

November 26, 1918

To His Excellency,
The President of the United States,
White House, Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

You have always given such generous hearing to any communication of mine that I am venturing to ask a great favor.

I have just agreed, if the passport can be arranged, to go overseas, to make a study for a series of articles for the Red Cross Magazine, and, ultimately, for a book. The Editor of the magazine, John S. Phillips, has what seems to me a really noble conception of the future of the Red Cross and desires to foster this through his publication. He believes it possible, if the needs and aspirations, not only of the war-ridden countries but of the more or less submerged groups in our own land, can be properly presented to the country, to hold together, for peace service, the amazing group--something like twenty-five million--called together, under the Red Cross, for war service.

My own conviction is that if we can keep alive in our own and other lands, the unselfish desire to relieve the miseries and free the aspirations of all men and women everywhere, quite apart from aiding any particular political or social theories the various groups and peoples may have, we will have a kind of international emollient which, flowing through all lands, will serve, naturally and unconsciously, to relax prejudice, to break down the barriers of caste, and to soften hatreds. I do not myself see any agency so well fitted for re-producing and sustaining this humanitarian lubricant as the Red Cross; nor do I see the Red Cross becoming this agent in any other way than by keeping before it the actual needs and aspirations of men and women.

It is to do what little I can to help this work in my writing and speaking that I have consented to go abroad for the studies of which I spoke above. And all this leads me, my

dear Mr. President, to my request that, if you approve of the idea and it is proper for you to do it, you give me some kind of credential that I can use with our representatives abroad. I think you know me well enough to be sure that I would not for a moment wish anything of you that would be contrary to your sound judgment of what is proper to grant.

May I say, too, that I am glad you have decided to go to the opening of the Peace Conference, and that I shall hope to have the honor and the pleasure some time in Paris of paying my respects to you and to Mrs. Wilson.

Trusting that I am not imposing upon your good will in the liberty that I have taken in writing you, believe me to be

Faithfully yours,