FRANKLIN K. LANE, CHAIRMAN
DR. ANNA HOWARD SHAW, VICE CHAIRMAN

GOVERNING BOARD

GEORGE L. BERRY
R. M. BISSELL
FULLER CALLAWAY
GROSVENOR B. CLARKSON
MRS. JOSEPH R. LAMAR
MRS. STANLEY R. McCORMICK
AGNES NESTOR
HANNAH J. PATTERSON
H. M. ROBINSON
DR. ANNA HOWARD SHAW
IDA M. TARBELL
DANIEL WILLARD

GROSVENOR B. CLARKSON, DIRECTOR
HANNAH J. PATTERSON, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

FIELD DIVISION
OF THE
COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

November 4th, 1918

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
132 E. 19th St.,
New York City.

My dear Miss Tarbell;-

I wrote you something about Miss Nicolay's preparation of the Foreign News material. After a little talk with her as to just the form in which we wanted this material, she re-wrote it, and all of us were more than pleased with the result.

I write you this because I am afraid some confusion may occur between the work done by Mrs. Becker and Miss Nicolay. I was not here when Mrs. Becker came to Washington, but a few days after I came back, Miss Nicolay came to the office. She seemed disappointed that so little use had been made of the foreign news material and said that she thought it was unnecessary for her to go on with it. Both Miss Nims and I reassured her on this point, and at that time I asked her if she would not take over the work of preparing the page of this material for each issue of the magazine. This she finally agreed to do, with the result of which I have spoken.

She told me at this time that no new material had been coming in, and suggested that I write to Mrs. Becker for some. I did so, and at that time I told Mrs. Becker that Miss Nicolay would take charge of and prepare material for the magazine. A few days later I received a note from Mrs. Becker saying that she would forward me material, and suggested that if we did not have time to prepare it in this office, and would return it to her, she would get it in proper shape. She made no reference to Miss Nicolay's work.

On Thursday she sent to Mr. Reynolds material for the new magazine, together with a letter in which she said "if you are short-handed in your office and will send me back the items that you wish to use, with any suggestions, I will rewrite them for you at once."

I did not understand this paragraph in her letter, nor the same reference in my own, until I learned from Mr. Reynolds that there had been some question of putting Mrs. Becker on the pay roll of the News Section. Had I known this, I would of course have spoken to you before asking Miss Nicolay to prepare the foreign news material for the magazine. I do not now, after being so insistent, want to tell Miss Nicolay that in the future the work will be done by Mrs. Becker. On the other hand, of course we are anxious that Mrs. Becker send us the clippings.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

We cannot answer Mrs. Becker's letter until we know what your idea is concerning her future work in this department. Will you be so good as to write me on this point?

Mr. Reynolds seems to feel that you would like to have her become a paid member of our staff.

The magazine went to press on Saturday. We are all hoping you will like it.

Very truly yours,

NEWS SECTION

Allene P. Wilkes

SECRETARY.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library