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MRS. KEARNS URGES ACTION IN SENATE

Rockville Centre, L. I.

Dear Sir:—

Knowing of your splendid support in the past in furthering the cause for freedom of American women, now that England, Canada and even Russia have enfranchised their women during this war, I felt that you would gladly do your "bit" toward getting the protection which the ballot give, to our splendid American women, who are giving sons, husbands, time, money and service to their country and many of whom will never again have their natural protectors return from "Over There". Would you either print the enclosed article which states both sides clearly and won't you write your own editorial urging Senator Wadsworth (Rep.) to vote yes when the bill for the federal amendment comes up before the Senate.

Mr. Wadsworth should represent our State as the people wanted our State to be known as favoring votes for women. His wife is an anti-leader but he should represent the spirit and desires of his State as expressed at the polls last Fall.

The Democrats are rushing around trying to secure the two votes needed to carry in the Senate. We only lack 2 votes to carry and need Wadsworth's. Only 2 votes needed to carry of course the Democrats will claim credit for freeing American women. It's up to the Republicans in our district to try to get their men by writing letters at once to Senator Wadsworth and Senator Calder; also urge all men and women voters to write to President Wilson, Vice-President Marshall, Senator I. L. Jones, Suffrage Chairman, Senator Thomas Martin majority leader to do all within their power to bring about an immediate vote on the Federal Suffrage Amendment.

Won't you personally write to Senator Wadsworth and let me have a copy of your letter. Please send me a copy of your paper in which your editorial or any article appears so I may record it and also send it to our press department at Washington for reference.

Sincerely and earnestly,

(Mrs. Wilmer R.) Edna Buckman

Kearns, Rockville Centre, L. I.

Chairman 1st Congressional District

National Woman's Party.

Thank you for your many kindnesses in the past toward the cause.

Names of big Nassau Republicans who have sent me copies of letters.

They have written to Mr. Wadsworth urging him to vote Yes. Senator Thompson, Assemblyman McWhinney, Comptroller Earl Bennett, Asst. Dist. Attorney, Elvin Edwards, Supervisor Hiram Smith, Jeremiah Wood, Wilbur Doughty and many others.

Congressman Hicks says he will do all he can to push it at Washington.

The following letter was received by a prominent Republican leader of the First Congressional District from Senator Wadsworth:

My dear Sir:—I am in receipt of your letter of March 22d, in which you request me to give my support to the Constitutional Amendment for Woman Suffrage. I am sorry that I cannot agree with you in this connection for I do not believe that the people of one group of states should impose franchise qualifications upon another group of states against the will of the latter group. It may be said that was done in the case of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, but that amendment followed a great war and was part of the plan for saving the Union, and as such was justifiable. For the Woman Suffrage Amendment, however, no such contention exists.

The people of New York have settled this question to their own satisfaction.

fact I assume. I cannot believe that they are today insisting that their views shall be imposed upon the people of Ohio, for example, who settled it to their satisfaction, but in a way different from that of the people of New York. I am conscious of my great obligation to the people of New York, and I want to reflect their sentiments here in Washington to the best of my ability. I may be disposed in my attitude with regard to this question but it cannot be disputed that I am a Senator of the United States and that my highest duty is to serve the best interests of the whole country. I think I shall be doing so when I vote against the federal amendment. Moreover I am quite confident that by so doing I am not injuring the people of the State of New York.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. Wadsworth, Jr.

March 25, 1918.

In commenting on this letter, Mrs. Wilmer Kearns chairman of the First Congressional District for the National Woman's Party says:

"In saying he does not believe the group of states should impose franchise qualifications upon another group of states against the will of the latter group, we must remind the Senator of the Constitution of the United States which provides that the Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses so shall deem it necessary, shall impose amendments to this Constitution—which shall become valid—when ratified by the legislatures of 3/4 of the states."

Such is the machinery of amending our Constitution and no amendment was ever adopted without objections from some of the states. The income tax amendment was rejected by legislature of 6 states. The amendment for the direct election of Senators, by virtue of which Senator Wadsworth holds his present seat in the Senate, was rejected by the legislatures of 12 states. The rule of the majority has been adopted as a principle in this country and if 36 of the states adopt the Federal Suffrage Amendment, it automatically becomes valid in the remaining group. Whether or not it is right to impose such qualifications on the minority is not for us or for the Senator to judge. This machinery has been provided for amending the Constitution, and women demand its use in their behalf.

The United States entered this world war with the words "We shall fight for the things we hold nearest our hearts, for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have their voice in their own government." How Russia, Canada and England who have in war time enfranchised their women must wonder what we mean by democracy? We must stand on our professions with the seal of sincerity if we expect to be credited by our allies. Does not saving our national honor in the councils of the world make the federal suffrage amendment during a war for democracy quite as justifiable as the 15th Amendment which the Senator justifies as "part of a plan for saving the Union" after a great war?

The people of New York do not wish to impose their views on the people of Ohio and to obviate that possibility Ohio has her own Senators. The passage of the federal amendment by Congress is merely a proposition to be ratified by the states and any state such as Ohio can protect herself against the unwelcome amendment by the machinery created for that purpose. In opposing the amendment in the Senate, Senators are merely obstructing the democratic method of leaving the ultimate decision with the smaller units—the states. The House considered the federal suffrage amendment a war measure—a measure tending toward greater democracy and senators opposing it are obstructing part of a war program.

After the long hard struggle of 70 years, when women have been knocking at the doors of our government asking for a voice in making the laws which they obey, can a few Senators of the United States longer withhold the recognition due them? Does any Senator represent the Empire State who virtually says "Our women are not worthy."

Mrs. Wilmer Kearns, Rockville Centre, L. I.

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