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NATIONAL AMERICAN WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION

BRANCH OF INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE AND OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

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NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE
PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.
171 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
171 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK

CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE

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MISS ESTHER G. OGDEN

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CHAIRMAN
MRS. WALTER MCNAB MILLER

HEADQUARTERS
1626 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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War Council

March 1, 1917.

To the Presidents:-

In accordance with the Call, the Executive Council met in Washington, February 23 and 24. The abridged minutes will be sent you later, and as soon as possible, full information upon every policy adopted by the Committee.

A document, called a NOTE, was adopted, presented to the public at a large impressive Sunday meeting, and delivered to the President by the Secretary of War. The President has acknowledged its receipt and compliments its character.

Extreme pacifists have objected to any action of this kind being taken but have displayed little understanding of the situation, either without or within our organization. You will observe that no word was said to ally us with either the war or peace movements. Not one of us had the idea that suffrage work should stop or even pause. An overwhelming war situation might drive out some forms of activity, but to suppose that anyone contemplated turning over our organization to war work without consultation with our members is ridiculous. Cooperation in the plan adopted cannot be made compulsory upon any State auxiliary or local. The Note invites cooperation of such of our membership as approve.

The National Council of Women, composed of nearly all National Organizations of women, has been invited to convene the National Central Committee, of which our Association will be one member.

It was voted by the Board of Officers to inform you that we advise that no action be taken to carry out the provision of paragraphs 1 and 3 unless and until war may be declared.

To the Presidents --2--

It was voted by the Board of Officers to appoint Mrs. Henry Wade Rogers, Chairman of a Committee on Increase of Food Supply, and Mrs. Walter McNab Miller on Elimination of Waste, as defined in paragraph 2. These ladies have had interviews with the Department of Agriculture and will soon send you a detailed plan for each of these suggestions. It is our belief that these helps to relieve the present food crisis may be undertaken by most of our locals in addition to the regular work without adding a new burden. We believe you can find new and desirable people to take up the new work, and that these exceedingly practical and popular movements will bring new friends and approval for our cause in every state. At the same time, these side lines will accomplish very real and useful results.

When Mrs. Rogers' and Mrs. Miller's plans are received, we ask that you will see that these are forwarded to your officers, enrolled friends and locals, together with a letter from your own Board, giving such counsel as you may wish to add. The organization of garden clubs, women farmers, etc., will prove a pleasant diversion and a positive gain to your working force and to public approval.

The Board recommends paragraph four only to cities and communities of large foreign population. Suggestions as to how its provisions can be carried out will also be formulated soon. War or no war, Citizenship Schools in the wards of our cities, well conducted, may well become a part of our regular campaign.

What we have done and what we may do will not "inflame the war situation", but will augment our influence and accelerate our chances for an early victory.

Most cordially yours,

CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT,

President.

Enclosure.

NOTE

in February 1917

The executive council of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, consisting of the official board, chairmen of standing and special committees and state presidents, called together in conference to consider a crisis in the affairs of our nation,

TO THE PRESIDENT AND GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

We devoutly hope and pray that our country's crisis may be passed without recourse to war. We declare our belief that the settlement of international difficulties by bloodshed is unworthy of the Twentieth Century, and our confidence that our government is using every honorable means to avoid conflict. If, however, our nation is drawn into the maelstrom, we stand ready to serve our country with the zeal and consecration which should ever characterize those who cherish high ideals of the duty and obligation of citizenship. With no intention of laying aside our constructive, forward work to secure the vote for the womanhood of this country as the right protective of all rights, we offer our services to our country in the event they should be needed, and, insofar as we are authorized we pledge the loyal services of our more than two million of members. We make this offer now in order to avoid waste of time and effort in an emergency; also, that the executive ability, industry and devotion of our women, trained through years of arduous endeavor, may be utilized, with all other national resources, for the protection of our country in its time of stress.

WE PROPOSE:

That a national central committee be formed at once, composed of a representative from each national organization of women willing to aid in war work if the need arises. The object shall be to establish a clearing house between the Government and those organizations, in order that service may be rendered in the most expeditious manner. With this end in view, we recommend that each component organization list its resources and report to this central committee concerning the definite work it is prepared to do. To further the practical application of this suggestion, our organization declares its willingness to undertake the following departments of work;

I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EMPLOYMENT BUREAUS FOR WOMEN.

Through its local, state and national headquarters, to register the names and qualifications of women available for occupations which men will leave to enter the army; to supply these women to employers and to protect the work of such women.

II. THE INCREASE OF THE FOOD SUPPLY BY THE TRAINING OF WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURAL WORK AND THE ELIMINATION OF WASTE.

The aid of the Department of Agriculture will be sought in planning systematic courses for women to accomplish these purposes. The cultivation by women of garden plots and vacant lots in cities, will be encouraged at the same time that the larger importance of regular farming is urged.

III. THE RED CROSS.

As the Red Cross, in which many of our members are zealous workers, is already equipped to render hospital, medical and general supply service, we offer our organized service in other fields, and we promise continued cooperation with the Red Cross, as needed.

IV. AMERICANIZATION.

A problem unknown to other lands will become accentuated in the event of war. Within our borders are eight millions of aliens, who, by birth, tradition and training, will find it difficult, if not impossible, to understand the causes which have led to the war. War invariably breeds intolerance and hatred, and will

and to arouse antagonisms inimical to the best interests of a nation.

With the desire to minimize this danger, our association, extending, as it does, into every precinct of our great cities and into the various counties of the states, offers to conduct classes in school centers, wherein national allegiance shall be taught, emphasizing tolerance, to the end that the Stars and Stripes shall wave over a loyal, patriotic and undivided people.

V. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

In order to carry out our expressed desire and purpose, a committee of three is hereby ordered appointed to confer with the proper authorities of the Government. If need arises, this committee shall be the intermediary between the Government and our Association.

(Signed) Executive Council
National American Woman Suffrage Association.

By

Anna Howard Shaw, Honorary President,
Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, President,
Mrs. Walter McNab Miller, 1st Vice-Pres;
Miss Esther G. Ogden, 3rd Vice President
Mrs. Henry Wade Rogers, Treasurer,
Mrs. Thomas Jefferson Smith, Rec. Sec'y.,
Mrs. Frank J. Shuler, Corresponding Sec'y.
Mrs. Solon H. Jacobs, 1st Auditor,
Miss Heloise Meyer, 2nd Auditor.

Washington, D.C.,
February 24, 1917.

From the
National American Woman Suffrage Association
Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, President.

Press Bureau,
Gertrude Mosshart, Chairman

For information of correspondents:-

The following officers of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and auxiliary organizations are in attendance upon the meetings of the executive council:-

Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Mrs. Walter McNab Miller, Mrs. Henry Wade Rogers, Miss Ester G. Ogden, Mrs. Frank J. Shuler, Mrs. Thomas J. Smith, Miss Heloise Meyer, Mrs. Solon H. Jacobs, Mrs. Arthur Livermore, Mrs. Robert S. Huse, Miss Mary G. Hay, Miss M. Carey Thomas, Miss Hannah J. Patterson, Mrs. James Lees Laidlaw, Mrs. F. M. Roessing, Mrs. Robert Griffin, Mrs. Helen Gardner, Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, Mrs. Julian Parke and Mrs. Bonelli, Alabama; Mrs. Edward Keating and Mrs. Edward Taylor, Colorado; Miss Runtz Reese, Mrs. A. E. S. Taylor, Connecticut; Mrs. Rose L. H. Duggin, Miss Aspina, Delaware; Miss Mary O'Toole, District of Columbia; Miss Laura M. Berrian, Georgia; Mrs. Elliott Cheatham, Georgia; Mrs. Lowenthal and Mrs. Caur, Illinois; Mrs. Tiffany Blake, Mrs. Bernie, Illinois; Mrs. Ovid Butler Johnson, Mrs. Horace C. Stilwell, Mrs. L. J. Cox, Indiana; Mrs. E. M. Ray, Indiana; Miss Anna B. Lawther and Miss Elizabeth Scott, Iowa; Mrs. Jouett Shouse, Kansas; Mrs. Garnett C. Howell, Mrs. Lydie Wyckliffe Holmes, Louisiana; Mrs. Charles E. Ellicott, Miss Emma Weber, Maryland; Miss Alice Stone Blackwell, Mrs. Theresa A. Crowley, Mrs. Lewis J. Johnson, Massachusetts; Mrs. Orton H. Clark, Mrs. Edgar Allen, Michigan; Mrs. Andreas Ueland, Mrs. Simpson, Minnesota; Ruth White, Missouri; Mrs. Walsh, Montana; Mrs. Freudenberger, Mrs. Clay Tallman, Nevada; Miss Martha E. Kimball, Mrs. Robert P. Johnston, New Hampshire; Mrs. E. F. Feickert, Miss Helen Lippincott, New Jersey; Mrs. Norman deR. Whitehouse, Mrs. Raymond Brown, New York; Mrs. John S. Cunningham, North Carolina; Mrs. Grace Clendenning, Mrs. O'Niell, North Dakota; Mrs. Harriett Taylor Upton, Miss DuPont, Ohio; Mrs. Harry Lane, Oregon; Mrs. John O. Miller, Mrs. George A. Dunning, Pennsylvania; Mrs. Edwin C. Smith, Miss Mabel Orgelman, Rhode Island; Mrs. Sara M. Algeo, Rhode Island; Mrs. Harriett Lynch, South Carolina; Miss Margaret H. Ervin, Tennessee; Mrs. Helen Moore, Texas; Mrs. Emily Richards, Utah; Mrs. M. L. Benedict, Vermont; Mrs. John H. Lewis

Mrs. Kate Langley Bosher, Miss Ellen Robinson, Virginia;
Mrs. Frances Axtell, Washington; Mrs. Ellis A. Yost, West Virginia;
Mrs. Henry M. Youmans, Miss Bain, Mrs. Ben Hooper, Wisconsin;
Miss Eleanor Stover, Mrs. Frances Burns, Miss M. Carey Thomas,
Mrs. Maud Wood Park, Mrs. Harrison Foster,

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