

Woman's National Committee for Law Enforcement

Allegiance to the Constitution

Observance of Law

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MRS. JAMES A. WHEE, JR.
Young Women's Christian Association
MRS. A. H. REEVE
Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher
Associations
MISS ANNIE FLORENCE BROWN
Lend-a-Hand Society

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MRS. CLARENCE C. MACY
MISS MARY GARRETT HAY
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Beverly, Mass.

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Other Vice-Chairmen will be added later.

Secretary
MRS. FRANK SHULER
129 E. 52nd St., New York City

Beverly, Mass., September 28, 1927

To the Woman's National Committee for Law Enforcement -

Dear Friend;

If you have read the article by Major Chester Mills in Collier's for September 17 you will realize, with me, that the most serious question before us today is not the simple question of enforcement of prohibition but the larger question of corruption in both political parties which accounts for failure of enforcement of law. This is exemplified in the Democratic party through Tammany and in the Republican party not only in certain state politics but in the National Law Enforcement Department in the Treasury in Washington.

The situation touches so closely the Woman's Law Enforcement Committee principles, that I believe we should take action in the immediate future on this question. We shall consider the possibility of a public campaign, through the country, and we may later have to consider this. At present, however, I feel strongly the need of your advice on the question of approach to both parties through a deputation carefully selected from our Executive Committee and National Committee.

While we covered the ground in our convention in Providence when we adopted the enclosed platform, is it not essential that we present this platform officially to the political leaders who assume to direct the choice of candidates and platforms in both parties? Since we are bi-partisan, representing both Democrats and Republicans through our membership, such a deputation would represent the general attitude of many women citizens throughout the country. It is amusing to see the utter disregard of these men of the great groups of intelligent women of principle who have definite ideas but who are not as yet represented in these parties. These men put on their committees women who agree with them and whom they can control in their thinking. Women took their share in the war and they are making a splendid fight in educating public opinion for international righteousness. We are citizens with power enough to change this whole situation if we have any patriotism, regard for our country or any desire to make wrong things right. Our chance will come in the primaries and elections of 1928. We shall have no weight so far as

numbers of delegates go, therefore it seems to me imperative that we take action and present that action to the leaders of these parties before men are definitely chosen to represent us nationally and in the state elections for Congress. There is a great opportunity for our state committees to do their work later through their state committee men. All this would be done quietly without publicity. We can give the parties an opportunity to do right, if they will.

If you approve in general such a plan would you be willing to serve on such a deputation either in person or by signing a petition? We could not, of course, commit the organizations affiliated with us to any policy which they have not already adopted. The procedure would be to have these leaders of organizations present their own statements in such a deputation, while the national statement could cover all these and convince the leaders that the women have certain definite ideals and principles in common. The politicians go with their plans and demand attention. Is it not time that loyal women who believe in the Constitution, who stand for the 18th Amendment, and who are outraged by the present situation in politics should at least present their case in a dignified, forceful way and ask these leaders if they intend utterly to disregard women or whether they will consider their requirements which are that the candidates be men of character who stand for the constitution which they swear to support and defend, that they stop the system of patronage which results in a situation like this in New York and which is by no means confined to New York, note Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco and other centers of iniquity.

Is there not a definite call to the women of this country now, for the sake of the country, to do their patriotic duty and do it in such a way that it will compel attention and right action by the political leaders? Do not women owe this duty to their parties?

If you agree to this and will write me I will take counsel with some of the leaders and send you the general form of statement for your suggestions and revision, with a request that you will sign such a statement and if possible will join the deputation. In the meantime I am securing the names of both committees, Democrats and Republicans, and the place where such a deputation might meet. It is important that this be done in time to prevent action which it would be difficult to rescind. That is, we should be in at the very beginning with our requests, which are not political, not selfish, not sentimental, not feminine, but wholly in the interests of the preservation of the republic whose greatest danger at this moment is not from without but from corruption within. Unless we women stand today for righteousness we are responsible for the evils of this situation.

I am meeting in conference with the Committee of One Thousand October 5 and 6 when we shall discuss the whole situation with some of the leading men and women of the country and secure concerted action along other lines.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy W Peabody
Mrs. Henry W. Peabody