

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

Form 168

GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, VICE-PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

BELVIDERE BROOKS, VICE-PRESIDENT

RECEIVED AT

MILLAN HA 49 NL

NEWORLEANS LA 30 DEC

MISS LAURA CLAY

HAMILTON HOTEL WASHINGTON DC

BY ALL MEANS INTRODUCE BILL WITHOUT WAITING TO REPORT BACK TO EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE DO NOT LET RED TAPE LOSE OPPORTUNITY WILL WRITE YOU TODAY
BE CHARY OF FLETCHER VARDAMAN AND ABERCROMBIE SPLENDID TEAM HAVE WONDERFUL
ENDORSEMENT OF MY RED HOT CHARLESTOWN SPEECH FROM EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF
SOUTHERN COMMERCIAL CONGRESS

KATE M GORDON

830

[March, 1914]

D 8328

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. C. E. ELLICOTT,
107 Brown Arcade, Baltimore, Md.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

March 28, 1916. 191

My dear Miss Clay:

My delay in writing you has not been due to sickness, I am happy to say, but because I have been waiting to see if I could hear anything from the women of the Southern Conference in reference to my letter on the United States Elections Bill, and upon my request as to whether they would endorse a note to financially enable us to send a lobbyist (Jean or anyone else that you want). I am much disappointed in the attitude of the women. Mrs. Valentine wrote in that the bill was considered more obnoxious than the straight amendment and there absolutely seems no interest nor desire on the part of the women to do anything for the bill.

I wrote the enclosed letter to the Democratic Congressmen. I have had some perfunctory replies. I did not send it when I expected to, because it was in the midst of the excitement over "The Warning to American Travellers", and I thought it best not to inject our question when an issue of that kind was occupying the attention of our law-makers.

Jean could not have gone on to help you, because of her work on the Anti-Race Track Gambling, which has culminated in a suit, requiring her presence. I am of your opinion that there is very little hope of Congress considering any other bill this session, but there ought to be a committee in Washington watching its interest. Have you any idea that Owen could get you a Hearing upon it? This, of course, would alter the situation. It will never do, however, to leave things to Mrs. Stoner. She is as well intentioned and earnest as can be, but she has no more idea of what to do or what to say than a child. She has, unintentionally, balled up the situation in Washington by bringing my officers letter for discussion before the Chapter and I understand that three of the most intelligent women have left the Chapter because they feel, and I think justly, that to yield to Mrs. Catt and not to stand by our states rights principle is to make the Southern Conference useless. I am going to write to Mrs. Catt and say that our Board is divided in opinion upon simply asking for a suffrage plank. You and Mrs. Ellicott and Mrs. Stoner are of that opinion. Mrs. Ellington leaves it to my judgment and our local women think it absurd not to put the Party on record for the only thing that they can recommend.

[May 28, 1916]

I feel that this letter is unsatisfactory, but I cannot for the life of me advise you what to do. It is very evident to me that the National does not expect to stand by its endorsement in any way. I have enclosed the opinion of a very distinguished constitutional lawyer on both yours and Mrs. Bennett's bills. I have tried to get the opinions of quite a number of our lawyers, but they approach the subject with such a prejudiced point of view that it almost hopeless to expect anything else than that their verdict will be "Unconstitutional". It is being forced upon me very strongly that the only hope we southern women have for our suffrage is to put the Democratic Party on record in favor of states rights suffrage, and then raise the issue of woman suffrage on the plane of making us, at least, equal in citizenship with the negroes in the United States. We have just got to play the prejudice game in this neck of the woods.

Very cordially,

Maie M. Gordon.

KMG / BS.

HENRY F. HOLLIS, N. H., CHAIRMAN.
M. B. GRIFFIN, CLERK.

United States Senate,
COMMITTEE ON ENROLLED BILLS.

March
Twenty-three
1916

Miss Kate M. Gordon,
1800 Prytania Street,
New Orleans, La.

Dear Miss Gordon:-

I have your letter of March 17th regarding
the wishes of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Con-
ference.

I am happy to assure you that I am heartily
in favor of woman's suffrage, and that I shall be glad
to vote for any measure of this kind that comes before
the Senate.

H/C

Sincerely yours,

H. F. Hollis

SOLOMON WOLFF, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, NEW ORLEANS, LA.

SUITE 509 CANAL BANK BUILDING,
CORNER CAMP AND GRAVIER STREETS

March 20, 1916.

My dear Miss Gordon:

I have your letter of the 16th inst. enclosing circular letter addressed by Mrs. James Bennet to the Members of Congress. This I herewith return.

I can not agree with the lady. In my letter to you of March 2nd, we considered the 2nd Section of Article 1 of the Constitution, wherein the Constitution of the United States fixes the qualifications which voters must have as being those requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislatures. And as I view it, it follows that the various states in fixing the qualifications required for the electors of the legislatures of the various states, at the same time fixed the qualifications of the electors for the members of Congress, etc.

With perhaps one exception, which it is not necessary to consider here, this right of the people of each state to fix the qualifications of the voters for members of Congress, etc. remained without qualifications of any kind, and the people of the various states had the right to say who should and who should not vote for members of the State Legislature, and in fixing those qualifications at the same time fixed the qualifications for electors for members of Congress.

This unlimited right of the various states was exercised in the various states by, for instance, prohibiting negroes from voting. So the various states could have said - Germans shall not vote; and perhaps right now some of them would like to say so! But at any rate, this right of the various states existed without limitation of any kind until the enactment of the 15th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which amendment reads:

Section 1 - The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color or previous conditions of servitude ".

In other words, by Article 2 the Constitution gave to the various states the right to name the qualifications of voters, and by the 15th amendment it limited that right by saying - in anything that you do, you must however not make a distinction on account of race, color, etc. This still left the various states in full possession of complete power to make any distinctions it would other than those specifically forbidden, and as I view it with the right to make a distinction between male and female. The 17th Amendment does not, in my opinion, touch the subject at all.

With good wishes, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Miss Kate M. Gordon,
City.

Solomon Wolff

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. C. E. ELLICOTT,
107 Brown Arcade, Baltimore, Md.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS: 417 Camp St.
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

March 17, 1916.

191

To the Democratic Members of the Sixty-fourth Congress of the
United States.

Dear Sir:

The Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference organized primarily to obtain the enfranchisement of the southern women through the medium of state legislation, earnestly requests your support for the United States Elections Bill, to enable women to vote for members of Congress, and which Bill has the endorsement of both the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference and the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

At our recent Convention in Richmond the Bill received enthusiastic endorsement, because we believed it relieved the Democratic Party from an embarrassing position created by the Federal Suffrage Amendment.

In the inevitable extension of woman suffrage it is natural for the women to rally to the party which throws the influence of its support and endorsement in favor of their enfranchisement. The injustice of women having to submit their right to a voice in representative government to the "CONSENT" of every kind of a man not interdicted by idiocy and criminality, has caused to rally to the support of a National Amendment many women of the south who should be true to the traditions of the Democratic Party and its States' Rights' Doctrine.

The temper of the American women is not to be trifled with. They are willing to stand any test for citizenship, but their Americanism resents the United States Government permitting its women to remain a SUBJECT CLASS -- denied the privileges and protection of the citizenship so generously extended to the alien and the negro. This is the resentment which is turning the southern women to look for relief in a National Amendment. The Democratic Party is absolutely in control in the south and yet in the status of her United States citizenship the womanhood of the south is allowed to remain the negro's inferior.

The Democratic Party now in power has the opportunity to make an imperishable record. In the significant contributions to woman suffrage for the current year the article by President Taft, is conspicuous not for the merit of the argument for and against,

[Mar 17, 1916]

but as a plea for delay. Is the logic for delay to be found in an opportunity for the Republican Party to secure the credit for this final and greatest extension of the suffrage?

The United States Elections Bill has for its author that distinguished southerner, Miss Laura Clay of Kentucky. The argument that the constitution includes women as an organic component part of "the people" is reasonable enough for this Democratic Congress to pass the Bill and allow its constitutionality to be tested by the Supreme Court. The Bill is one that leaves the qualifications of the voters to be prescribed by the States, exactly as when the state adopts suffrage by submission to the voters.

Therefore, the Southern Conference, in perfect sympathy with the policy that suffrage is a state right, asks of this Democratic Congress to recognize that woman suffrage is no longer a theory to be debated, but a condition to be met, and that it seize this opportunity to do justice to the women of America. Such an act will meet with the endorsement of all suffragists and place to democratic credit this last and greatest extension of the suffrage.

Very truly yours,

Kate M. Gordon

KMG / BS.

SOLOMON WOLFF, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, NEW ORLEANS, LA.

SUITE 509 CANAL BANK BUILDING,
CORNER CAMP AND GRAVIER STREETS

March. 2nd, 1916.

My dear Miss Gordon:

I have the little pamphlet entitled "United States Elections Bill", left at my office by Miss Jean, I presume so that I would read it.

I do not know that you want any expression of opinion from me, but if you do, then I beg to say that in my opinion the Constitution does not warrant Congress in passing an act of that kind. The Constitution provides that:

"The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the People of the several states; and the electors in each state shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures."

I presume it will be admitted that if the Constitution of the United States provided that the electors in each state should have certain qualifications described and fixed in the Constitution itself, no one would argue that Congress would have the right to change the qualifications so laid down in the Constitution.

Now, as it happens, the Constitution itself does not prescribe the qualifications. It delegates the right to prescribe those qualifications not to Congress but to the various State Legislatures.

This being true, you can not say that Congress has the right to prescribe those qualifications, when the Constitution in so many words delegates that power to another authority.

I am sure you can easily see the strength of this argument and will supply others of a like character.

I am, therefore, unable to agree with the argument made by Mrs. Laura Clay, of Kentucky.

With good wishes, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Miss Kate Gordon,
City.

Solomon Wolff

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MRS. JOHN B. PARKER, Cor. Sec'y,
1620 Audubon St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
319 Carondelet St., New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS.

MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MISS MARY JOHNSTON,
Warm Springs, Va.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS.

MRS. C. E. ELLICOTT,
107 Brown Arcade, Baltimore, Md.

MRS. D. P. MONTAGUE,
Chattanooga, Tenn.

HEADQUARTERS:
417 Camp St.,
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

NEW ORLEANS, LA. March 2, 1916.

Miss Laura Clay,
The Hamilton,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Miss Clay:

By all means if the National will do anything for the United States Election Bill avail yourself of their splendid facilities, but do not be disappointed if they refuse to do anything, for I am rather inclined to think their endorsement is not genuine, but it will be a good way to prove their genuiness.

I enclose, at Mrs. Harper's request, her letter. She is making it cover several purposes.

With cordial regards,

Kate M. Gordon

KMG / BS.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

April 29, 1916. 191

Miss Laura Clay,
Lexington, Ky.

My dear Miss Clay:

What arrangements have you made about securing board in St. Louis? Can we not arrange to get in the same hotel? If you have not made your arrangements, will you engage for me, at the same time, a single room wherever you stop.

I have received a list of the hotels from the Hospitality Committee in St. Louis, and as they are all about the same price, want to get among some friends.

I only expect to have a limited hearing before the Committee, and will not want to stay in St. Louis any longer than is absolutely necessary.

I am waiting for Margaret Foley to call. She is in the city under the auspices of the other society,

We have a May Day celebration on Monday.

The clippings from the western papers make the C.U. appear as being the recipients of great attention. I hope that after the National Conventions are over, the suffragists will realize the futility of all this national amendment business.

Let me know your hotel plans. Do you know where the National will have its headquarters? The Chicago papers report the necessity of accommodating the suffragists on Lake boats. Not a bad idea.

Cordially,

Kate M. Gordon.

189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.

Apr. 12th, 1916.

My dear Miss Gordon,

Well, we had a fine Congressional conference in Louisville, - 138 delegates in attendance, some from every Congressional district, and even delegates who were not suffragists, as we invited societies of every sort to send fraternal delegates. I recommend that to you as a means of bringing over the unconverted who are interested nevertheless in civic affairs. We had a fine banquet, fine speakers and large audiences and everything went without a hitch until on the last afternoon a resolution was moved that we endorse the Federal Amendment. Then there occurred what the papers called a "sharp clash" between Miss Clay and Mrs. Catt. But it did not amount to that. I regretted that a question should come up which placed me in opposition to a wish of our National president to whom we owed this splendid convention; and I should not vote on the question at all, as I was not willing to put myself in opposition to her. But I explained at length my objections to endorsing the Amendment, pointed out that there were other Congressional measures which the National had endorsed for years, more in accordance with the interests of Democratic States, called attention to the statement that Miss Shaw had made in convention at Washington, and which had not been successfully denied, that the Congressional Union were working hand in hand with the Republican party/ etc. My objections were ably seconded by Mrs. Sam. Henning and other ladies; and the final result was, as we were all bent on keeping harmony with the national was, that we endorsed impartially all suffrage measures before Congress. Elise Smith later asked Mrs. Catt what she thought of the resolution and she said she thought it was very weak. This is all that I think is necessary. Mrs. Catt says she is trying to find out exactly how the States are going to support the Amendment; and I think it is enough to show that Kentucky is not going to give it any support to

Kentucky is not going to give it any support worth talking about. Mrs. Catt, in conversation, gave me the impression that in some of the Northern States, also, the support was weak. She was not even going to try for support in the Tenn. Conference, but was going to work for unification of the factions there.

She explained the "Standing Parade" which the National was designing for the Democratic Party Convention at St. Louis. I am going as one from the National; and I will say right now that I think we of the Southern Conference should co-operate with the National in the Parade, and then have our Southern women form a separate committee to wait on the Democratic committees. Let me hear what your plans are as soon as possible, so I can unite my efforts with yours. Except standing in the parade, I have promised no sort of action. You had better write to Mrs. Edwin Post, of Paducah, who is, or has been a member of the Conference. She told me that she intended to send in her dues again. If she has not done so, see that she is asked, and obtain her help in securing a large delegation from Paducah for all your St. Louis work. In Ky., it is absolutely necessary that we work in complete harmony with the National, asserting at all times, however, that the National has always given equal encouragement to State Rights policy as to the other; and that we are perfectly loyal in standing for either measure in Congress which we prefer.

Now about the Elections Bill. I think your letter to the Dem. members of Congress is fine.

I wish to say of Mr. Wolff's letters what I have to say of most of those who have given an opinion, - that he does not mention the gist of our argument at all. We do not deny that the States have the right to prescribe qualifications for their own state electors, and that the U.S. Con. adopts all of those for the U.S. electors which are not specifically or by necessary implication excluded. The XV Amendment excludes color by express limitation; the preamble and 1st. article excludes sex by the

Apr 12, 1916

wording of the Article which vests the right of choosing members in the People. Mr. Wolff writes: "You cannot say that Congress has the right to prescribe those qualifications, when the Constitution in so many words delegates that power to another authority". No, we do not say so; what we do say is that the States may prescribe what qualifications they please for State Electors, and that Congress must accept all of them for Congressional electors except those which are precluded by the vesting clause; but that sex is precluded by the vesting clause.

I wish to say that Mr. Wolff's objection is the one which makes the vital difference between our Bill and that one advocated by Mrs. Colby. The arguments which have been used before Congress for her bill do imply the power of Congress to have supervision over the qualifications. If you read Mr. French's argument in the Refr. 18th, 1915, Congressional Record carefully, you will see that this is the ground which he takes. Let us understand squarely where the opposition to our Bill comes in. My argument, because it has no Congressional prestige, is not considered at all. I suppose those who read it and the other think that I do not know the difference. Certain it is that not one whose opinion has been given treats of my point at all; or when they do, they give opinions which are not founded upon the accepted opinions of the Supreme Court; such, for instance, as denying that the Preamble is an authoritative part of the Constitution, or that it is not true that the People established the Constitution, but that it was done by the States in their sovereign capacity. In contravention to such objections, I have looked up constitutional authority, and I propose getting out another leaflet giving those authorities.

In reply to Mrs. Valentine's objection, she is right, as I wrote you in regard to Mr. Abernombie's objection. Let us clearly understand that the votes of many members for the S.B.A. Amendment have been given because they look upon that Amendment as a referendum to the State leg-

islatures, and they are willing to shift the responsibility to the legislatures, whilst our Bill puts the responsibility on Congress itself, and their favorable action will take immediate effect. Do not allow yourself to be misled on this point at all. I have had opportunity to study the mind of Congressmen which Mrs. Valentine has not.

I had many misgivings about the constitutionality of our Bill when I went to Washington. My hearing of the objections led me into points of view different from those I had before, and at every one of them I was more confirmed in my judgment that the Bill is constitutional. Our difficulties are long precedence for another course of action. Neither Congressional method is easy. There are only three paths open to suffragists, - continuance of pressure for the Amendment, - pressure for the Elections Bill, - or abandonment of Congressional effort altogether. I am confident the women will not abandon Congressional action. I will also restate my opinion that if the Southern Conference does not push some Congressional work it cannot retain its hold on the interest of even the Southern suffragists. The Congress is too conspicuous an arena for them to be content to leave it altogether to workers from other sections. Our question is whether the difficulties of overcoming long precedence in interpreting the Constitution offers greater difficulties than amending that instrument. Just at present, even the most enthusiastic advocates of the Amendment must feel discouraged. Now is the time to gain the attention of the women; and I am going to do what I can to that end rather than to think of more Congressional work in Washington just at this time. I am going to the Mississippi Valley Conference, and I am on the program for an address on our Bill. I shall continue to press it up the National, and I am not without hopes of making an impression there. Mrs. Catt and Mrs. Roessing are both women of good sense, and they have learned that opposition to the Amendment is real. Our work in Congress has given the S.S.W.S.Con. the prestige of standing first for the Bill. If we can do nothing further just now, let us remember that this

[Apr 12, 1916]

prestige belongs to us through the short session next winter; and we shall have the intervening time to prepare, which we did not have this time..

I wish you were going to be at the Miss.Valley Conference; but at any rate I shall hope to have full time to discuss the subject with you at St.Louis.

I wish to say that I asked Mrs.Colby why she had departed from the argument of Francis Minor, which is practically the same as mine, and had taken new grounds for her bill, which has the objectionable feature I have explained. She shows just her grasp of this subject when she replied that Minor's argument had dropped out of her mind, and that there is no real difference between her bill and ours! Her answer relieved an anxiety I had had, there there was some flaw in my argument which I had overlooked! On every side I found confirmation rather than overthrow of our argument; and I believe in holding firmly what we have and trying to get more. I am glad to say that I found every where that Sen. Owen's support is considered very valuable.

Well, I must not weary you, so I will close, with my regards to all my friends, and hopes of our having a successful meeting in St.Louis.

Very cordially yours,

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

May 8, 1916.

To the Officers of the Southern Conference:

As the time for the National Democratic Convention approaches, I am writing to say that I am making every effort to secure a hearing, but have not heard definitely from the National Committee. I am going to write to both the National Association and the Congressional Union to learn whether they have any definite appointment. I rather think we will have to proceed along the regular lines of putting in our request for a plank and then take our chances as of yore. I am sure that with the suffrage status as it is, the Committee will not be able to ignore any division of suffragists, and we southern suffragists have, of course, a position of vantage.

I have written to all the states to ask that as soon as the lists of the delegates to the Democratic Convention are named, that a list be sent to me, but I am going to ask the members of the board in their respective states to keep on the lookout to secure me a copy, by requesting their chairman of the Democratic Committee for a copy of same as soon as secured.

I suppose you know that we will ask for a states' right plank to be incorporated. I submitted the vote and a majority were in favor of this demand, particularly as we are organized primarily for this form of suffrage. In fact, I have been the recipient of some very positive opinions, that to do less than this would be to violate the objects of our organization, and with this viewpoint I agree. I cannot subscribe to Mrs. Catt's point of view that the Democratic Party going on record for a states' right form of suffrage is another form of opposition. It certainly is a recognition of the principle of suffrage and would form the cornerstone of practical suffrage work in the South. Without this endorsement our line of work in the South is upon a very insecure basis. It is the only form of suffrage that we can reasonably expect the Democratic Party to endorse, and the point of view that I am trying to meet is one that I fear may be taken, (that any national recognition of suffrage whatsoever, nationalizes the question,) and this is a principle to which the party is opposed.

It is desirable that any and all of us who are going to St. Louis, try to secure their rooms in the same hotel. I wrote to Miss Clay to know where she would be, and this is her

May 8, 1967

reply: "I have asked Miss Passmore, Chairman of the St. Louis Hospitality Committee, to make me a reservation for the nights of the 13th and 14th, at any hotel she could, at the rate of \$1.50 to \$2.50 per day, with bath if possible, and the right to keep the room as long as I needed it."

I am going to write to Miss Passmore immediately and make the same provision, and I would advise each of you to do the same, so that she will place each of us at the same hotel.

Very cordially yours,

Walter M. Gordon.

KMG/BS.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS

MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

June 26, 1916. 191

Ans July 1,

Miss Laura Clay,
Lexington, Ky.

My dear Miss Clay:-

I have been anxious to hear from you and learn the result of your interview with Mrs. Catt in ~~Lexington~~ upon what share she will take in pushing the U.S. Elections Bill.

After leaving you on Friday night we met her in the lobby, and she was to my mind incomprehensible. After questioning me upon my attitude toward the plank and finding that I was satisfied and felt that it was a distinct advantage to the south, she burst forth into a declaration that she regarded it as an "insult to womanhood." After knowing her satisfaction with the Republican plank, that certainly is not as strong, I cannot but attribute the "insulted womanhood" attitude as a pro-republican viewpoint.

I have written to Senator Owen and will let you know immediately whether he will push the bill during the next few weeks.

Cordially,

Kate M. Gordon

KMG / BS.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS

MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.



AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1535 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

417 Camp St.

June 10, 1916. 191

To the Officers of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference.

My dear Friends:-

The resolution below is that which I will ask of the Democratic Party. Since framing it and sending it to the southern delegates to the National Democratic Convention, in the states from which I had a response to my request for lists of National Committeemen, the Republican Convention has placed itself on record for states rights woman suffrage. You will read in this resolution that for the Democratic Party not to endorse us is to repudiate their time honored stand.

I feel without fear of contradiction that we will get states rights endorsement from the Democratic Party, and needless to say that I feel that this southern flank movement has been a great agent in getting the two parties on record. Borah, of course, though Republican, has been in thorough sympathy and in accord with us, and he was the moving spirit in the Republican plank.

R E S O L U T I O N

Government by consent is fundamental democracy. Women are both taxed and governed, and to longer deny them a voice in representation is a denial of American Principles. The Democratic Party in vindication of its faith in Americanism, pledges its support to the women of the several states, to secure for them self-government while preserving to the states a like self-government in consonance with the doctrines of the Party.

Mrs. Boyer and I will be at the Warwick Hotel in St. Louis, and I hope that all of you may be in St. Louis for a conference on future policies, which would be of great service at this time.

Very cordially,

Kate M. Gordon

KMG / BS.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS

MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.



AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St

July 27, 1916.

191

Miss Laura Clay,
Lexington, Ky

My dear Miss Clay:

I have just written Mrs. Catt that I will go to Atlantic City. I really do not know how I am going to do it, for my suffrage obligations have me swamped, but I feel I owe it to the southern women to do what I can to present the suffrage situation in the south.

I will follow the outline suggested by you, but truth to tell I do not feel that the call of the convention is a necessity, and I think its purpose is to commit the National to a partisan policy.

I do not know whether you have seen this letter of Mrs. Catt's sent to the state presidents. I have had a copy made. I fear that the National is about to go on the shoals.

Very cordially yours,

Kate M. Gordon

KMG / BS.

Lexington, Ky.

July 17th, 1916.

My dear Miss Gordon,

I suppose you have received a letter from Mrs. Catt, asking you and me to take the affirmative side of the question: Shall work be dropped on the Federal Amendment and efforts confined to State legislation?

I have accepted, with the understanding that I may be allowed to make it clear that I do not oppose all Federal legislation.

Mrs. Catt has asked me to write to you my line of argument for my first ten minutes, so that you may know how to frame your argument not to go over the same ground. I have concluded to make my main point the reasons for the excessive difficulty of gaining the Amendment, with a definition of why it contravenes States Rights. I propose leaving to you (if you wish it) the whole of the theme of its injury to the success of our cause in the southernmost tier of states.

Please let me hear from you about this. Write me at Richmond, where I shall be during the summer, though I am now for a day in Lexington.

Love to all my suffrage friends.

Very cordially yours,

Richmond, Ky.

July 12th, 1916

My dear Miss Gordon,

Your circular letter of the 7th is at hand. I hardly suppose Sen^s Owen wishes to declare his intentions about the Elections Bill till after the National Convention at Atlantic City, as I know Mrs^s Catt was going to consult with him, and he has always supported the Federal Amendment as well as the Elections Bill. Following his example, I believe the Southern Conference should confine its work just now to considering what it ought to do in case the Congress does not accede to the demands of the N.A.W.S.A. and submit the Federal Amendment at the Congress. Of course, you have seen what the N. Journal says Sen. Shafrpth has promised Mrs. Catt to do. I do not expect the submission; and like you, I am seriously concerned about a possible turn of the Atlantic City Convention to a partisan attitude; for I consider the present apparent preference for the Republican plank over that of the Democratic a distinctly partisan attitude. However, I know Mrs. Catt at Minneapolis declared that she believed the passage of the Amendment by the present Congress impossible; and therefore I hope she will not allow the Convention so to endorse the Amendment as to commit the N.A.W.S.A. to a distinctly Republican policy. Nevertheless, I believe the Southern Conference should be on its guard against such a policy; and I am glad you are going to be at the convention to watch its interests. Mrs. Catt expresses herself more more violently in the reported newspaper interviews than in her letters. Perhaps she has cooled down somewhat.

In answer to your questions: I am strongly of the opinion that the Southern Conference should continue. We know that its work deserves much of the credit of the Democratic plank. It would be a waste of valuable energy to drop its work now. I believe you should call a Board meeting, at least, at Atlantic City; for I think it impossible to discuss a further policy by correspondence. I believe we should do our utmost to co-operate with the National; and before we decide on our ~~own~~ course, we should know what that Convention is going to do. If it remains non-partisan, or, what I hope, decides to work for the Elections Bill, we could then pursue our present policy of Press work and conferences in the South. If, though the Convention should declare for a partisan policy, either openly or tacitly, then it would be necessary for us to take a more radical stand.

(1) I agree that under any circumstances we should push the Elections Bill.

(2) I am much impressed by your second suggestion. I think it would require concerted action to succeed, and we ought to go about it after careful deliberation.

(3) This proposition may not yet be necessary. Let us watch the progress of events for awhile longer.

(4) This proposition ought to be urged in the National Convention. The objection might be raised that we would be working against some of our friends, as the S.U. has done at times.

Very cordially yours.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

July 7, 1916. 191

To the Officers of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference:-

Senator Owen at St. Louis mentioned that in view of the fact that the Democratic Party was on record in support of woman suffrage, and which was a very necessary pre-requisite toward pushing the United States Elections Bill, he felt that the time was now opportune to push said bill. I have waited for a reply to my inquiry whether he would push it before the close of the present session of Congress, but so far have not heard from him.

The NEW SOUTHERN CITIZEN, for July, which I presume you have all read gives my point of view on the twin planks, and what has been accomplished. The Southern Conference vindicated its purpose and was of enormous service as a flank movement. To discount the value of the plank to the southern suffrage situation is a lack of political appreciation that cannot, to my mind, be explained except the through the blindness of partisan allegiance.

It is, therefore, with considerable alarm that I am watching the trend of affairs which seems to incline toward the National taking a partisan stand in the interest of the Republican Party. If this fear should materialize, then the suffrage situation in the south will get a very severe blow, and the only offset will be the recognition of suffrage along Democratic lines for our southern women. I would regret the injection of anything like political partisanship, but I do feel that the suffrage work needs a distinctively southern organization to meet conditions that have made it necessary for our commercial, educational, sociological and religious institutions to have southern organizations to handle their problems.

Now, that we have achieved the purpose of our organization the question naturally arises whether the Southern Conference shall continue or not? If we do continue, then we must have a special line of policy. If the National stresses the federal amendment as the main feature of the National work, then of course, we simply must have a southern suffrage organization. There is no doubt that our press service is beyond compare, the best of its kind in the United States to-day, and it does seem a pity to let this work lapse.

July 7, 1916

However, we must recognize that there is a certain animus against the Southern Conference and which manifested itself in the only discordant note that was sounded at the Hearing before the Democratic Resolutions Committee, when Mrs. Catt, in speaking in favor of her "abstract principle", made it appear that all southern women endorsed it, and conveyed the impression that the south was not for state right suffrage. Personally, I feel that if the Southern Conference was financially strong enough to do for the southern states what the southern state presidents hope the National will do for them, there is no doubt that we could make the Southern Conference a suffrage power of strength, for I realize that if our women have any political sense whatsoever, they cannot run in the face of political party traditions.

On the pledges that I have I can carry the Conference, by borrowing money, until January, but beyond that time I do not wish to feel that the burden of the financial responsibility must be carried wholly and solely by me. To continue our press work, publish our NEW SOUTHERN CITIZEN, and maintain headquarters makes an expenditure of about \$500 a month. We should increase the press service and I feel that this money could be raised in the south if any real effort was made.

I am outlining all of these conditions in order to get your point of view on the wisdom of continuing our work, and I request that each of you send a very candid opinion as to what you think should be done. In the meantime, I wish to say that I believe we should

- 1, Push the United States Elections Bill with every bit of energy that we possess;
- 2, Try to bring individual test cases as to our right to vote as United States citizens;
- 3, Start an active bit of propaganda for the basis of representation to be based on the voting population;
- 4, Try to inaugurate an effort to make our purchases preferably from goods manufactured or grown in suffrage territory.

If it is possible I will attend the National Convention at Atlantic City, at which time we officers could hold a council as to the future of the work.

Please let me have your opinion at the earliest possible date in order to circularize our membership.

Very cordially yours,

Harri M. Gordon

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

December 28, 1916. 191

*Copy of letter rec'd -
H. C. -
Committee*

The Southern States woman Suffrage Conference organized in 1913 to meet the issue of a federal suffrage amendment went on record as believing that suffrage is a state right and not a federal right. Our aim was to educate the suffragists of the South that until the Democratic Party went on record in its national platform, state submission in our opinion would be impossible.

In the National Convention our organization appealed in behalf of a states rights plank as the only logical request to be made of a state sovereignty party. The party is now on record and we appeal that immediate steps be taken in this one party territory of the South, for the "solid south" to fall en bloc for woman suffrage.

While our organization feels nothing but sympathy for those suffragists who seek, through a federal amendment, relief from the degradation of disfranchisement, we believe that the Democratic Party as a matter of principle as well as expediency should proceed through the enfranchisement of the women of the South to pin to the party standard the credit for this last and most important extension of the franchise.

The woman suffrage states have returned the party to power. If the democratic stronghold of the South is added to the democratic West a suffrage situation will be created which will make the rest of the states fall by sheer force of events. If on the contrary the federal amendment is submitted the South, for its own protection, will either prevent or delay its ratification, and upon the Democratic Party will fall the onus of responsibility. The democrats of the West have a right in this emergency to demand party protection and the South is the ideal field from which to provide it.

There is no doubt that the policy of the Republican Party is one of delay. A great coup d'etat is possible if the states of the "solid south" should by constitutional conventions,

Dec 28, 1916.

-2-

called for this express purpose on a common date, enfranchise its women. The deliberations of those conventions would not necessarily have to be submitted to the voters, following the precedent established in the adoption of many of the present constitutions of the South. In the southern states where two well defined parties exist, the Republican Party could not afford to antagonize the woman sentiment, particularly when its party platform is on record in favor of woman suffrage under state regulation.

The Southern Conference has extended an invitation to the governors of the southern states to meet us in Washington just prior or after the inauguration to confer on a policy for the South. We hope that as the arbiters of democratic destiny, you will agree to make the democratic "solid south", created such by the injustice of the now existing federal amendments, escape any further injustice by creating a short cut for the suffrage of the women of the United States. Such a happy solution of a difficult situation, cannot but bring credit to and perpetuate the party in power.

We, therefore, earnestly appeal to you to take immediate steps to define a line of policy on the above suggestion. The women of the United States must be enfranchised. The Democratic Party cannot and will not force on the South a federal amendment contrary to the policies and traditions of the party. A policy of delay will lose to the party, prestige and power, and menace its future. Let the Democratic South solve the problem to the satisfaction of all not biased by partisan prejudices.

Hoping for your co-operation,

Very truly,

Kate M. Gordon

President.

Louise Collier

Cor. Sec'y.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

December 21, 1916. 191

My dear Miss Clay:-

I enclose copy of governors letter. Also copy of letter to the president.

I will write to John Sharp Williams and urge his making the South fall in line. I agree with you thoroughly that the purpose of the National Association in thwarting state submissions such as has occurred in Illinois, and in their general policy is a play in the interest of the Republican Party. They know as well as I do that the ratification of a federal amendment, if submitted, will occupy years and can be made to play to the advantage of getting the next party in power, republican. They are, of course, very much disappointed that their plans with a view to Hughes election have gang so far awry. If the Democratic Party has not sense enough to take advantage of the situation that has come to it, then I must confess I will bend every energy in favor of the party that will give me my enfranchisement. Much as I hate the idea of a federal amendment I can assure you if the Democratic Party makes it necessary for us to get it that way, then I will do everything in my power to force it, but in the meantime I am going to work every bit of energy I am possessed of to secure it the way I want it and the way I think it ~~has got~~ ^{will} to come to us.

Have you been reading the Congressional Record and the immigration debate? How John Sharp Williams and Vardaman have enjoyed the situation.

Apropos of the Tennessee convention, are you going to the Dudley faction or the McCormack faction? Jennie stopped in Memphis for a few hours and went up to Mrs. Betts, who is positively disgusted with the whole situation in Tennessee. She says that Mrs. Dudley's pretending to raise \$25,000 is an absurdity; that her methods of work are parallel to Tammany, and she does not give Mrs. Scott a much better reputation. I do not know whether, in this diatribe against the Tennessee suffragists, she includes Mrs. McCormack. I have always found Mrs. McCormack straight, but I think she has an unfortunate manner and antagonizes unnecessarily.

Mrs. Boyer is off on her vacation. I have asked her to confer with the Massachusetts suffragists and see if they cannot help us a little financially. We are dreadfully embarrassed. Both my sisters join me in cordial regards and best wishes of the season.

Cordially
Kate M. Gordon

*Wm. M. Storer
Dana Jones*

189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.

Dec. 19th, 1916.

My dear Miss Gordon,

I read your letter and enclosures with great interest. You did not send me your letter to the Governors, and I would like to see it. I return your other enclosures.

I feel that in many respects the Southern Conference is of more importance now than even it has been before. It seems certain that the present policy of the National, either designedly or otherwise, is distinctly for the advantage of the Republican party. I think this is designed by some, is drifted into by others, and overlooked by others. But the fact, for whatever reason, becomes constantly more apparent. Now is the Democratic party going to be outwitted in this way, or is it going to wake up to the opportunity of strengthening itself, an opportunity which which does not come more than once in a generation?

In Kentucky the fear of a State amendment being forced at a called session of the legislature seems to have blown over. We think that was a project of the liquor interest and we should have opposed it. Now our friends think we can get it submitted at the regular session in 1918, to be voted on in the fall of 1919; and I believe we shall try for it then. But we have a new Board, many of whom are Republicans, and I think I see signs of a wish to work for the Republican party ^{means of} by the suffrage association. We shall have a Board meeting on the 3rd of Jan., and after that I can speak more definitely about the submission of our amendment.

I am invited to the Tennessee Suffrage Convention in Nashville, and think I shall go. I wish you were going, too.

Let me hear from you again.

Love to all. Very cordially yours,

[Dec. 21, 1916]

COPY

Letter to governors of the Southern States

December 13, 1916.

In August 1913, representative southern suffragists extended an invitation to the southern governors to meet them in New Orleans in order to confer and adopt "a uniform plan of action for woman suffrage in the south." This communication stated "we are united in the belief that suffrage is a state right and that the power to define a state's electorate should remain the exclusive right of the state." The outcome of the meeting in November was the formation of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference, whose object was to secure a states rights plank in the platform of the Democratic Party and to preserve in this final and greatest extension of the suffrage the great democratic principle of state sovereignty.

Our object is now partly achieved. The Democratic Party is on record in favor of woman suffrage as is every political party in the United States, and we are now bending our energy to preserve to the party the prestige and the power which will unquestionably accrue to the party that first extends "votes to women".

The south reasonably is opposed to a federal amendment; the Democratic ^{part} essentially stands for state sovereignty; the Democratic Party is in power today through the influence of those states where women vote. All of these facts point to the democratic south as the territory that must pin to the standard of democracy "votes for women, if the Democratic Party's allegiance to state sovereignty is to be maintained.

The Southern Conference believes that, in this one party territory, the mandate must go forth for the enfranchisement of the women of the southern states, and earnestly extends an invitation to you as a governor of a southern state, to know whether you would be willing to meet our representatives in executive conference with the chairmen of the democratic state committees and unite upon a definite plan of action. The time and place for this meeting has not been agreed upon, but suggest as opportune either immediately before or after the inauguration of our president, March 3 or 5, in Washington.

Would you kindly let us know whether you would be willing to attend in person or send a representative to such a conference? We would appreciate your presence and counsel.

Very cordially,

KMG / BS.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS
MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. JAMES M. McCORMACK,
7 S. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA. 417 Camp St.

December 14, 1916. 191

Miss Laura Clay,
Lexington, Ky.

My dear Miss Clay:-

Many thanks for your kind letter and its generous enclosure. As we have little or no money in our treasury I was glad to turn it over to Mrs. Bartlett.

I enclose correspondence with Mrs. Catt, which please return, with my reply. I also enclose letter to southern governors to keep you in touch with the correspondence from headquarters. I am going to move heaven and earth to get the south to fall en bloc. If Mrs. Catt has any real political sense it seems to me she would turn over the southern situation to the Southern Conference, and try to erase that fatal mistake they made last year in committing the National Association to a state policy with a definite object of using it for the purpose of federal amendment ratification.

As I look back on that emergency convention and the plan they made for a March convention to turn over the situation to the republicans, I get wrathful. When I recall her attitude to the democratic plank, which she regarded "as an insult to womanhood" I am wrathful, but I say little about it.

I am going to write to Mrs. Belmont and give her the opportunity to do some work in Oklahoma. Mrs. Catt's policy of trying to restrain the states until the National is ready to assist is the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of, and the only thing I can see that warrants it, is the play for delay as suggested by Taft's wonderful contribution to suffrage literature.

Very cordially yours,

Kate M. Gordon

KMG / BS.

189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.

Dec. 10th, 1916.

My dear Miss Gordon,

Yesterday I received your circular letter to the Board of the Southern S.W.S. Conference.

I want to say that it think it is most timely. On every hand I see that the qualified approval of the Atlantic City convention to press for the S.A. Anthony Amendment is being pushed to the extent of crowding out work for State amendments. Just a day or two ago I answered a circular invitation from Mrs. Catt to join the Advisory Aides of the National Congressional Committee to work for the Amendment, and in the letter was the statement that gross frauds in the elections in Iowa, W. Va., W. Virginia and S. Dakota, and hence the importance of pushing our cause. ~~gians and. De Bakata showed that the reason for the difficulty in carrying State amendments, and thereby the Federal Amendment. I understand also that in Illinois there is also opposition to working for a state amendment instead of the Federal Amendment. Under these circumstances, I feel that the work of the Southern Conference is as necessary as ever, though it has succeeded in the main object for which it was organized.~~

In regard to suggestions for future work: Of course, I am warmly interested in the United States Elections Bill, and therefore I say nothing more about it.

I agree with the policy of asking the West to demand that the South shall protect them by some effective work for woman suffrage. Whether that shall take the form of constitutional amendment or otherwise, especially without reference to the electorate, I would advise going slowly about that.

and tentatively about that, taking the views of our friends as you feel your way. It might suit the Gulf states, but I doubt if it would suit those states where no such constitutional action was ever taken.

I do recommend that we should keep always before the Democratic public that unless the Democrats are alert, the Republican party will yet get the credit and presige of giving final success to the suffrage movement. It is perfectly evident that the policy of the Congressional Union and at present of the N.A.W.S.A. , if successful, would give the Republicans far more than the Democrats m prestige with the newly enfranchised voters. If the Democrats should be aroused to this fact, their own partisans would themselves devise ways to help us, perhaps more effectively than we can think out for ourselves; though that ought not to keep us from doing all the thinking we can.

In this connection, I think the S.Conference should try to ally with its work the Democrats of other sections. I was glad to see you consulting with Mrs.George Bass at Atlantic City. It seems to me the Democratic Women's Clubs should take a hand in this movement.; for if something is not done, the States Rights point of view will be overlooked in work for suffrage altogether.

At present I have no other suggestions to make. I am enclosing a N.Y.draft of fifty dollars, mad payable to you, and which I am not sending through the treasurer, because I want you to use it for the Conference work in any way which you may think desirable without having it appropriated by order of the Board.

Please give my love to Mrs.Boyer. Tell her the gentleman to whom she gave the letter of introduction never presented it. My regards to your sisters.

Rejoicing that the Southern Conference is going to strike out in continued activity, I am

Very cordially yours,

189 N. Mill, Lexington, Ky.

Jan. 24th, 1917.

My dear Miss Gordon,

The two factions of the Tenn. suffragists did not get together, but they did both endorse and work for the partial suffrage bill of which I sent you a copy.

On Friday, I received a telegram from Miss White and Mrs. Reeses, saying the bill had passed the lower House that morning by 59 to 24 votes; and that it was made a special order for Thursday before the Senate. They have good hopes of its passing the Senate, as it was introduced there by the Speaker pro tem.

Have you observed that there is an opinion abroad that the Webb-Kenyon anti-liquor decision of the Supreme Court will have a tendency to make it harder to pass a National Prohibition Amendment, because the decision of the Supreme Court sustaining the Webb-Kenyon bill will enable prohibition states to protect themselves against interstate liquor selling? It is important, if this is the case, to us in regard to the S.B.A. Amend., as the hopes of passing that are sustained by the likelihood of Congress passing a Prohibition Amendment. Now if we could get Sen. Owen's U.S. Elections bill passed it would pretty certainly stop the wild zeal for the S.B.A. Amend.

Mrs. Catherine W. McCulloch has just sent me a leaflet describing the Illinois Suffrage Amendment Alliance, which has introduced in Illinois Legislature a state suffrage amendment on Jan. 17th. She says they are opposed by Mrs. Trout, who quotes Mrs. Catt as disapproving a state amendment fight in Illinois. I am becoming fearful that the great "drive" for the S.B.A. Amend. may have deterrent effects on much more hopeful work in the States. I wish you might have Mrs. McCulloch's leaflet, - in fact, I will enclose one she sent me, as I think it is one of the best refutations I have seen that state amendments are too difficult to get, and that we must therefore try for the Federal Amendment.

I want to trouble you about a matter of a N.Y. Draft for \$100 I sent Mrs. Bartlett from Louisville about the 5th of January. I have found that another letter I wrote from the Seelbach Hotel to some one in Lexington was never received, and I fear the same thing may have happened to my letter to Mrs. Bartlett; and if so, I ought to send a tracer after it as soon as possible. They tell me at the bank that drafts do not return to it for some weeks, so I cannot hear from it there; and I think if Mrs. Bartlett is not at home, it would not be worth while for me to write to her. I suppose you have telephonic communication, and as I want to hear from you at any rate, I am asking you to make the inquiry for me.

Love to your sisters and to Mrs. Boyer.
Cordially yours,

P.S. I told our state treasurer, Mrs. J. B. Judah, of the S.S.W.S. Conference Press Bulletin; and she said she would like very much to have it sent to her for her Louisville press work. Could you send it to her? Her address is: Mrs. J. B. Judah, 2115 Murray Avenue, Louisville, Ky.

SOUTHERN STATES WOMAN SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE

MRS. O. F. ELLINGTON, Rec. Sec'y,
721 W. Morkham St., Little Rock, Ark.

MARIE LOUISE COLLENS, Cor. Sec'y,
1309 Berlin St., New Orleans, La.

MRS. H. B. BARTLETT, Treasurer,
155 Audubon Boulevard, New Orleans, La.

IDA PORTER-BOYER, Executive Sec'y,
419 Camp Street, New Orleans, La.

KATE M. GORDON, President,
1800 Prytania St., New Orleans, La.

LAURA CLAY, Vice-President at Large,
Lexington, Ky.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS

MRS. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT,
New York City.

MRS. HELEN GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

AUDITORS

MRS. C. E. ELLICOTT,
107 Brown Arcade, Baltimore, Md.

MRS. W. M. STONER, 2nd Auditor,
1538 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS:

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

New Orleans, February 13 1917

My dear Miss Clay:

I am forwarding Mrs McCullech's letter to Alice Blackwell. What a justification for her Amendment fight it is to any one not blinded to the follies of a Federal Amend. I also inclose Mrs Catt's letter in reply to mine asking for her to recommend to the State Associations to concentrate upon a demand on the Democratic Party. I mentioned that of course we were wide apart on what was expedient, but the we certainly were agreed on wanting the suffrage. I illustrated my point on how divergent our views were by stating that the suffrage plank in the democratic platform which I regarded as the first essential for suffrage in the south she regarded as an insult to womanhood. You will see her reference and explanation, which to say the least is most inaccurate.

We will not be represented at Washington. What is the use everything is cut and dried beforehand. To my mind there is no game to play but that of party prejudice. I am debating whether the Tennessee and N.C action in not giving partial suffrage is to strengthen the position of a legislature not supporting a federal amendment, or whether the states have been advised of the action of the National "to secure states only to force a federal amendment. You note I am regarded as crazy for believing submission a good thing for every southern state.

Mrs Catt's grasp on Oklahoma and Illinois convinces me of the impertinence of any outsider undertaking to tell a state what it shall or shall not do. I think the Ntl has a perfect right to refuse financial assistance but beyond that it has no right to assume control. I do not blame the South Carolina President resenting her going over her head.

Cordially

Kate M Gordon.

Lexington, Ky. Apr. 16th, 1917.

My dear Miss Gordon,

I am deeply regretful that we will have to give up some of our S.S.W.S. Conference work, though I knew it was inevitable unless some good luck financially came our way.

I thoroughly approve all your suggestions made in your letter of April 5th.

I do hope you will be able to keep up the newspaper bulletins. At the Washington Council of the N.A.W.S.A. Mrs. Harper paid the very highest compliments to the Press work of the Conference in her Press Report. It would be a great loss to have to discontinue it.

What is Mrs. Boyer going to do now? I did hope that the National would send her to Oklahoma; but as I passed through New York last month Mrs. Catt told me they were not doing anything for Oklahoma now.

I agree with you about the political situation. I do not see how any one can believe that the Federal Amendment will receive the support of the Democratic Party. Things are moving very rapidly now; and maybe some new development will show itself, as it has done in Arkansas.

Love to Mrs. Boyer and your sisters/

Very cordially yours,

New Orleans, April 5th. 1917
417 Camp Street.

Dear Member of the Board:

Some weeks ago I wrote the inclosed letter which explains my point of view on the Southern Conference's activity. I did not send it hoping against hope that some good luck would permit us to continue the splendid press service. But no such fortunate condition has presented ~~itxax~~ it self and we are preparing to draw the headquarters to a close. If all pledges are paid in we will be able to take up our note of \$1000 — if not then by some form of entertainment we will have to redeem it.

I think tho it would be a great tactical mistake to disband the Southern Conference. At any moment a southern label to some form of suffrage activity may be an essential I therefore suggest that all the present declare their willingness to remain as such or if opposed let me know at once. Then if we ca raise money enough sometime next fall or next winter call a confere nce in some southern city and make a demand on the democratic party to recognize its duty to women. With some preparatory work upon the Democratic Committee men of the western states by women who are governed by the dictates of the party platform, I think we can bring things to a head. Meanwhile I will keep alert and individually do what I can to shape sentiment along state lines.

I think the National point of view of both Federal Amendment Associations to the primary suffrage in Arkansas shows what a little grasp they have of the southern situation. Why in the world limit the suffrage to primaries, except to safeguard against the negro woman. The Presidential suffrage was not so clear of complications. And yet these Federal Amendment advocates are rejoicing over Arkansas' gain without any sense of its import on the situation.

I apologize for the blur of some of these^s copies. But as I have no stenographer to help out Mrs Boyer and I are kept on a jump to get thro, so will have to make you share some of our discomfort. I cannot express the regret we all feel at having to give up Mrs. Boyer. My one hope is that she may soon re- turn to us.

Cordially and fraternally
Kate M Gordon.