

CONNECTICUT WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

MINUTES, EXECUTIVE BOARD.

June 3rd, 1921.

The final meeting of the Executive Board of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association was held at the home of Miss Katharine Ludington, President, at Lyme, June 3rd, 1921.

The meeting was called to order at 11.30 a.m. and Mrs. Porritt was elected Secretary pro.tem.

In the absence of the Secretary the minutes of the previous meeting were omitted.

The President stated that the business of the meeting was to receive reports on the work that had been done in closing out the affairs of the Association and to make final arrangements for dissolution.

Miss Washburn, acting President and Treasurer, reported on the closing of Headquarters, and the taking up of work by the Connecticut League of Women Voters.

The Treasurer's report was then read by Miss Washburn, and accepted. The Treasurers' report is appended.

Moved by Miss Tyler that Mrs. Wm.T.Hincks be appointed a committee to see that the debt on the Bridgeport pledge be collected, and that the money be used to repay Miss Washburn, who had made herself responsible for the debt. Motion carried.

Moved that Miss Washburn be authorized to close the account. carried.

A discussion followed of the ownership of Mrs. Schoonmaker's book. No vote was taken as it had been voted at the Convention that all such property of the C.W.S.A. should be given to the C.L.W.V.

A discussion followed concerning the disposition of the banners of the C.W.S.A. Moved by Miss Bulkley that the State banners and the Co. banners be presented to the State Library. Motion carried.

Moved by Miss Washburn that Miss Ludington, Mrs. Hepburn and Mrs. Hincks be appointed a committee for the presentation of the banners to the State Library. Carried.

Moved that a committee be appointed to get into touch with towns of which the C.W.S.A. has banners, concerning the disposition of these banners. Motion carried.

Moved by Mrs. Hincks that the League of Women Voters be made residuary legatee of all properties of the C.W.S.A. Carried.

Moved that committees appointed at this meeting report to the C.L.W.V. Motion carried.

2.

Moved that the records and archives of the Association be offered to the State Library. Motion carried.

Moved that the minutes of this meeting be added to the archives. Motion carried.

Moved by Miss Washburn that a farce now among the papers, be given to Mrs. Hepburn. Motion carried.

Moved that a committee be appointed by the chair to get the archives into shape for offering to the State Library. Motion carried.

Miss Ludington appointed to this committee Miss Bulkley, chairman, Mrs. Porritt, Mrs. Deming and Mrs. Day.

The following motion was then passed:--

Whereas the work of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association, begun in 1869 and carried on through years of indifference and ridicule, then through years of bitter opposition to general acceptance and finally to complete accomplishment; and

Whereas at the final convention of the C.W.S.A., held at Hartford, November 18, 1920, the Executive Board was empowered and directed to wind up the business of the organization and to complete its dissolution; therefore be it

Resolved: That we now declare the business of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association to be finished, and the Association dissolved.

Present: Miss Katharine Ludington, President, Miss Mabel Washburn, Mrs. Thomas N. Hepburn, Mrs. William T. Hincks, Mrs. George H. Day, Mrs. W. H. Deming, Mrs. H. Townshend, Mrs. Sam. T. Russell, Jr., Miss Mary Bulkley, Miss Edna Tyler, Mrs. Couch, Mrs. H. M. Dadourian, and Mrs. Kitchelt, and Mrs. Annie G. Porritt.

Annie G. Porritt, Sec. pro Tem.

When we met a year ago the Susan B. Anthony Amendment had been ratified by nineteen states including our neighbors Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and New York. Special sessions had been called in four other states. Complete ratification before November seemed certain but we knew that Connecticut might be needed to make up the full number and we knew that to bring Connecticut in would be hard work. We didn't know quite what hard work it would be.

The object of the campaign before the Association was perfectly clear - it was to get a special session of the Connecticut legislature. The convention in Bridgeport adopted a resolution declaring that since the party in power in the state was the Republican party and since a small but powerful group in that party had been blocking suffrage, the immediate policy of the C.W.S.A should be to concentrate opposition against that small group. The Governor had been petitioned by 103,000 women of the State, and he had been petitioned by a majority of each party and of each house of the legislature, to call a special session. Some other means than those so far tried must be found to move the Governor.

As I look back over the year, the campaign, which never for a moment let up in its intensity, falls into four main divisions:- the fight for ratification by February; a period during which pressure was concentrated upon the Republican state central committee, and upon individuals whom we knew to be our busiest opponents in the state. Second, the campaign to present to the Governor proofs of an emergency justifying the calling of a special session. Third, following ratification by the 35th state, the campaign which had for its slogan "November, 1920". Fourth, after Tennessee's ratification, the campaign to get in Connecticut as the 37th state and to obtain the necessary legislation to enable women to register and to vote.

The point of attack, it must be remembered, was necessarily the republican party. Indications were very strong that the party in power in Connecticut held independent views on the matter of suffrage from the national republican leaders. For on December 10 the National Committee recommended to Republican legislatures the ratification of the suffrage amendment and urged that special sessions be called in the states

that had not acted, so that ratification might be complete before February 1st.

With the republican state central committee as the immediate objective, because it appeared to be the immediate obstacle, the association at once launched a campaign both within and without the state. It was necessary to have outside help, both for the sake of external pressure upon leading republicans within the state, for publicity in papers outside the state, and because the leading republicans here were thoroughly acquainted with suffrage arguments and with the Connecticut workers. It was felt that this question had become a sort of family affair between Republicans. And so the services of a group of Republican suffragists, the Phoenix Publicity Bureau of New York, were obtained, and three workers who were at the same time suffragists, republicans, publicists and trained interviewers came into Connecticut. They worked under the direction of the state association and under the advice and suggestions of our local leaders whose work they supplemented. They interviewed leading republican men throughout the state, gaining an insight into the situation and an understanding of the problem that faced us. Whenever possible they obtained the signatures of these men to two petitions - one addressed to the state central committee, urging the members to use their influence in obtaining a special session and the other to the Governor, and through their New York office they brought to bear personal influence of Republicans in their states. In the meantime a steady campaign of publicity was going forward. The state was circularized with fliers setting forth the fact that the eyes of the nation were upon Connecticut, and that national republican leaders such as Will Hays, Mr. Taft, Mr. Hughes, Senator Harding and General Wood all endorsed ratification by means of special session, Miss Hinman was filling the papers in Connecticut with suffrage maps showing Connecticut linked with the solid south, while the Phoenix Bureau was placing news stories about Connecticut in the New York papers. The rest of the country began to know that Connecticut suffragists intended to get the vote through the men of their own state.

In the meantime a Republican Men's Ratification Committee was organized, with Mr. Isaac M. Ullman as chairman, Mr. John T. Robinson as Secretary, and with a membership of loyal friends of suffrage. It met first on January 26 in New Haven to discuss

the question of presenting the case for a special session of the legislature. Throughout the winter and spring the committee gave valuable help and advice to the Association.

By the end of January, 27 states had ratified, including Rhode Island - and four more states were in sight. Early in February the Republican State Central Committee was to meet, and plans were made for presenting at that time a petition of 478 names, representing men prominent in party affairs in nearly every community in the state. The petition called upon the Committee and its chairman, Mr. Roraback, to use their influence toward the calling of a special session of the legislature; it was presented by a member of the men's ratification committee - and as you know, was ignored.

opinion by Ex-Justice Hughes, and before the convention - this opinion was on every seat. We went armed with a second bulletin published by the men's committee, in which leading lawyers of the state took issue on constitutional grounds with Governor Holcomb's latest refusal. Late in the evening we were admitted to the hearing before the resolutions committee, at which Miss Ludington, Mrs. Helena Hill Weed, Mr. Francis Cole and Mr. Charles Treadwell presented the suffrage case. After a very animated discussion the resolution was adopted by a vote of 25 to 8. On the following morning the convention, by the adoption of this resolution, respectfully requested the governor of the state to call a special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of passing upon the amendment...In this way did the republican party in the state formally go on record.

Since November we had traveled a long way, in breaking down one by one, the opposition's defense. First the Governor had said: "The desire of a few women does not create an emergency." Then he had objected on the ground that suffrage was not an issue when the present legislature was elected - a statement easily refuted by current newspaper reports. On March 15th he had said that he could not change the state constitution otherwise than by the manner specified. Then on March 31st, <sup>he repeated</sup> that persistent appeals do not constitute proof of an emergency. And finally on April 10th, in reply to a letter of Colonel Ullman, the Governor stated that he was ready to receive proofs of an emergency.



The situation, then, at the beginning of May was this:- Early in March West Virginia had ratified quite as dramatically as Tennessee was later to ratify. You will remember that one lone vote in the Senate saved the day for West Virginia and that this vote had to be snatched from the waters of the Pacific Coast and rushed across the continent while the friends of suffrage worked night and day to keep the legislature in session. Washington also ratified on March 22nd making the 35th state, and leaving only one more to be gained. The only apparent possibilities were Vermont and Connecticut - both Republican states, possessing legislatures that stood ready and waiting to ratify. ~~It~~ It was clearly the task of the Association, since the Governor had invited proofs, to supply him with proofs of a greater emergency than that of the state - the proof that there was a national emergency. In doing this the Association had an opportunity to put through a brilliant and unique piece of work. The National Association had offered to send into Connecticut ~~a~~ women representing every state in the Union, to join in a concentrated protest against the Governor's refusal to allow the Connecticut legislature to act and so to enfranchise the women of the entire nation. The week of May 3d was set apart as "emergency week." At times previous to that week we at headquarters felt an emergency at least equal to that of the entire nation, I am sure. It was a gigantic undertaking to plan not only the meetings, but the motor corps, the train schedules, hospitality for each one of the constantly shifting groups, and to supply speakers from our own state for each of the meetings. It was only through the most wonderful cooperation on the part of the women of the state, and on the part of many members of the men's committee, who acted as chairmen and frequently as speakers, that the plan could have gone through so successfully. Its success was also in great part due to the organizing ability of Miss Hutt and her enthusiasm and her untiring work for weeks preceeding the event. Although Miss Hutt was called <sup>away</sup> before emergency week opened, you saw her careful planning in every detail as bit by bit it worked out.

And the publicity! Whenever one peered over the screen behind which Miss Hinaman carries on her mysterious deeds, one saw her shuffling photographs - photographs of fair women, dark women, thin women and those not so thin. Forty-seven different women and each one with several different kinds of photographs and with at least one

news story to go with it. Each photograph to go to each of the cities where the individual represented was to speak. I leave this gigantic game of solitaire to your imagination. I am sure that you will see the results.

You all, I imagine, heard the speakers, also, ~~also~~ so that you do not need to be reminded of the tremendous appeal they made to the audiences in the forty different towns they visited. Or of the luncheon held on their arrival, or of the final hearing before the Governor and the gay parade which preceded it and the mass meeting on the capitol grounds at which Mr. Robinson and Judge Ellis of Waterbury spoke. In spite of the appeals made to the Governor by the women of suffrage states where suffrage had been a success, by the women from non-suffrage states whom he by permitting the legislature to meet, might enfranchise; by Republican women who cared for the honor of their party in fulfilling its pledges - still the Governor replied, "These arguments do not prove or tend to prove the existence of the special emergency mentioned in our state constitution, which is the only authority given the governor to call a special session."

There was growing resentment and indignation in the state - but technically we were as far from being voters in November 1920 as we had been in November 1870. Having exhausted the methods previously tried the Association by a vote of the Executive Board June 3 adopted this logical development of policy - to oppose the Republican party in the state in the coming campaign, with the exception of those men who were the tried and true friends of suffrage and of those who would come out and ~~work~~ for a special session. For the republican party in the state, while it <sup>had</sup> adopted a resolution urging the governor to call the legislature together, at the same time <sup>had</sup> returned to power the very men who had most bitterly opposed us and who were at that time standing in the way of a special session. We were confirmed in our analysis of the situation by the action of the Republican National Convention which a few days later at the instigation of the Connecticut delegates (so we were informed by the Hartford Courant) took the teeth out of the suffrage plank, so that the national republican party was placed in the ~~undignified~~ ~~that the~~ ~~not~~ position of expressing an "earnest hope" that "Republican legislatures in states which have not yet acted upon the suffrage amendment will ratify...."

The first step in the working out of our new policy was the sending of a circular letter to all gubernatorial candidates asking, for publication, how each one stood on the matter of a special session. When these ~~these~~ replies came in they were given to the press, and a finally summary of the stand of the association toward each was published before the party convention took place. The second step was to obtain if possible a state Republican convention made up of anti-machine delegates. The purpose of this being in the main to prove to the machine that it would be a far wiser thing to do to get the suffrage issue out of the way before the November election. Beyond that, our plan was to oppose candidates for the legislature who were known to be opposed to suffrage; to oppose them both before their nomination and if necessary after. The towns were canvassed and the counties were charted; Miss Ludington was at her desk at headquarters every week all summer long, and between times she was touring the state from one end to the other addressing meetings and setting forth the policy of the Association.

In conjunction with this work, a sub-committee of the men's ratification committee was appointed to poll the legislature in readiness for any fresh development. A committee of Republican women with Mrs. Austin of Norwich as chairman, drew up a statement which came to be known as the "No vote, no money pledge" and which was signed throughout the state by Republican women who pledged themselves not to give money or to work for the Republican party until the thirty-sixth state should ratify.

In the midst of this summer campaign, news came that the legislature of Tennessee would be called in special session. Tennessee had constitutional limitations against the ratification of proposed amendments which a decision of the Supreme Court on the <sup>Ohio</sup> liquor case had <sup>now</sup> invalidated. But we were urged by the national leaders not for one moment to slacken our fight. It was known that all the forces that had opposed ratification in New Jersey and other states, and which had caused it to fail in Delaware would concentrate upon the last state. And this proved to be the case.

At this point the little <sup>New England</sup> ~~northern~~ state of Connecticut entered the fight for suffrage nationally. While pressure within the state continued, three Republican women, Miss Mary Olcott, Mrs. James Stokes, and Mrs. W.H. Allee journeyed to Columbus, Ohio, in



order to place before members of the Republican Executive Committee exactly the feelings entertained by women of their own party who questioned the sincerity of that party in fulfilling its pledges to women. On August 7th over thirty members of this association led by Miss Ludington, interviewed the republican chairman, Will H. Hays, in New York, to inquire exactly what was being done to bring about ratification both in Connecticut and in Tennessee. I imagine that his later references to us were tinged with respect though possibly not with flattery. All through the long session in Tennessee, Connecticut women played their part in the struggle, bringing influence to bear both through Democratic and Republican channels.

You are familiar with this recent history and with the history of the special legislation passed by the Connecticut legislature. Those of us who were at the Capitol during the two memorable and humorous sessions all through which Miss Ludington worked with such determination to get the facilities for registering and voting to which the women were entitled, will never forget the moment when word went round that the legislature was going to ratify - and when that legislature was declared to be a law unto itself with full power and authority to act. The whole country knows that one special session wasn't last enough for Connecticut, and that being the state she had to ratify three times to make it quite safe! The action of Connecticut, while it was superfluous, removed all doubt from even the most skeptical mind that ratification was complete. It was a satisfaction not only to the women, who were let in through the action of their own state, but to those members of the legislature who had worked loyally in the past to get us in.

Immediately upon the passage of the new legislation the membership of the Association launched the work of getting the necessary information about registration and voting before the women of the state. <sup>who conducted</sup> The citizenship lectures ~~conducted by Mrs. Kitchelt,~~ <sup>who conducted a</sup> woman's forum ~~conducted by Miss Hinaman~~ <sup>which was</sup> and published in a number of newspapers, and the town county leaders all shared in the work. In addition, headquarters were kept more than busy answering questions of inconceivable variety that came by mail, by telephone and by word of mouth.

At this time there arose questions of immediate policy which the executive board of the association felt that it could not act upon without a mandate from the association.

On September 24th a business meeting was held in Hartford, to which delegates were sent by the leagues and by counties.- In addition, all members of the Association were urged to come and share in the fullest discussion of the issues. The meeting was called in order to take ~~a stand~~ up the question among others of the relation of women to the parties, and of whether or not to take a stand on candidates. The <sup>principle</sup> action was the decision by a <sup>practically</sup> unanimous vote of the meeting that the Association should oppose the re-election of Senator Brandegee because of his 15-years' record in the Senate, in which time he had opposed consistently the measures and the principles of human welfare for which women are peculiarly responsible. Certain members of the Association believing that loyalty to party was their first duty felt that they could not conscientiously follow this action. The association <sup>it stands for anything stands for the</sup> ~~always stood for~~ freedom of minorities. It is not necessary to repeat the history of so recent a campaign. The result was that on November 2nd Senator Brandegee ran so far behind his ticket that he would probably have been defeated in any normal year. But that result is of ~~minor~~ importance except for its demonstration that there is in the state a large group of men and women who, if their party's candidates do not measure up to what they believe to be a proper standard, will cast their votes against those candidates. That demonstration is bound to influence future nominations.

Finally, the Association demonstrated once more its adherence to principle - and when you are fighting for principle you can never be defeated, just as in the fight for suffrage we have never known defeat. None of our effort throughout the year has been wasted, because it has always been educational, both to ourselves and to our opponents, who have learned that women are a force to be counted with. Who can say what part of our campaign brought us the vote by November, 1920? All we know is that if we had stopped, Connecticut would not have been the 37th, and Tennessee very possibly would not even have been the 36th.

I do not need to tell you, who have known Miss Ludington longer than I, that it has been her leadership and her planning and her care even for the most wearisome details that has put through this year's work. She knows better than anyone I can think of how to make play out of work - with her it is a great game.

Now what has it all been for? I Do you think that Miss Ludington and that those who led in the work before her could have carried it on with such indomitable spirit only in order that women might go to the polls once a year and drop their ballots in a box? Do you think they could have done it if they had not believed that women would use their votes to wipe out the injustices in the world-- the injustices between man and man ~~between women and men~~ and between women and man -- to lift intolerable burdens from motherhood and childhood?

Even if we wanted to, could we possibly escape the responsibility of victory?

# WORKERS MEETING

55-57 Pratt Street, Hartford, Conn.

September 2, 1920.

The meeting was called to order by Miss Ludington at 1:30 p. m. In her opening address, Miss Ludington, stated that the C. W. S. A. was not at present holding any celebration, this state had not given ratification but a celebration would be held in connection with the annual convention in November.

The present meeting was a business meeting to consider tasks ahead. The subjects were under the three heads following:-

1. The history of what had been done by the C. W. S. A. since ratification.
2. The immediate duties--getting out of the women for registration: poll of the legislature for special session of September 14.
3. Consideration of attitude towards state candidates in the coming election.

Under the first heading, Miss Ludington reviewed the work of the C. W. S. A. It had been organized years ago to get the vote for the women of Connecticut. This was its primary object. All other objects being secondary. The women were morally and legally sure now of the vote but the recent action of the Tennessee legislature had created a doubt among some of the women and some men. The antis were trying to create uncertainty and it was therefore the first duty of the C. W. S. A. to make the vote absolutely sure by securing ratification from the Connecticut legislature on September 14.

With this in view the board had taken action.

1. Not to disband the C. W. S. A. until after the November election. There was too much at present to do and no time now to organize a Connecticut League of Women Voters.

2. To hold a convention in November when such a league may be organized but to recommend that the C. W. S. A. continue in existence until 1921 when organization of the League of Women Voter may be completed.

3. Communications have already been sent out after ratification containing instructions to workers and the pledge of the Republican women not to actively aid the Republican party until the position of women is quite sure. Miss Ludington recommended that the women sit tight to this pledge so long as any uncertainty exists. A Bulletin had also been sent out to the League presidents and the workers containing instructions about registration and a pamphlet by Mrs. Dadourian also a report on the results of machine rule.

The duties now before us, Miss Ludington summed up, as being first of all the securing of ratification and to obtain this an immediate poll of the legislature.

The poll would be taken under the direction of the county chairmen and the county chairmen were asked to get their committees together and decide upon methods at the close of the meeting. The poll ought to be at headquarters by Sept. 10 which would allow four days for emergencies. The aim of the poll should be to get 100% vote for ratification.

The next duty in regard to the special session was to see that the women obtained everything that ought to come to them. A bill was being drawn up by the lawyers for the C. W. S. A. and one also



3.

by Blodgett, Clerk of Bills for the State. The object would be to have these bills agree in which case the passage would be easy. The women were asking (1) more days for registration and making voters, (2) if possible the omission of the necessity of sending names in beforehand to the registrars, (3). the transfer of school voters to the regular list (4) a provision enabling the women to get into the town caucuses that nominate the legislators (5) admission of the women to the October town meetings.

GETTING OUT THE WOMEN. This would be handled by counties. Miss Lindington stated that she had appointed a committee with Mrs. Dustin, Mrs. Porritt and Mrs. Kitchelt to provide leaflets and instruction and to furnish information for the workers. Other members would probably be added later to this committee.

County chairmen and the county executive committees should take a list of towns and cities and find out what is being done in each by the political parties. Towns could be divided into three classes-- towns where the political parties were doing all that was necessary-- such towns would need no further work; (2) towns where local workers were efficient and the field would be covered by them, (3) towns which would need attention from the county chairmen on account of their not being covered in any other way.

The workers in different towns here gave accounts of what was being done by political parties and registrars. Information was also given concerning the attendance of women at caucuses and their treatment.

Miss Olcott, Ridgefield, stated that the machine had given no opportunity to the men to vote as they were afraid that the men would let the women vote and so upset the cut and dried program. In some places the Democrats had invited the women to come in but they had not been allowed to vote for fear of an illegal vote upsetting the election

of delegations.

The question of taking positions inside the Republican party under the Republican machine was then discussed. American women were going into parties for the sake of principle and not for the sake of party. They had had much experience with party machines and knew the evils in Connecticut. Two methods offered (1) to get into the party and work for reform inside (2) to hold a position as independent voters and reform from outside. Miss Ludington advised the women at present to sit tight and do more thinking before taking positions within the party.

Miss Runtz-Rees here gave information concerning the attitude of the men toward women within the Democratic party, an attitude which was not indicative of the granting of any real power to the women. This question was discussed by Miss Olcott and several other speakers.

Miss Ludington emphasized the need of getting out a huge registration of women. The position of woman was at stake. The justification of the work of the suffragists would be seen in the numbers of women taking part in the election. Women were Exhibit A in this election and every kind of statistics will be used on them. In regard to instructions concerning voting in the election, no plans were ready yet but voters schools could be held to tell the women how to register and to vote.

Returning to the question of taking office under the machine certain points were emphasized.

1. That the women were to have no voice in electing the delegates to the Republican or Democratic conventions.
2. They would have no voice directly on the choice of candidates.
3. They would have no voice on the drawing up of platforms.

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These facts had a strong bearing on the question of taking office within the parties. Nevertheless, women should attend the party conventions. In large numbers they should also come to Hartford to the special session. There should be at least two hundred women present when Connecticut ratifies.

The principles to guide the women were then laid down by Miss Ludington.

1. The desire to serve--but this desire needs careful guidance.
2. The securing of a status in which we could make our contribution to the world. This had been the purpose of the suffrage agitation but this purpose was not fully completed. The world was not yet fifty-fifty in regard to men's views and women's views. Nor was women's voice yet fifty-fifty within the political parties.

The object of the women should be to get most weight for the women's point of view. The women would divide into parties but it was hoped to have a non-partisan organization to re-enforce the women in their work within all parties and to keep the women together. This was the object of the L. W. V. which it was hoped would be a clearing house for women's work and a meeting ground for the women. In regard to the attitude towards party the reasons for the anti-party fight were now over and the responsibility of the women calls to the future but the only way to judge a man is by his talk. In our attitude towards candidates, we should be guided not by the satisfaction of getting square with the men but by the consideration of the welfare of the state. Women must remember not vindictively but public spiritedly and as patriots. With this preliminary Miss Ludington read the names of a number of the Republican candidates and commented on them. As these candidates were on the lists sent out to workers their names are not repeated here.

In spite of the fact that the women would not be able directly to influence the senatorial or gubernatorial nominations Miss Ludington emphasized the fact that the expression of their opinion would have a strong influence in the conventions and urged the women to make up their minds concerning these candidates.

Miss Ludington then made her appeal for funds to carry on the work and in pledges and a collection taken up the amount of \$6 . was contributed.

Mrs. Porritt then made a short speech on the Republican machine, its constitution and influence. The county chairmen then assembled their workers for the holding of brief meetings.

The meeting adjourned about four p. m.

Annie G. Porritt,

Recording Secretary.