. The Democratic headquarters will be in the Hotel Jefferson. Every room was taken within three days after the convention was fixed for St. Louis. A broad, fine asphalted street runs from the Hotel Jefferson to the Coliseum where the Convention will be held. It is proposed that a cordon of suffragists shall line both sides of the street, standing on the edge of the sidewalk all the way from the Hotel Jefferson to the Coliseum, and another cordon will surround the Coliseum standing guard, particularly to all entrances to the big hall. It is urged that all these women shall dress in white and that they shall wear yellow sashes indicating the state from which they come and if there is more than one organization in a state the sash should indicate the name of the organization as well.

If possible it is urged that Congressional Districts shall again be represented and the name of the district added to the name of the state on the sash. The delegates from each state should wear uniform hats and the regalia should be uniform. Of course every woman will wear the kind of a white dress she has, the only extras being sash, hat, or extra ornament, such as aprons, caps, arm-bands, badges or whatever may be desired. Each woman is expected to carry a yellow parasol. These may be secured in St. Louis if ordered in sufficient time. A definite place to the women of each state will be assigned later. So far as we now know the women will stand on guard on the morning of the 14th from 10 until 12 or possibly 10:30 to 12:30, and again from 2 until 4. In the evening, the hour depending upon the program of the Convention later to be announced, there will be at least 12 platforms (probably automobiles) stationed far enough apart so as not to interfere with speech-making, and these will be presided over and addressed by women and men from the enfranchised states, each state being invited to take charge of one platform. Any other state which can send speakers and workers enough to command a platform will be welcome to have one. We would of course like 48 platforms or autos, one for each state, provided the state delegates will provide them with speakers.

A permit will be asked for these meetings to cover 1 hour or 1½ hours, and they will be well advertised. At a given time a bugler will sound a warning which will give all the speakers two minutes in which to close their speeches. At the end of the two minutes each chairman will again read the resolution which has previously been presented to the gathering, and at all the platforms at one moment a ringing vote will be taken upon the resolution which will call upon the Democratic Convention to take up the question of woman suffrage. There are other picturesque details which will be announced later, but you are requested not to give out any publicity about the plans in St. Louis until the women have had time to get their permits. If it is known just what they plan to do the opponents would doubtless use influence to prevent them from getting the necessary permits.

The women of both states are enthusiastic over the plans and will earnestly work to make the demonstrations the biggest and most impressive possible.

It is needless to say that the only short cut to final suffrage is a plank in the platforms of the two dominant parties. It is therefore well worth our while to show that the women of the entire Nation are making this request and we urgently invite you to send women to both Chicago and St. Louis. At this time no definite information can be given you as to

accommodations. In both cities Committees on Hospitality are at work on that problem, but as the political parties have taken all the space in the best hotels it follows that the women coming for the suffrage demonstrations must not expect to have the best. Committees of Arrangements will make you as comfortable as possible and later will announce rates and conditions. The states not far away from these two cities may find it advantageous to go in a special car (which if full will cost no more than ordinary travel) arriving in the morning and returning at night, thus making it unnecessary to remain over night in the City. The Convention in St. Louis is likely to be a brief one as everyone agrees that Mr. Wilson will be nominated on the first ballot. The one in Chicago may extend over two or three days. It is important that both Committees shall know what to expect from your State. The Chairman of the Committee in St. Louis is Mrs. Morrison Fuller, The Buckingham, St. Louis, Missouri.

It is necessary that you understand that the local women will not be able to get tickets of admission for the suffrage visitors to attend the Convention. An application must be made to your own delegation for those tickets and even though the application is made early you will probably not secure enough tickets for all your delegates to attend the Convention.

IOWA: The normal conditions in Iowa are vastly superior to those of the four campaign states of the East. There is no such depth of conservatism to be overcome. The press is extremely favorable; the best men are outspoken for it, including the Governor, the most promising candidate for Governor, the Supreme Court Judges, etc., etc. A condition exists in Iowa which makes it a new experiment in Campaign States. As many as 30 or more years ago the State established prohibition by Constitutional Amendment. The amendment was declared unconstitutional by a Supreme Court decision. The Legislature then enacted statutory prohibition. From that moment prohibition became the issue in all elections until it was finally repealed, the State being regarded as a Prohibition State and local option being granted to counties to vote themselves wet - just the opposite from the ordinary local option measure. The Legislature has now established again statewide statutory prohibition which closed every saloon in the State on January 1st.

Along the Mississippi River on the east and the Missouri River on the west are some large towns which have decided wet tendencies. There are 80,000 German votes in the State and these throughout the 30 years past have stood together solidly against prohibition and are now against woman suffrage. The State, however, has had a long prohibition experience and it is believed is overwhelming for it. Although suffrage workers have kept themselves aloof from this question as everywhere, there is a tangle as usual between the two questions. A Constitutional Amendment for prohibition has passed one Legislature and will be presented to the next one, and if passed there will go to vote in 1917. The wets therefore claim that the Prohibitionists only want suffrage for women in order to vote prohibition. The prohibitionists may or may not be anxious to have the votes of women. In any event it is a condition we have not met before. The organization in the State is very incomplete and the campaign in my judgment is not so elaborate, intensive and urgent as it should be. The women make the usual explanation of this fact in that they are short of money and cannot easily get it. The secret of successful campaign money-raising in New York and Pennsylvania was that we followed the example of the multi-millionaires and got a provisional cap of \$10,000 for our campaign fund. The Board authorized me to try this plan for Iowa.

A legacy has come into the hands of the National Association from Mrs. Coggeshall, for many years the leader of the Iowa movement. The State Board made a budget of necessary needs for the campaign and the minimum amount necessary to carry on a campaign commensurate with the requirements of the situation will require \$25,000. \$30,000 is really needed. The State has \$5,000 in cash or pledges. Our offer therefore was that the \$5,000 on hand should be considered the first \$5,000 of \$25,000, that the National would give the last \$5,000 of that \$25,000 from Mrs. Coggeshall's bequest, provided the State would raise \$15,000. We further proposed that we would write to all the states and to ask all who intended to assist Iowa or any of the campaign states to permit us to count all money so contributed in another \$5,000 which would top the \$25,000 and make the sum total \$30,000. The point to be made you will readily see is that in that case the National and the states will contribute one-third of the campaign fund for Iowa. That fact, we believe, will stimulate and encourage the women to raise more money themselves than they otherwise would. If, therefore, it has been your intention to give anything whatever to Iowa, will you kindly let the amount pass through the National Treasury or at least let us know what the amount is and let your contribution be counted in the last \$5,000. I do not mean that this \$5,000 is to be withheld until the last moment for the earlier they get help the better it will be for them.

WEST VIRGINIA & SOUTH DAKOTA: The National Board is anxious to make a similar offer to these two States. In the case of West Virginia we wish to offer them \$5,000 to cap \$20,000, thus making a total of \$25,000. There our survey has been made. We shall make a survey of South Dakota soon and wish to offer a provisional sum there also. We have a little money for both of those provisional sums and hope that money may be sent from other states to complete the necessary \$5,000 for each. We beg the co-operation of all the states in this plan in order that we may try the experiment.

May I hear from you as soon as possible as to what you think your state can do for the Chicago parade, the St. Louis demonstration and the campaign funds?

NATIONAL CONFERENCE: A National Conference was held last year in Chicago to which the State Presidents were invited. I was not present at that meeting and consequently am unable to judge of its value. It has been proposed since I left St. Louis that it might be well to hold a similar conference there in connection with the Democratic Convention. This proposal has not been mentioned to the St. Louis women but I presume they would not object. If it should be held it would be advisable to have it on Tuesday, the 13th. Will you send me your vote on this matter on the enclosed slip.

Cordially yours,

Carrie Chapman Catt

President