

# National American Woman Suffrage Association

(Member National Council of Women and International Woman Suffrage Alliance)

President, Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, Moylan, Pa.  
First Vice President, Rachel Foster Avery, Swarthmore, Pa.  
Second Vice President, Florence Kelley,  
105 East 22nd Street, New York City.  
Corresponding Secretary, Kate M. Gordon,  
1800 Prytania Street, New Orleans, La.



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
Warren, Ohio

Recording Secretary, Alice Stone Blackwell,  
6 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Treasurer, Harriet Taylor Upton, Warren, Ohio.

Auditors: { Laura Clay, 189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.  
Ella S. Stewart, 5464 Jefferson Ave., Chicago, Ill.

January 16, 1909.

My dear Miss Clay:

I suppose by now you have learned that there is no necessity for me to go to Washington, and I cannot express to you what a relief it is. I think, however, we ought to keep in touch with Owen more and I am going on my own responsibility to write to him in regard to the right of women to vote for "members of Congress". That is a Jim Dandy proposition.

I have just received a letter from Mrs. Boyer urging me to go to Oklahoma, as one of the stock objections to the Legislature granting the suffrage to the women is because the Southern women do not want it. As she wittily expresses it, "<sup>ought to be</sup> ~~You~~ Southern enough <sup>for</sup> a few more inches would make <sup>you</sup> tumble off the earth into the Gulf!"

Now I would like very much to go to Oklahoma, but the date for their Hearing- the 26th- is the very date that Mrs. Maud Wood Park and the college work is requiring my attention here. I could get around this if Jeanie were to be here, but she will be off at the National Child Labor Com., and I know Fanny will be indignant if we left the whole burden of looking after Mrs. Park and the house, and everything else, to her. I am therefore going to telegraph Mrs. Boyer and ask her whether it is possible to postpone the Hearing to the 28th or 29th, and I will try and go, although the twenty-four hours' ride means a pain in my back that will make me shudder before I get rid of it.

I think the aimlessness of the headquarters in Washington, <sup>established as it were</sup> ~~is~~ at a tangent, is manifesting itself, in that letter when its sole work seems to be whether we will allow the District people to hold

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#2--Miss Clay.

their meetings there. Mrs. Bradley is engaged, I do not know at how much. The only other reason for its existence that seems to occur to its promoters is that it will be a useful place to store the petitions.

Take cum grano salis that Mrs. Upton did not know anything about the establishment of headquarters at Washington.

I think myself that Mrs. Avery, who seems to me to have absolutely no judgment whatsoever, is- in an effort to save Miss Shaw- assuming all sorts of authority and responsibility. She enclosed me the carbon of a letter to Dr. Eaton in regard to the date of the Washington Convention. She must have jumped to the conclusion that I chose the first of July for the opening of the Convention. I settled upon it because Miss Shaw wrote me that if agreeable to me and Mrs. DeVoe that it was the date that suited her. She writes in this letter many reasons why the Convention should not take place at the date settled upon by me, evidently without any consultation at all with Miss Shaw.

She now wants Penn. to undertake the distribution of the Specialized Literature to the ministers. The reason she wants this is because she thinks she has a woman eminently fitted for the job. Although I have expressed my desire to carry on the work under National guidance, she persists in this idea and gives for her reasons that Mrs. Chambers is a great W.C.T.U. and a very orthodox religious woman, of whom, she says, we have too few. Now these very points are two very good reasons why Mrs. Chambers in my mind is not the woman best suited

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#3--Miss Clay

for the work. I do not wish this knowledge of the activity of the organized liquor element to appear to come from a W.C.T.U. source. I think it will have ten times more weight if it came from our Association without any allegiance to any prohibition idea. I think it is especially fortunate that I, who am not a prohibitionist, should be the one to institute the work.

Now there is another phase to this orthodox Protestant woman not being too much at the helm. My own experience with very religious Protestants is that they have very little toleration for anybody outside of the Evangelical churches. They are all more or less bigots on the subject of the Catholics, and as we want to secure the influence of the Catholic Church in this movement, as well as any other, I think it well to have the work conducted by one whose first interest and last interest is suffrage. One very serious objection I have in our work with all of these W.C.T.U. women is that they are first W.C.T.U.'s and then suffragists. That was certainly the case with Laura Gregg in the Oregon campaign.

I think I will take good pains to see that this letter does not reach Mrs. Avery.

Very cordially yours,

Kate M. Gordon

Lexington, Ky. Jan. 28, 1909.

Miss Kate M. Gordon,  
New Orleans, La.

My dear Miss Gordon,

Yours of Jan. 25th just at hand. I had received notification of the accomplishment in the suffrage resolution in Dakota through some correspondence of Miss Blackwells which she let me see. Through that I learned that the tax paying was an idea of the W. C. T. U's, and that Mrs. Pickler had aided and abetted them. This was introduced without the knowledge of our Mrs. Fitch, though it was her father-in-law who brought in the bill, not knowing that there was any difference of standpoint between the suffragists and the W. C. T. U.. At that time I did not know that Miss Gregg had gone to South Dakota and was comforting myself with the idea that she was on the way to Arizona. Therefore I wrote to Miss Blackwell that the responsibility seemed to me to be on Mrs. Pickler, and that our Board would have nothing to do but await results. With this idea I possessed my soul in patience, though I may say that the Oregon situation came vividly across my mental vision. Out of this calm attitude I was rudely shaken by receiving a copy of the resolution as passed from Miss Gregg with a marginal note that it had been done before she got there; and a still greater shock came to me yesterday when a letter came from Miss Shaw asking me to go to Arizona; in response from an urgent appeal from Mrs. Munds, saying that Miss Chase was incapacitated, Miss Gregg was in South Dakota and that I was about the only available person. I felt quite woe-begone for I believe we ought to work in the territories. I have turned the matter over

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in my mind as carefully as I can and I have just written to Miss Shaw that I will go.

I am doubtful, after knowing Dr. Wood's experience with Mrs. Munds, whether I can accomplish enough to pay for what it will cost in money, but I reassure myself by remembering though hard to get is still not as hard to get as a chance to win a state, which this may be. I expect to start tomorrow night and I hope that you will send ~~your~~ thoughts to encourage and strengthen me in what seems a very arduous undertaking. You and I will both be on the wing for these hard fields at the same time.

I have had no chance to think of where mail can reach me or anything of that sort, but Mrs. Munds' address, Mrs. J. L. Munds, Prescott, Arizona, and I trust that you will forward me a line, in her care, to tell me how you come out in Oklahoma. Give my love to all the dear workers there and tell them I am with them in spirit. I will try to let you know if I see any hope in Arizona.

And here I want to return to the idea of your going to Washington.

Should not you be there at the other end of the line as it were to look after the Enabling Act for both Arizona and New Mexico? It seems certain that they will be admitted this winter or at least that all plans will be completed for their admission by the next Congress. This is the Congress in which we should work on the Enabling Act. Now as I am going to Arizona by great effort of courage, I assure you I feel very keenly that we should not loose anything by lack of work in Washington. I have had no time to think carefully what ought to be done but I do wish to lay it before you. I have written so fully of many reasons why I think it would be advisable for you to go to Washington that I want you to write to me what you think of this aspect of work to be done there. I feel that I have now a peculiar claim to urge that we shall not lose anything at that end of the line.

Please write to me and tell me what you think ought to be done. I am greatly gratified at your going to Okal

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I am greatly gratified at your going to Oklahoma. I believe that you will find the situation there a very interesting study.

Please remember me to your sisters, and believe me

Very cordially yours,

Diet.

I shall await developments in South Dakota. I was not so far from you in sympathy on the Oregon question as I may have appeared; but it seemed to me that Mr. Comper's position required our acquiescence. If we are obliged to change our edict on account of this last complication I think we might re-open that Oregon question and possibly help in their last years campaign.

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January 25, 1909.

My dear Miss Clay:-

I have just received from Laura Gregg a printed copy of House Joint Resolution No. 10 of the Dakota legislature. It has passed the Senate by a vote of 28 Ayes and 3 Nays. The section we are interested in, however, is: " Any woman who is seized of real estate in fee simple, situate in this State, or who is the owner and possessor of taxable property within the State of South Dakota, having the qualification enumerated in Section i of Article VII of the constitution of the State of South Dakota, as to age, residence, and citizenship, shall be deemed a qualified elector of this State and shall have all the rights, powers, privileges as a qualified elector thereof as fully as if she were a male person."

Now, according to the vote we passed in regard to Oregon, we cannot consistently help these Dakota people. If you remember, I did not at all agree with you all in the vote taken. I did not think it was entirely consistent with our position of allowing State rights; but I was in such a helpless minority (not even you, my good friend, standing by me) that I did not wage any further battle, for I knew we had a battle royal before us with the Oklahoma situation, and it was no use rousing the lions any further on Oregon. But if we are not in a hole right now and if we are not in a position to allow Abigail to toss us on her horns, I am no judge of a situation.

Now, are we going to back down in South Dakota? Bring your statesmanship head to bear on this case.

Very cordially yours,

Kate Gordon

*For our day  
My let -  
Sunday  
next -  
Gulliver  
to  
go*

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January 7, 1909.

My dear Miss Clay:

Your letter urging me to go to Washington received. If it was simply for the Headquarters work I would not budge an inch, but I do consider that the resolution is an entirely different matter, and certainly requires the presence of a National officer. At the same time I feel that my usefulness is crippled to a certain extent with such a body of women and the antagonism that there is in the District towards the National officers, and which sentiment has largely been engendered by the beautiful spirit of Harriet Taylor Upton. I fairly dread, in some respects, to have to meet the groutch of Miss Gillette, which is a cultivated one.

Then I do not know how I am to be situated in Washington. I have never heard whether Mrs. Bradley is a reality or not, and I will not go there and assume the cares and responsibilities of running a domestic establishment. To a certain extent I am just a little bit nettled over the way Miss Shaw and Mrs. Avery ignored Miss Thomas' invitation to me to go to Washington, and I want it distinctly understood that in going there I will not undertake the organizing in any way of the National Headquarters. I do not approve of them as they purpose managing them, and I will not assume the responsibility whatsoever.

If I go to Washington I will have to give up, for the present, at least, any activity in the line of the ministerial work,



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#2- MissClay.

which I really think is far more important. I have to pull up stakes in my local work that I think a great deal more important, and it confirms me in one thing, that I have either got to give up local work and devote all my energies to National work, or vice versa; and as I consider the local work of far more value than I do the way the National handles questions, I am seriously considering retiring when I finish this year of National work.

As a matter of fact, I can hardly get a single, blessed thing out of Mrs. Upton. There has only been sent to me in the last two days a scrapbook which I heard about through Mrs. Boyer, and I only got that scrapbook after writing to Elizabeth Hauser to send it to me and after repeatedly asking Mrs. Upton to do it. Her answers were that there was nothing at Headquarters bearing on the liquor dealers' report. Ask when the paper is to be printed, and you will hear something about Advisory Committee, but she would not even say a word to Miss Shaw or take the initiative in anything, and she is nursing a groutch.. The Convention voted that a detailed statement should be published and sent to the States upon the financial situation and the confusion that was created, and which placed us in doubt, etc. I have written for this and nearly six weeks have passed and she does not pretend to send it. Any time she does write they are overwhelmed with work. How they can be so is more than I can understand. The only person I know of who has been left off the Headquarters force is the extra helper who used to go in and assist in getting out Progress. If

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#3- Miss Clay.

Elizabeth Hauser, Minnie Hauser, Miss Reilly, Mary Andrews and Audry are not more than a sufficiency to run those Headquarters, then in the parlance of the street, "There is something rotten in Denmark" and I think it is little short of criminal negligence to maintain such an expensive machine and get so little return out of it.

I have telegraphed to Miss Shaw to know what is the very latest. I need go to Washington. I am not at all prepared for the change. If it means a matter of two months, it is at a tremendous expense that I have to go, getting warmer clothes and being fitted up for cold weather, to say nothing of the break in family life here. It just makes me heartsick and weary to even have to contemplate going. Do you realize that that program for the Washington Convention is needing attention, and that when I get through with the District campaign, I will have to grind, grind, grind until the Washington Convention is over. And that is what I have been doing since the Chicago Convention-grinding and working until I am sick and tired of it.

Do you agree with me that failing to get our amendment inserted we should then inaugurate a campaign against granting men the suffrage in the District? It will be a beautiful example of the impotence of woman's influence, I am afraid; but it will be a striking lesson.

Could you go to Washington, too? I certainly don't like the idea of being there alone, with the spirit that we know exists. Judging from what letter that Mrs. Upton sent me to read, which declared the sentiments of the ladies of the District.

Affectionately yours,

Kate M. Gordon

Lexington, Ky. January, 2d. 1909.

Miss Kate M. Gordon,

New Orleans, La.

My Dear Miss Gordon,

I have to-day received Miss Shaw's circular of January 2d. I am writing you just a few lines to urge that you comply with Miss Shaw's request to go to Washington. You know how much I desired it when I saw you in Buffalo. While I know the labor and responsibility involved, yet I think you are as equal to it as any one I know, and the experience would be so full of interest and of such vital importance, that one could afford to make great sacrifices to pass through it.

I thoroughly agree with you as to the necessary and prime importance of our insisting upon woman's suffrage being made the issue from the very beginning. I have written so to Miss Shaw and also to Mrs. Catt. I do not think the negro question is as important a point in this issue as you may, but when you are on the ground, you can tell far more accurately than one can possibly do at a distance. I have nothing just now to say except that I urge you to drop other things and go to Washington in this emergency.

Give my regards to your sisters, and believe me

Very sincerely your friend,

Dict.

Lexington, Ky. January 11, 1909.

Miss Kate M. Gordon,  
New Orleans La.

My dear Miss Gordon,

Your letter of January 7th gave me great satisfaction in so far as it signified your consent to go to Washington under certain circumstances which I think you are fully justified in expecting to be arranged as you desire. I have no information about Mrs. Bradley, I suppose of course she has been engaged and that you will be relieved from all household cares. As far as I can learn from Warren Mrs. Upton was as much in the dark about the headquarters in Washington as you and I; and she naturally feels somewhat sore about such a radical change, and the prospect of a still more radical one relating to headquarters without any consultation with herself. The whole thing seems to me somewhat high handed as I do not think anything that went on at Buffalo justified decisive steps without further consultation with the Board. I am going to offer no more opposition however because there never was any reason why the headquarters should be at Warren except that Warren was the home of the treasurer. Washington is the logical place for our headquarters.

In fact all the reasons given in Mrs. Avery's letter of December 15th are good enough and while I cannot approve of action as hasty as was taken now that it is done I shall console myself by the reflection that I shall be relieved of some of the friction which probably would have been excited if there had been further discussion.

To return to yourself, I realize that you will have to drop some important work and I regret it

important work and I regret it; but if there is anything at all in Mr. Blair's views of the suffrage campaign in the district we ought to exert ourselves to the uttermost to seize every advantage it offers. I am not going to contemplate for a moment your idea of withdrawing from the Board, you know my estimate of your value there. I am very heartily in sympathy with your intention to study out new plans for the advancing of our cause in the South. We have tried the old plans long enough by themselves, they do not seem to me adequate for our purposes. I differ from you in thinking the National Board is hopeless about taking new steps, with proper urging to adopt well digested plans I think the Board and the Convention will consent to take forward steps. I look upon a winter in Washington, where you will be brought into contact with able persons representing the actual political sentiments from all sections of our country, as a most valuable ~~education~~ <sup>different</sup> for you. I found my political view was instructed and broadened by my stay in Oregon and Oklohma. I do not doubt that you will gain wider and ~~broader~~ <sup>different</sup> views by a winter in Washington. New Orleans is distinctly a southeren city and your views have naturally a strong southeren bias. I am not objecting to that in its self, but I do anticipate that plans formed on that bias might prove impracticable when they might be carried through if somewhat modified to meet the sentiment of other sections, if there were no other reason than that you should be thoroughly equipped for other planning I should urge your going to Washington. You ask if I agree with you that failing to get our amendment inserted we should inaugurate a campaign against granting men suffrage. At this time I certainly do not agree with you. I do not think we have the strength for any such campaign, our situation is not the same as that of the English Suffragetts; and we should not allow our enthusiasm for their apparent success to lead us to adopt any of their methods which do not

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suit our circumstances.

I do not think it would be possible for me to go to Washington for any length of time this winter. At Mrs. Catts request Kentucky has undertaken to do all the work in connection with the Petition in Kentuck;

I consequently employed a stenographer and am now diligently at work starting the Petition through the state.

I have at this point received the circular letter from Miss Shaw of January 8th inclosing Mrs. Avery's report of investigation of Senator Blair's Memmorial. This may influence our move in Washington; but in any case you understand my sentiments.

Please remember me to your sisters and believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

Dict.

Lexington, Ky. Jan. 19, 1909.

Miss Kate M. Gordon,  
New Orleans, La.

My dear Miss Gordon,

I was glad to get your letter of Jan. 16th. I was not certain how Mrs. Avery's investigation of ex-Senator Blair's proposition would affect your view of the importance of going to Washington. It seemed to me that the fact that the President was advocating suffrage for the District was an important feature of the situation. I have never seen that message of his to Congress; but thought probably you had.

If we can get the money from outside sources for the Washington headquarters I think the whole thing will be a good move for us, for it has been suggested to me that when her ~~old~~ father passed away it was likely that Mr. and Mrs. Upton would move away from Warren; and in that case it would be well for us to have preparations made to move headquarters to Washington but as I said before I do not intend to worry myself any more about it, since it is done and since it seems a pet project of Miss Garretts.

I wish you might go to Oklahoma, I received a letter from Mrs. Boyer and I am sending the carbon of my reply to let you know what I think of the situation. It seems to me we have a good fighting chance in Oklahoma; and if we get the bill through we must persuade the National Board to keep up the fight, if we can have a campaign in a real Democratic state it will be of ~~incalculable~~ <sup>invaluable</sup> benefit to our cause. For you recollect that <sup>all</sup> the campaigns we have had not one has been <sup>a</sup> Democratic state. Unless I misread the signs of the times it appears that the Republicans are already

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setting their sails to catch the wind of the womens votes when they come.

But if the Democrats make no sign of competition we may have to wait long before the Republicans feel obliged to make a move in our favor.

I observe that I have not previously answered your letter to State Presidents of Jan.6th. Speaking for Kentucky I will say that I prefer the Round Table conferences to state reports at the National convention.

Did I ever send you a copy of the letter I received from Prohibition Headquarters relative of Liedman's speech at the Brewer's Association. I enclose a copy in case I have not done so previously. I have tried to get a copy of the Brewer's Journal of July 1st, but have not yet succeeded.

I agree with you that we ought not to delegate to a W. C. T. U. woman the sending out of our statement that the liquor interest is opposed to woman suffrage, we have made the investigation and we should plainly and unmistakably stand behind the statement. Our State Presidents are the ones to send out the leaflets after they have been prepared with the understanding that our Official Board knows where-of they are speaking.

I really do not understand how it is that so much important business of all sorts seems to be undertaken in Philadelphia without any reference to the Board in general. I had not heard a word of any of these matters of which you speak, that is about the literature and the convention until I received your letter.

I shall be so glad if you can go to Oklahoma. I believe your presence there would be a great stay to our friends and that you could do much to impress the Democrats with the idea that the Democratic Party has a live interest in the woman suffrage move.

Please remember me to your sisters, and believe me,

Very cordially yours,

Dict.



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February 8, 1909.

My dear Miss Clay:-

On my return Friday I found your letter of Jan. 28th, announcing that you had consented to go to Arizona. Needless to ask for those good wave-thoughts to be set in motion. It is a hard task that is before you and I only wish I could be of more practical service than manipulating our wireless thought station.

My Business Committee letter will report to you the situation in Oklahoma. If they succeed in submitting either the legislative petition or the socialist petition to that special election and the National does not avail itself of a campaign there, then I think it is rank nonsense to be worrying ourselves in other States to create a situation when such a favorable one as Oklahoma is there for the <sup>asking</sup> asking.

I must confess I feel very blue over the hopeless situation which confronts us as we attempt to face a popular vote. The only hopeful side I see in it all is, that in a practical political situation, such as Oklahoma affords, or in a campaign, our question is discussed on its merits.

I have had a letter from Mrs. Catt this morning on the Petition work and I imagine that she has had little or no response in the South. I really think the way they went off on that Petition work exhibits a lack of consideration of what might be the effect if we did not get our millions signers. As a matter of fact, it is a tremendous piece of work and one from which I see little or no good resulting.

Feb 8, 1909

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#2--Miss Clay.

February 8, 1909.

If I hear definitely in the next day or two from Mrs. Boyer that she has looked into the situation and finds that a petition can be submitted at a special election in September, then I think we four who are in favor of the Oklahoma situation ought to just make a stand for a continuation of the work; if need be, present our case to the Executive Committee. If you feel as I do, let me know at once, so that I can be prepared to get sister Blackwell and sister Kelley to make the stand of their lives. I am not willing to continue this little peanut policy of a few hundred dollars here and a few hundred dollars there, which in the aggregate amounts to thousands without bringing us any practical results whatever, except those which naturally come from the growth of our idea by time and the ordinary means of agitation..

In regard to the work in Washington on the Enabling Act, I promise that if a situation arises which makes it necessary, I will do my best to go on and help out at that end of the line. But there is work for you to do first at the other end. Find out everything you can in regard to the men in Washington in control of this matter. I personally feel that it is not the work of the National, but it is the work of the National to see that an Arizona woman is there to press the point. Find out if there is a woman in Arizona of good address and certain capability- who would make this her mission, even though the National had to pay her expenses sub rosa.

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*Auditors*: { Laura Clay, 189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.  
Ella S. Stewart, 5464 Jefferson Ave., Chicago, Ill.

#3--Miss Clay.

Have her go through the form of being the official representative of the women of the Territory delegated to go there for that purpose. Then if one of our National officers is in Washington she could direct the course, in order to secure woman suffrage in the Enabling Act. If such a woman from Arizona could be found, and after looking over the ground you find a capable one, I should advise you at once to take up the matter with the Business Committee.

In great haste,

Affectionately yours,

Kate M. Gordon

New Orleans, La.,  
February 6, 1909.

Dear Member of the Business Committee:-

I have just returned from Oklahoma and will now make a report of the situation as I found it.

I was specially invited to go on in order to speak to an objection that was constantly recurring, in which it was stated that "Southern women do not want to vote". I think everybody who heard me that ~~night~~ before the Senate Committee realized that if all Southern women did not want to vote there were some who did, <sup>and I do think, in</sup> ~~view of Southern prejudice~~, that any of the men and women holding this point of view did not feel very comfortable when I said that a lack of self-respect was the only excuse left for this sort of an attitude in regard to Southern women, and I invited them to confine <sup>their opinions</sup> ~~it~~ only <sup>to</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>men +</sup> ~~class~~ of Southern women. <sup>as believing.</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>feel sure</sup> ~~view~~ <sup>applicable</sup>

The hearing was a remarkably good one. Short addresses were made by a number of women on different points, and they did well. A little Socialist woman - a Mrs. Brandstatter - made one of the clearest addresses, from the working woman's standpoint, that I ever heard in my life. But whether the hearing will have any weight on the Committee or not, I do not know. Here is the situation:

There has been in Oklahoma a phenomenal growth of socialism. The disaffection has largely been from the ranks of the Democrats. The Democrats are badly divided between what is known as the Regular Democrats and the Insurgent Democrats. The Democrats who counted largely on a large Indian vote, because of their prejudice to the negro, have been woefully disappointed, as the Indians will have nothing to do with politics. In the meanwhile, two successive years of bad crops and the unsettled money market have been turned to wonderful account by the Republicans, and one-third of the present Legislature is Republican. Then, of course, there is the Prohibition vote.

#2--B.C.

Feb 6, 1909

A poll of the Republican vote in the House is unanimously in favor of woman suffrage, not by conviction, but to further embarrass the Democrats and keep them on the run. The Socialist vote throughout the State is assuredly safe for us. We have a certain number of the Democrats through conviction, though not a large number, <sup>but</sup> ~~and~~ the Prohibition vote is counted absolutely against us. The Prohibition leader, a young man, was the most aggressively opposed of any young man that I met, and argued against the woman's vote as <sup>against</sup> ~~the most prohibitions~~ measure, entirely from the standpoint of the failure of Prohibition in the enfranchised States.

If our bill for woman suffrage should be submitted through this Legislature, it would go to a special election with a number of other constitutional amendments, and at this special election a simple majority vote would carry it. Now, it seems that the Socialists have settled upon Oklahoma as a State in which to concentrate their efforts for socialism, and they now have twenty speakers going over the State preaching socialism, and woman suffrage in addition. They propose, in the event of the Legislature failing to submit the woman suffrage amendment, to initiate an initiative <sup>W. S.</sup> petition. Mrs. Boyer, however, regrets very much that this Socialist petition should be the one to go before the people, and as <sup>B.</sup> Brandstetter, the leader of the Socialists, is very friendly to the woman suffrage organization, he has promised that in the event of the Legislature not submitting the amendment, then to secure the signatures through the Socialists, which, he says, is a matter of only three weeks, <sup>or 4</sup> and let the Woman Suffrage Association submit it <sup>as their</sup> ~~through~~ ~~no~~ initiative.

Mrs. Boyer was fully of the opinion that if this petition was ready in time before this special election, which will take place in September if it takes place at all, that the Governor would be obliged to submit

it with the rest of the amendments at this special election, which would then require only a majority vote for its carriage.

I, however, saw Bradstetter the other night, when passing through Oklahoma City, and he said that this was a point that would have to be looked into very carefully, because he was under the impression that it lay in the Governor's power to say when any initiative petition should be <sup>voled upon</sup> heard. I immediately wrote to Mrs. Boyer to have this point investigated. There is also a necessity to see whether the legislative referendum would also be at the mercy of the Governor and so designate a regular election as the time to submit it, in which event it would require a majority of the votes cast, and as Haskell is not friendly, of course we know what to look for.

However, in the event of either the legislative or initiative referendum being submitted at a special election, there is no question but what the situation in Oklahoma is the most favorable we can ever hope to get. <sup>anywhere</sup> It is very seldom that such a combination of circumstances occurs: disaffection in the majority party holding them hopelessly divided; a growing socialistic sentiment, not only on its merits but through active propaganda being carried on by twenty official representatives; the Republican party committed to a certain extent to our support; the campaign time arranged so as to take advantage of the summer Farmers' Meetings, which from all accounts represents the State's manner of carrying on its political propaganda.

Now I do not think there is any chance of raising any serious amount of money for the work in the State. I spoke very strongly on this point, and none of the women seemed to hold out any hope of being able to secure money. Mrs. Boyer says that every man, woman and child is in the toils of land-gambling. Everybody has bought land, and they are paying gradually for it and economizing and depriving

#4--B.C.

E Feb 6, 1909

themselves of everything in order to meet monthly payments. My own conclusion is that if this amendment to the constitution could be submitted at this special election, that it is well worth the National Association's while to spend three, four or five thousand dollars in the State of Oklahoma..

I was much pleased with the ability of the women I met. The women who attended our Convention are not in the least typical of those I saw. Mrs. Biggers particularly impressed me as a capable, consecrated woman. I imagine she has made great sacrifices to hold the presidency of the State. I was particularly pleased with a young Mississippi woman from Chickasha. From all accounts Chickasha has the best material at work in the State. But the women are busy women. I do not suppose that there are a half a dozen women in the State that have anything like "Help". . . The only viewpoint that we can take of the situation is, is the gaining of a State for woman suffrage worth that much to the National Association?

Mrs. Boyer did not press <sup>the</sup> point at all. I think she feels that some of the Board imagine that it is a desire for employment on her part that has led her in the past to urge so strongly work in the State, and she feels that although there is a remarkably hopeful situation, should certain things take place in the next month, that she is not the one to urge the Association. More than this, I think the woman is desperately homesick. It has been an awful hard job, and her enthusiasm and consecration has been to my point of view magnificent. She is willing, in the event of the work continuing there, to give a month of her service free. I, too, would be willing to give a month or six weeks to those sections of the State that are supposed to represent Southern sentiment.

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#5--B.C.

I have outlined this long letter to you all in the hope that in the event of this petition carrying, that we be prepared to know whether or not the National will jump in and do the financing of a campaign for the State.

I was much interested to see the way petitions were coming in from all quarters of the State, addressed to members of the Legislature from their counties. Over five or six-thousand names had come in, numbers of them no doubt due to socialistic activity.

In closing allow me to say to the Official Board that I believe if we hope to win any State in the future there must be a radical reform in our methods of organizing. I believe the time has come when we will have to employ men organizers, for it is useless to hope for women, no matter what they number, to influence a political situation without votes. The Prohibition element of Oklahoma was the last drop which convinced me of our hopelessness. I believe further that a great deal of shilly-shallying and lack of <sup>-operation</sup> ~~comprehension~~ among the W.C.T.U. women <sup>with the suffragists</sup> ~~came from this known opposition of the W.C.T.U. to the~~ <sup>to us.</sup> Prohibition party. I believe that the Prohibition political party is as much the enemy of ~~the~~ woman suffrage, as is ~~the~~ ~~avowed~~ ~~purpose~~ of the organized liquor element. As long as we are voteless, we are helpless. I further believe that the so-called Prohibitionists have no real desire for Prohibition; they want Prohibition in name only, or their attitude to woman would be a different one from what we have been led not only to believe, but to know, through both our Oregon and Oklahoma experience.

Very cordially yours,

Kate M. Gordon.



February 12, 1909.

My dear Miss Shaw:-

Your letter dated February 2nd, in regard to securing a unanimous vote in order to send a letter of appreciation to Mrs. Catt, was received yesterday, the 11th, and consequently, even tho I telegraphed my willingness, it will be too late to be of any service. It goes without saying that I was more than willing to express my appreciation of the work she has done. I do not, however, think that the work will pay for all the effort, time and expense that it has cost; but, of course, this is purely a matter of opinion.

I do not think Mrs. Catt intended her letter to be sent to the Board, for I feel sure that she will never be able to explain her attitude upon the "South hanging as an incubus around the neck of the movement and bound to keep it from national success". The only thing that comes to me, as I review the situation, is that poster the English people have gotten out: "What <sup>a</sup> cheek"! When I realize that her deduction comes from some foolwoman or women writing that the work to get signers to a petition might affect their "social position", "lose them the respect of friends" or "be regarded as cranks", I wonder what has become of Mrs. Catt's common sense. Some names gotten at random or possibly recommended through Miss Hay. Has Miss Clay's social position ever been affected by her stand? Has the stand of Mrs. Bruns and her sisters for suffrage ever affected the position of the daughters of General Logan, of Virginia? Has Fanny Burton Smith, the daughter of General Gordon, ever been socially hurt because she

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was a suffragist? Did Mrs. Merrick ever sacrifice any social position? and she stood for it when it was identified with the abolition movement. I myself never found my social position hurt, and Lord knows I have stood for suffrage in and out of season, and in the most unpopular way that I could stand for it, but tomorrow, if I wanted to make of my parlors a social gathering, I could have in them anybody I chose to invite in the city of New Orleans. Before people can lose social position they must have it, and in the Era Club, and in the Era Club of New Orleans, we have the most exclusive people as well as the commonest that any movement of the people could well imagine.

For every dollar for work spent in the South, I think in every State North there has been a hundred spent and may be a thousand. There is no doubt that after the fiasco made by the Republican Party enforcing negro suffrage that any general extension of the suffrage is going to be handled with gloves, particularly when it involves again this color question. The concensus of opinion among all politicians with whom I have had serious conversation- and let me tell you, it has not been a few- is that the extension of suffrage is purely a question of a State's right, and this is as well defined an opinion among the Northern men as it is among Southern. It is for that reason I am unqualifiedly opposed to wasting time and money on this National <sup>Amendment</sup> Petition work, and which makes me heartily out of accord with our National Board on anything of the kind. I would stand for some kind of an appeal to Congress for an amendment that would give women in the States the right to force an initiative when Legislatures re-

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#3--Miss Shaw.

fuse to consider their question.

If, as Mrs. Catt says, the South is "hanging as an incubus around the neck of the North", why in the name of thunder doesn't she carry some Northern States? I dare say she is disappointed because the Petition has not gone like wildfire. It was little short of ridiculous to expect to get it in February. The trouble with Mrs. Catt is that she has never been a worker with individuals, that is, in a State movement. Her work has largely been in campaigns, mapping out and making speeches to worked-up audiences, and she never has appreciated the grind of the small worker. I know what it is; I know what it cost in personal effort, and I do not blame people, who have not been workers for the cause, not tumbling over themselves to present petitions in the byways and highways for something that cannot be granted. However, I will watch with great interest to see how the North- the wonderful North- which the South has gripped around the neck, will have acted by the time we take a census of the work the first of April.

I was not one of those who voted for this National Petition, and remember, I spoke strongly against it. I am going to work in Louisiana, however, and I dare say we will show our quota. One of the things that will goad me hardest will be the effect that this Petition might have if we do not get the million signatures. Gollies! if I was an Anti, I would not ask for any better propoganda, and I do think it was never weighed seriously enough by our officers or our

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#4--Miss Shaw.

Convention.

I wonder how Mrs. Catt explains the attitude of the W.C.T.U. ladies, who were not willing to have it known that they had given the names of the local unions, nor willing to say where the list had come from. I wonder if these W.C.T.U.'s were all Southern ladies, afraid to lose their "social position".

Mrs. Catt will be surprised when she sees my point of view on her deduction.

Affectionately yours,

[Kate Gordon]

Mrs. Catt sees nothing significant -  
cant in Wash. + Cal. I  
do - they have the  
yellow point of view -

# National American Woman Suffrage Association

(Member National Council of Women and International Woman Suffrage Alliance)

President, Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, Moylan, Pa.  
First Vice President, Rachel Foster Avery, Swarthmore, Pa.  
Second Vice President, Florence Kelley,  
105 East 22nd Street, New York City.  
Corresponding Secretary, Kate M. Gordon,  
1800 Prytania Street, New Orleans, La.



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
Warren, Ohio

Recording Secretary, Alice Stone Blackwell,  
6 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Treasurer, Harriet Taylor Upton, Warren, Ohio.

Auditors: { Laura Clay, 189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.  
Ella S. Stewart, 5464 Jefferson Ave., Chicago, Ill.

February 12, 1909.

My dear Miss Clay:-

I have been boiling over since I read Mrs. Catt's Petition letter to Miss Shaw. I have no idea that she intended it to be copied and sent around. Read my reply to Miss Shaw on the matter. I am sick and tired of the partisan point of view that some of them take. Have you seen any wonderful desire of the North to enfranchise their women citizens? If it is all the fault of the South, why in the name of common sense don't the Northern States get to work and not wait upon the South.

I had a letter yesterday from Mrs. Boyer. The Committee reported against the bill, but the other bill is now coming up in the House. She is looking into the question of the Governor having the right to submit a bill and thereby losing the opportunity for it to come up at a special election.

From the standpoint of propaganda, give some thought to the idea of our going before Congress to secure some power by which the women citizens of the nation could, in the event of States failing to submit what they do not consider important, force a situation compelling them to submit the suffrage question.

Very cordially yours,

Kate M. Gordon

Miss Shaw letter -  
my own suggestion  
as per

XXXXXXXXXX

Lexington, Mar. 27th., 1909.

Miss Kate M. Gordon,

1800 Prytania St.,

New Orleans, La.

Dear Miss Gordon,

I got home last night at mid-night and find letters in my mail here which give me considerable troubled thought. The ones I want to write to you about are the Oklahoma letters. You observed that in my vote on the Oklahoma business that I requested that mine should be a duplicate of your vote. I did this because you had so recently viewed the situation, and because you and I as southern women regard the Oklahoma campaign as of more importance than what the rest of the Board deem it. My experience in Arizona only confirms my conviction that we must have some political influence if we hope to win. I see no chance of our having political influence unless we can get up a rivalry between the two great parties for the future woman vote. Oklahoma is our one Democratic state where a campaign is anywhere nearly on hand. I am therefore greatly perturbed lest we be disappointed in Oklahoma by not pursuing this present campaign. If we had no other campaign on hand I would be very insistent in going on in Oklahoma, as it is I am not willing to urge its importance upon the National Board. I am also somewhat doubtful of the expediency of the new move suggested by Mrs. Biggers and Mrs. Boyer, because this Mr. Clark their friendly adviser is the leader of the minority

2.

or Republican Party and proposes to run on that ticket for Governor. If the campaign should turn out to be under Republican auspices it would make of Oklahoma only another Republican campaign. This is not my idea of what is desirable for us. We need a distinctly Democratic campaign or a campaign in a decisively Democratic state. My letter from Mrs. Boyer was directed to Phoenix whence it was returned here and I read it only this morning. So long a time has elapsed that I shall not be able to exchange letters with her or Mrs. Biggers, and the date has passed on which she mentions they will both be in Enid, that is the first of April. Therefore I am writing thus fully to you and I feel that if you are impressed with the importance of going on in Oklahoma individually we may be able to do something even though the National Board as a whole may not desire to help on the campaign. In my letter to you from Phoenix of Mar. the 3rd I wrote that if you judged it best to continue work in Oklahoma I would pledge three hundred dollars of the income of the Bruce fund to the work there. In reading over my letter I think I may not have made myself clear on this point. So I now wish to repeat that if you believe that Oklahoma is still a promising field on this new proposition and think the money will be advantageously expended I will pledge the three hundred dollars to it. As it is too late for me to write to Mrs. Biggers or to Mrs. Boyer I shall leave it to you to decide this without writing anything more to you and advise that you telegraph to them that the three hundred dollars will be available to continue the petition work. Of course I shall wish to hear at once what you decided.

At this present time I am not going to write to you about Arizona as I intend to give a report of the situation as I saw it in a circular letter for all the members of the Official Board.

I observed that in my pressure of work I overlooked answering your letters fully on one important point. You ask if in all our delegates to

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3.

Seattle is there a good speaker. Mrs. Frances E. Beauchamp is going as one of our delegates. She is the President of the Kentucky W. C. T. U. and one of the very best temperance speakers I have ever heard. She can also make a fine speech on mountain settlement work, in fact on any educational topic. She would be splendid in a legislative Round Table Conference for she has done a great deal of successful legislative work. I do not see how these points escaped me when I wrote to you last, except that I was so much preoccupied. Mrs. Beauchamp's address is Lexington Kentucky.

Please let me hear from you as soon as you can. Give my kind regards to your sisters, and believe me

Ever cordially yours,

Dict.