

New York, May 10, 1920

Dear Mesdames:

Over a year ago you sent to the Chairman of the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense an interesting letter, in which you related how during the great war a group of Armenian women in Cairo had made the first flag of free Armenia. You offered this flag to the women of the Committee of National Defense in the United States. It must seem very strange to you that no reply has ever been received from this Committee acknowledging your beautiful gift. A word of explanation will, I think, show how this apparent neglect came about.

Soon after the signing of the armistice in November, 1918, the Women's Committee was formally disbanded. It had been organized for service merely during the war's term. As practically the war was over, the Government thought it wise to disband the Committee. The Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw did continue for a number of weeks in active service settling up the affairs of the great organization. Last summer, however, Dr. Shaw suddenly died. Many things which she would naturally have looked after had to seek information in other quarters. The writer, who was the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, was in Europe; and later in the Northwest in strenuous work for the League of Nations, and incidentally, I may say, always stressing the hope that the United States would see its way to take the mandatory over Armenia. It was only a short time ago that your letter found its way to me.

I do not now know where the flag is or if it really was sent from Cairo, but you may be sure that if you still desire to send it, and I think myself that it might be wise so to do, it will be welcomed by the group of women who formerly made up the Woman's Committee of the Council of National Defense, and that it will find a safe place in the halls at Washington, and that I myself personally will give to the press the story of what you have done. Will you not tell me on receipt of this letter if the flag was sent, and if so, to what address.

I hope my dear Mesdames that you will accept this explanation and apology, and that there may be as little further delay as possible in bringing the attention of our country to the flag.

With my profoundest hope that the dark days of Armenia will soon be past, and that this country will see its way to extending more direct help than it has yet been able to, believe me,

Faithfully yours,

Misses Vondam Sisters,
c/o Rev A. Khantamour,
American Mission,
Cairo, Egypt.