

COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

WOMAN'S COMMITTEE

35 West Eleventh Street, Atlanta, Georgia,
June 4th, 1918.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

Your letter of the 29th reached me on Friday afternoon, the 31st, and I wrote you a reply on Saturday while I was waiting for the taxi to come to take me to the train. Fortunately I didn't finish it before the taxi came, as I should probably have mailed it at once, and I ought to know better than to mail a letter written when I am provoked, as I was then.

I will repeat, however, the facts that I told you in the other letter, only omitting some of my own comments,

On Saturday morning, Doctor Shaw asked me to come to her room for a private conversation, and when there told me that the evening before, after I had left the office, she had received a letter from Mrs. Bowen, our Chairman from Illinois. Mrs. Bowen wrote of some business matters, and then said that Mrs. Funk had written to Mrs. Kellogg Fairbanks that the Woman's Committee had resigned in a body, and would probably go all to pieces! Mrs. Bowen did not speak as if she had heard this in confidence, but said that she had learned, from another source, however, that Mrs. Bass was to be made Chairman of the Illinois State Division.

Doctor Shaw felt about this, just as I do, and as I imagine you will, although you may have heard it before. Do you recall Mrs. Funk's smile when I said, in the Committee meeting, that it was a point of honor for us to keep our action secret? Doctor Shaw spoke of it, said she had watched Mrs. Funk while I was speaking, and seemed to have interpreted the look as a protest against my thinking that any such statement was necessary.

I don't know whether you knew that the Liberty Loan Committee complained, after the second drive, that Mrs. Bowen and the Illinois Division did not cooperate successfully. Mrs. Bass stated to us at a meeting which she attended that she had been present at a meeting of the Illinois Division and had not even been called upon to speak. If she had been General Pershing himself she could hardly have expressed more surprise that such an opportunity had been allowed to pass unimproved.

I don't know how all this strikes you, but when I recall the high ideals of patriotic service which inspired us a year ago, I confess I am heartsick over it all.

Miss Patterson took the letter to Mr. Gifford for two reasons, she told him.

First, to show the necessity for speedy action.

Second, to show what Mrs. Funk was doing. She also learned that Mrs. Bass had had an interview with the President, the other day, to discuss the Woman's Committee!

Doctor Shaw has had a letter from the Secretary of War saying that he was not ready to make a formal reply to her letter. That, with the knowledge and consent of the Council of National Defence, he had taken the matter to the President, and that the President had said he thought it would be most unfortunate if the Woman's Committee were not to continue.

The Secretary went on to say that the Council of National Defense would take the matter up and would hope to do something to remedy the

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difficulties which they realized we had to contend with.

From this letter and from what Mr. Gifford said, Miss Patterson is satisfied,--and I think she is correct,-- that there will be no reorganization. Mr. Gifford said there could not be, under the circumstances. Miss Patterson thinks the assistance will take the form of a letter from the President, probably endorsing the work of the Committee.

I confess that my first feeling was that I wanted to get out of it all as soon as possible. I shall not, however, take any hasty action, but will try to talk to you, to Mr. Gifford and to Miss Patterson before I decide.

If there is any real good that we can accomplish I am prepared to do my share, but it seems to me likely that the State Division can be taken over by the State Councils of Defense and directed,--so far as Washington is concerned,--from the State Councils Section.

Doctor Shaw telegraphed to Mrs. Bowen not to pay any attention to such absurd rumors. She left Washington on Saturday afternoon when I did.

I expect to remain here until the middle of June, and possibly later, unless Miss Patterson telegraphs me to come to a called meeting.

I shall be very glad to hear from you with regard to all this.
Affectionately yours,

Clara P. Lamas.

My trunk has not come and I haven't your address with me,-- so I must wait until I have received my trunk and papers, before mailing this.