

NATIONAL ORDER OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS—CONVENTION
STATE HOUSE

May 13, 1942

Annapolis

NOW, as possibly never before since women first entered the realm of politics and Government, is it necessary that there be at hand, a medium of expression for the views of the women of our Country on all the great questions facing us now or looming before us.

Certainly it would seem that no medium could be more effective for such expression than is afforded through the discussions and deliberations of women who have had experience of serving as legislators, and of helping to shape the laws of our local, State and Federal Governments.

With all the great changes that have occurred affecting women, there is continuing need for revisions of laws, and for changed National thinking with regard to woman's part in public activities of today. It is hardly to be disputed that the changes in our National life with regard to woman's part in the scheme of things, great as they admittedly have been, are nothing compared to the changes that impend in the months and years immediately ahead.

Gone for the emergency, and probably forever, is the time when women were limited to a very definite pattern in the life of their community and Country. You know how many women are engaged in vocations where they are, to all intents and purposes, on an absolutely equal economic basis with their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. You, of course, noted the recent statement by Chairman Paul V. McNutt of the War Manpower Board, in which he declared the necessity of an additional 1,000,000 women in industry during the coming year. What effect this will have on our National and individual way of life can only be conjectured!

Furthermore, in one, two, three or more years, when the emergency shall have ended, and the need for women in productive fields consequently lessened or eliminated, are we to suppose that women will be satisfied to resume the relatively lesser part in American National life that has been theirs up to recent years?

The answer undoubtedly is, that *they will not* be so content! This war, it is safe to predict, not only will inject women into every field of endeavor much more vigorously than ever before, but its aftermath will find many of them holding on tenaciously to their newly won place, and ready to defend by every possible means, their increased participation in industry and in Government. As a consequence, all thinking and planning for the post-war period will be predicated on recognition of this major new factor in the National picture.