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# CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT

THE POWER OF AN IDEA





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THE POWER OF AN IDEA

by HELEN HILL MILLER



Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, Inc.  
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*Introduction: The Centenary of Carrie Chapman Catt*



January 9, 1959, marks the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Carrie Chapman Catt, American woman leader whose organizing ability brought through to completion the constitutional change that in 1920 gave nation-wide suffrage to the women of the United States.

To mark this milestone, the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund is presenting a brief story, first of how American women became full citizens under Mrs. Catt's leadership, and then of how their practical experience as citizens has been shared around the world by means of the Fund established in Mrs. Catt's honor, particularly in countries which have recently either emerged from totalitarian rule or gained independent nationality.

As an indication of the direction to be taken by this living memorial in the future, the Directors of the Fund point out that the ballot is only the beginning; democratic government is not a classic work of art presented intact for the admiration of a spectator generation, but an everyday way of life; year by year and decade by decade, freedom must continually be earned.





CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT  
1859—1947

## Section I: How American Women Became Full Citizens



### THE MOMENT OF VICTORY



In the twenty-six room mansion known as Suffrage House at 1626 Rhode Island Avenue in Washington, three women looked at each other in silence. It was shortly after eight o'clock in the morning on Thursday, August 26, 1920. Carrie Chapman Catt had put the receiver of the wall telephone back on its hook; turning, she said, "The Secretary has just signed the Proclamation of the Amendment. He wants us to come to the State Department to see it."

The amendment to which she referred was the nineteenth, which wrote woman suffrage into the Constitution of the United States. At four a.m. that morning, the ratification of Tennessee, thirty-sixth state to act and the state whose action made the amendment binding, had been received by registered mail at the State Department. It was at once referred to the Department of Justice, where the Solicitor General had waited up all night to certify the correctness of its form. At eight, back at the State Department, Secretary Bainbridge Colby affixed his signature to the official Proclamation.

With Mrs. Catt, president of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, were Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton, vice-chair-



man of the Republican National Committee and past manager of the Association's National Headquarters, and Mrs. Helen Gardener, President Wilson's appointee as first woman member of the U. S. Civil Service Commission, who later in the morning took Mrs. Catt to pay her respects to the ailing President of the United States. Their moment of silence recognized the successful conclusion of a long effort. In its general form of a campaign for women's rights and woman suffrage, that effort had been under way for nearly three quarters of a century. In its specific form of the campaign for the nineteenth amendment, the strategy celebrated by the moment of victory had been progressing from carefully planned stage to carefully planned stage since the first inclusion of suffrage planks in the platforms of the two national political parties in 1916.

#### WANTED: A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The decision to make an all-out drive at the national level in the 1916 presidential year was based on recent successes in the states. During the last third of the 19th century, four Western states—Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho—had granted full suffrage to women, but from 1896 to 1910 no additions accrued, in spite of vigorous efforts. Then in rapid succession, Washington, California, Kansas, Oregon, Arizona, Montana, Nevada and the Territory of Alaska joined the full-suffrage column; Illinois approved woman suffrage for presidential electors; and in thirteen further states, other votes on the issue, lost by varying margins, nevertheless laid promising siege to the area east of the Mississippi.

When Congress assembled in December, 1915, Bill No. 1 in both Houses proposed an amendment to the Constitution providing votes for women. Encouraged, the national suffrage association regrouped personnel and formulated new strategy. Mrs.

Catt, resuming the presidential office she had held from 1900-1904, emphasized: "Whether for Congressional work or for state work, the only solid foundation is organization."

From her earliest efforts for suffrage in Iowa in the 1880's, Mrs. Catt had always had a "Plan of Work." She now determined to establish action programs for every state in which suffrage was still to be gained, and to stage major demonstrations at the national conventions of the political parties in favor of the inclusion of suffrage planks in their 1916 platforms.

UMBRELLAS IN CHICAGO—The Republican Convention met in Chicago. The suffragists planned a mammoth parade, complete with elephants, to start from the newly-filled land at Grant Park and proceed down Michigan Avenue to the Coliseum, timed for

Umbrellas in Chicago





entrance into the convention hall at the moment when the Resolutions Committee would receive the plea for a suffrage plank. When November 7 turned out to be a day of driving wind and lashing rain, other demonstrations were cancelled. Mrs. Catt announced, "Our parade will start as scheduled, but I advise raincoats and rubbers." Interspersed among marchers whose soaked skirts dragged a pavement clobbered with Grant Park's clay, twenty-four brass bands, horns a-gurgle, drew crowds to sidewalks and windows. *The New York Times* reported:

"The firemen's parade was called off, but 10,000 women took part in the suffrage parade, marching for more than an hour in a heavy downpour and biting wind. In the hotel lobbies tonight . . . politicians are calling it the pluckiest thing they ever knew women to do . . . Tremendous publicity has been gained."

In the Coliseum, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, firm opponent of woman suffrage, read the platform committee's report. From the packed galleries and in some cases from delegates' seats on the floor, the women listened. Finally, he came to this section: "The Republican party, reaffirming its faith in government of the people, by the people and for the people, favors the extension of suffrage to women. . . ." He was interrupted by a tremendous cheer. Shouting above it, he continued, "But we recognize the right of each state to settle this question for itself." The cheer died.

SUNSHADES IN ST. LOUIS—Yet while giving no encouragement to a federal amendment, the Republican party had gone on record for suffrage in principle. With this fact established, Mrs. Catt and her group departed for St. Louis to prepare the walkless parade that became known as the "Golden Lane." This was a form of psychological warfare devised to win recognition from the Democrats. Some years earlier, at the suggestion of Laura Johns, yellow rosettes had been adopted as the official color of the suffragists. So, in a line that stretched all the way from the Jefferson Hotel to the St. Louis Coliseum, more than half a mile, women dressed in white with yellow sashes and parasols stood flanked by their

St. Louis Post-Dispatch Photo



Sunshades in St. Louis

state banners. Midway, in front of the St. Louis Fine Arts Building, a symbolic tableau featured the Goddess of Liberty as its central figure. Delegates en route to the convention hall had to run this gauntlet.

The plank announced by the Democratic resolutions committee, after an internal struggle that produced a strong minority report, read: "We favor the extension of suffrage to women, state by state, on the same terms as to men."



When the vote on this plank was taken, the galleries fluttered with roll call blanks on which the women jotted down each delegation's response. The *New York Times* commented:

"It was like the French Convention of the revolution, gallery ruled, and the women with the roll call blanks suggested the knitting women of the Reign of Terror."

After the two conventions, the *New York Evening Post* editorialized:

"Woman suffrage has acquired an entirely new status . . . To have made the conquest over both Republicans and Democrats in a single year is a signal achievement."

But to realists in practical politics it was clear that both parties had shied away from a federal amendment, and tried to buy time through proposing a state-by-state approach. Mrs. Catt immediately called an emergency convention of the suffrage association for September.

### MRS. CATT'S MASTER PLAN

Her detailed plan, followed for four years thereafter, demanded concentration on passage of a federal amendment. To this end—to the chagrin of some states-rights Southerners—it vested in the national board authority over the previously self directing state suffrage associations. Each state was given an assignment and thirty-six state associations formally accepted their concerted responsibility. Over the next three years, the number of presidential electors in whose choice women shared rose from 91 to 326.

Both of the Presidential candidates were invited to address the 1916 suffrage convention. On the Republican side, Charles Evans Hughes was unable to come, but issued a surprise statement just

before the convention opened, in which, in his individual capacity, he endorsed woman suffrage by federal amendment.

Hence additional suspense awaited President Wilson when he said: "We feel the tide . . . and we shall not quarrel in the long run as to the method of it. . . . I have come to congratulate you that there has been a force behind you that will beyond any peradventure be triumphant, and for which you can a little while afford to wait."

The member who responded to his address, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, commented: "We have waited long enough, Mr. President, for the vote; we have hoped it might come in your administration." On the spot, the convention pledged \$818,000 toward a million dollar campaign fund.

To both parties, the western vote in the 1916 November election was thought-provoking. Newspaper headlines based on eastern trends, announcing a Hughes victory in early editions, had to be reset as returns came in from beyond the Mississippi, the area where most of the suffrage states were located. The capstone of the Wilson victory was the vote in California, where women had been enfranchised in 1911. At the same time, Montana elected Jeanette Rankin the first woman to serve in the national House of Representatives.

### POLICY AND PROGRESS IN WARTIME

For months, the imminence of war had been in all minds. In February, 1917 to clarify the policy of the suffrage association in advance of an actual declaration of hostilities, Mrs. Catt called the executive council to meet in Washington. Many of the women prominent in the suffrage movement, Mrs. Catt included, had long been active in the cause of peace; the newly-seated Congress-



woman Jeanette Rankin, in the special session called by President Wilson on April 2, was both sponsor of the current suffrage amendment bill and one of the few House members to vote against the declaration of war. After difficult negotiations, the suffrage association declared the movement would support the government but would continue to put priority on the suffrage amendment, regarded as both a war measure and a means of assuring women a voice in the peace.

In the spring of 1917, massive financial aid for the suffrage cause suddenly became available, after prolonged litigation, with the settlement of conflicting claims under the will of the New York publisher, Mrs. Frank Leslie, who died in 1914. This opulent, experienced, and childless widow had observed from a distance Mrs. Catt's organizing capacity; to the surprise of the recipient, she bequeathed most of her estate to Mrs. Catt to be used "as she shall think most advisable to the furtherance of the cause of woman's suffrage." Mrs. Catt established the Leslie Woman Suffrage Commission to receive the legacy, which totaled \$901,-979.49; with the first money paid over, it enlarged the 47-year old *Woman's Journal*, now renamed *The Woman Citizen*, to provide a new mouthpiece for the coming campaign.

Among all the states in which renewed efforts to gain the vote were undertaken in 1917, the outcome of the New York constitutional referendum in November was expected to have the greatest national impact; earlier in the year, favorable action on some form of woman suffrage had already been taken in North Dakota, Indiana, Vermont, Rhode Island, Michigan, Ohio, Nebraska and Arkansas.

Mindful of the impact of the 1915 suffrage parade, when from early afternoon until after dark 50,000 marchers, ranging from Seventh Avenue garment workers to Lillian Russell, the toast of Broadway, had streamed up Fifth Avenue from Washington Square to Central Park, the woman suffrage parties of New York City and New York State combined to prepare a similar demon-

stration. Headed by Mrs. Catt and the other national officers, some 20,000 marchers dramatized the manifold occupations of women in wartime. Signatures to the suffrage petition, election district by election district, were displayed on 2,500 standards. The total, 1,030,000, represented more than a majority of the women of the state.

The political picture was confused: New York's Republican Governor Whitman was for the suffrage amendment, but his colleague, Senator Wadsworth, differed; among Democrats, Tammany had been against it, but underwent a last-minute change of heart. When the polls closed on November 6th, 1917, however, women were voters in the state of New York, and the move for a Federal amendment was on in earnest.

## THE SIEGE OF CONGRESS

Mrs. Catt's presidential address before the suffrage convention in Washington a few weeks later was directed not to association members but to members of Congress:

"Woman suffrage is inevitable—you know it. The political parties will go on—we know it. Shall we, then, be enemies or friends? There is one thing mightier than kings or armies, congresses or political parties—the power of an idea when its time has come to move. The idea will not perish; the party which opposes it may."

The convention voted that if this Congress did not submit the suffrage amendment to the states, efforts would be made at the November Congressional elections to defeat candidates who had proved unwilling. It raised over \$800,000 to back this intent.

THE HOUSE RESPONDS—In the House, after a quick, favorable Committee report, January 10, 1918 was set as the date for the



vote. To pass, the amendment had to have a two-thirds majority. The vote was 274 to 136; by a hair-raising, hairline margin the constitutional requirement was met.

The Senate, however, adjourned its spring session without action and when the bill came up in October, it fell two votes short of success.

Campaigns were promptly launched to unseat four anti-suffrage senators; the defeat of Weeks of Massachusetts and Saulsbury of Delaware, and the commitment of their successors to the amendment, assured enough votes to win in the incoming Congress. (Actually, Mrs. Catt pressed for a second Senate vote at the lame duck session of the old Congress, after death and election changed a vote in South Carolina, but one more vote was still needed; the tally was 63-33.)

**THE SENATE YIELDS**—President Wilson called a special session of the new Congress for May, 1919. Three days after convening, the House passed the renewed suffrage bill by a huge majority, and on June 4, a Senate vote of 66-30 sent the nineteenth amendment to the states. Within an hour, Mrs. Catt wired the governors of all states where special sessions of the legislature would be necessary if action were to be taken on it that year. When the convention of the suffrage association met in Chicago in February 1920, twenty-eight states had ratified and four legislatures were in session; in speed of ratification, the nineteenth amendment had made record time.

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The suffragists had hoped that by this time suffrage might be an accomplished fact: foreseeing the possibility, Mrs. Catt had used the association's Jubilee Convention in St. Louis the previous

spring as an occasion not only to preview the victory that was clearly in sight, but to prepare for the period in which women who had obtained the ballot would be exercising their new franchise. She wanted to provide new and constructive channels for the organizing ability and the nationwide capacity for united work that had developed through the suffrage campaign.

The 1919 convention call contained the following sentence:

"As a fitting memorial to a half century of progress, the association invites the women voters of the fifteen full suffrage states to attend this anniversary and there to join their forces in a League of Women Voters, one of whose objects shall be to speed the suffrage campaign in our own and other countries."

In her presidential address, Mrs. Catt expanded this idea: the League, free from religious or racial bias, should work to liberate women from remaining legal inequities, and to aid the enfranchisement of women of other lands. At home, it could present a program of nonpartisan political education, an expansion of the schools for citizenship which had already been operated under its auspices. A League of Women Voters was accordingly set up, composed of the organizations in states where woman suffrage had already been attained, and headed by Mrs. Charles Brooks of Kansas; it was to act as a section of the suffrage association until the 19th amendment was actually ratified.

## MRS. CATT CONVEYS A HERITAGE

So, at the Chicago convention, celebration of the success of three generations of effort was combined with establishment of a new vehicle for women as enfranchised citizens. The League of Women Voters, conceived the year before at St. Louis, was given a formal birth certificate; Mrs. Maud Wood Park became



its executive, and a new group of younger women formed its board. In describing the function of the new organization, Mrs. Catt said:

"In the League of Women Voters we have an anomaly; we are going to be a semi-political body. We want political things; we want legislation; we are going to educate for citizenship. In that body we have got to be non-partisan and all-partisan. Democrats from Alabama and Republicans from New Hampshire must work for the same things . . ."

At the same time, Mrs. Catt made it clear that she expected woman voters likewise to take part in partisan politics:

"For sixty years we have been appealing to the political parties to give us the vote. I do not think we have won the vote in a single state where one or both parties have not given their consent—so powerful are they. Well, then, is it our intention to remain outside of those parties as we have been for sixty years? . . ."

"The only way to get things done is to get them done on the inside of a political party . . . You will be disillusioned, you will find yourselves in a political penumbra where most of the men are . . . But if you stay long enough, you will discover a little denser thing which is the umbra of the political party—the people who are picking the candidates, doing the real work that you and the men sanction at the polls. You won't be welcome, but there is the place to go. You will see the real thing in the center with the door locked tight. You will have a long hard fight before you get inside . . . but you must move right up to the center . . ."

Commenting on Mrs. Catt's handling of this meeting, one journalist reported:

"The proof of a good workman is the way he leaves his job for another man to take up . . . Mrs. Catt had a great organization under her hand . . . What she did was to meet the new conditions, and see to it that women capable of guiding those new conditions were put at the head with plenty of power and a chance for initiative."

## RATIFICATION COMPLETED

But, as of March, 1920, one last rugged fight was ahead before the job would be finished; women would not vote for president in November unless another state's special session ratified in time. As soon as the governor of Tennessee, where women had been enfranchised by state constitutional amendment in 1919, called the legislature, Mrs. Catt, from the Hermitage Hotel in Nashville, worked unceasingly with local leaders.

The Tennessee Senate ratified promptly, but the House was another matter. The Speaker was strongly opposed to woman suffrage. The first vote was on a move to table the motion, offered by the Speaker with the assurance that "The battle has been fought and won." With 96 members present, the outcome was a 48-48 tie. This opened the way to a vote on the motion itself, in which the Speaker expected to break the tie by voting against the amendment. But when the roll-call reached the name of young Harry Burn, a newly elected member, there was an unexpected development. Back in the hills of McMinn County, Mrs. Burn, a strong suffragist, had written her son: "I have been watching to see how you stood, but have not noticed anything yet. Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put 'rat' in ratification." So, reversing his vote on the motion to table, young Harry shouted "Aye!" and thereby gave the amendment a winning majority.

Various rear-guard actions were attempted, including an effort to enjoin the Governor from signing a ratification certificate and sending it forward to Washington. But he signed it, and hence on August 26, 1920, woman suffrage became a reality in the United States.



By a rare political circumstance, the wording of the new amendment was identical with the first proposal drafted by Susan B. Anthony forty-five years previously. It stated simply:

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

## THE LAST PARADE

The following afternoon Mrs. Catt's train pulled into New York's Pennsylvania Station at the end of a triumphal progress up the seaboard. She looked out onto a solid mass of faces. Governor Al Smith was waiting with a state committee of welcome. The 71st Regimental Band played "Hail the Conquering Hero Comes!" An enormous bouquet of delphinium and yellow chrysanthemum was duly presented; Mrs. Catt was installed in a waiting car surrounded by a guard of honor; and the last of the suffrage parades swelled up Fifth Avenue.

### The Victory Reception



## Section II: How Practical Experience Has Been Shared



## A LIVING MEMORIAL



rs. Catt's decisive part in securing votes for women in the United States was coupled with lively interest and active cooperation in the world-wide movement for woman suffrage. As head of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, she made repeated trips to Europe, and a world tour in 1911-12. In the 1920's, after her retirement from suffrage organizations, her world interest expressed itself through the Conference on the Cause and Cure of War.

Though in 1928 Mrs. Catt bought a home in New Rochelle, New York where she lived first with Mary Garrett Hay and after Miss Hay's death with Alda Wilson, she was often elsewhere. She worked with that former arch opponent of woman suffrage, Elihu Root—whose Washington residence, by a turn of fate, had later become Suffrage House—on behalf of the Permanent Court of International Justice. She was the recipient of a lengthy list of awards, decorations, honorary degrees.

In 1936, a celebration of her jubilee of public service included a visit to the White House which she had first entered to ask



Theodore Roosevelt to support woman suffrage. This time, Franklin D. Roosevelt presented her a letter which read in part:

"Our old friendship, dating back to the days when I was a very young State Senator in 1911, would be a sufficient reason for me to write you on your completion of half a century of public service. But there is a greater reason—because the whole country applauds you and your very great contribution to our well being."

As the two sat side by side, the other members of the delegation remarked the resemblance of the profiles of these two indomitable, amiable extroverts, each of whom had been the instrument of major change.

Only two months before her death in 1947 at the age of eighty-eight, Mrs. Catt attended a testimonial birthday dinner organized by the American Association for the United Nations. Later that spring, a group of sponsors made plans for a living memorial.

#### THE CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT MEMORIAL FUND

For years, a constantly mounting volume of inquiries from women in countries overseas had been received by the League of Women Voters of the United States. Either by mail or in the course of visits to the United States citizens of countries which were either attempting to operate new democratic constitutions in the rubble of totalitarianism or assuming political responsibility after a period of colonial tutelage were requesting material that they might use at home. No staff or budget existed for response to these requests. So at its Council meeting in April, 1947, the League welcomed and approved a project "for spreading the practical knowledge and the underlying theory of how a democracy in a free country works, and why." By the end of 1958, the Carrie

Chapman Catt Memorial Fund had completed a decade of active operation.

Over that decade, both in agenda and in financial resources, the CCCMF developed well beyond its early goals. Initial contributions, many of them in amounts from \$1.00 up, came from Mrs. Catt's friends. A Memorial Volume, listing the early donors, was presented to the Library of Congress in 1951.

But as the seed money thus obtained produced successive harvests, it attracted additions. Repeatedly, in one part of the world or another, work initiated through a CCCMF grant has been continued or expanded with funds from local sources. At the same time, grants from foundations have enabled the Fund to originate its projects on a somewhat larger scale.

Through 1957, 1450 individuals and 31 foundations made contributions to the Fund's work; the CCCMF had at its disposal over \$450,000.

#### ROUND-THE-WORLD EXCHANGE OF PERSONS

The round-the-world coverage of the Fund during the past ten years appears alike in the story of the exchange of persons under its auspices and in the record of its distribution of materials.

COUNTRIES RENEWING A DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE—When the Fund started, the number of appeals from women's organizations that had been cut off from all communication during the war indicated that its energies might be absorbed in two-way exchanges with these countries.

In the year of the Marshall Plan, the women of recently-occupied France were newly enfranchised and the women of Germany and



Italy were engaged in the rebuilding of a democratic society. Anne O'Hare McCormick of *The New York Times* wrote:

"The living memorial could not be more timely, more needed or more in tune with the ideas of Mrs. Catt. The European crisis is a crisis of democracy, and democracy has to be saved largely by women who form the majority in most war-ravaged countries. In a struggle for survival and freedom too desperate for Americans to imagine, they need contacts, encouragement, cooperation."

Along with other citizens, Anna Lord Strauss, then President of the League of Women Voters of the United States and now President of the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, had urged inclusion of a section on women's affairs in the United States Office of Military Government in Germany. The first exchange-of-persons program of the Fund grew out of its work. The group of seven German women—members of provincial parliaments and of the Berlin Assembly, an educator, an editor and a lawyer—who arrived in 1949 for a two-months tour of the United States under Fund guidance, were the first of a long series of German visitors.

Similarly, at the instance of Military Government in Japan, the Fund provided facilities for a prewar Bryn Mawr graduate, who was back in the United States taking a refresher course in administration, to tour the country observing citizens' organizations. A teacher of English at Tsuda College in Tokyo, she was President of the New Japan Women's League; subsequently, she became Chief of the Women's and Minors' Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Labor, and in 1957-58 returned to New York as first an alternate and then a full member of the Japanese Delegation to the UN.

Among visitors from Western European countries isolated during the war was a young lawyer from the Netherlands who had completed her studies in haylofts as a member of the Dutch resistance. Having won a U.N. internship, she made contact with the CCCMF in New York; a small grant enabled her to do a

grass roots tour of the country, mostly by bus. After her return to Holland, she was elected to the City Council of Utrecht; as a member of the budget committee, she struggles with problems of school finance and gives special attention to women's prisons. She is currently the Netherlands representative in the World Federation of University Women and the International Alliance of Women.

The first American to go overseas on behalf of the CCCMF was Mrs. Marc. A. Law, who went to Italy in 1948 at the invitation of Italian women's organizations. She was impressed by UNLA, the Society to Combat Illiteracy; at her instance, the Fund granted \$4,000 to be used by UNLA for a 20-day training course for teachers conducting night classes for illiterates and employed teenagers in the Southern provinces of Matera and Lucania. The illiteracy rate there was 48 per cent. As soon as the course was announced, 1300 teachers applied; only 100 could be accommodated. When these returned to their villages, some 50 Centri di Cultura Popolare were founded; without party or religious affiliation, democratically controlled by those who attend classes, they initiated the teaching of reading and writing, handicraft, health, agriculture, and citizenship. Subsequently, the substantial funds from other organizations attracted by the success of this pilot project have greatly enlarged the work.

COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING NEW NATIONHOOD—But while two-way exchanges with countries eager to catch up with democratic developments have continued, in more recent years the inflow of visitors to the offices of the CCCMF has included men and women from newly independent nations around the globe from Korea to Sierra Leone, and invitations have come to CCCMF consultants from areas where women have emerged directly from purdah into the political arena.

To take care of overseas visitors in the nation's capital, and to facilitate contact with arriving participants in intergovernmental programs of leadership exchange, a Washington office of



the CCCMF was opened in 1950. One of its specialties is a Capitol Hill tour, in the course of which the American legislative system, with its Congressional procedure, its committee hearings and reports, its House and Senate debates and roll-calls, is explained, and illustrated by visits to the galleries and interviews in member's offices. In 1957, such briefings were provided for visitors from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Ceylon, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, Switzerland, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

In addition to these political briefings, through CCCMF facilities a good many women who have come to the U.S. from newly independent countries have had first-hand opportunity, elsewhere than in Washington, to check on impressions that they had before they came, and to acquire new ones. Some, conditioned by the movies to expect all Americans to live in penthouses, discover that the average housewives who are the active element in PTA's, Leagues of Women Voters and other community organizations can do what they do not because they have servants but because they are good administrators and organizers, because of carpools, household machinery, every-one-bring-a-dish community suppers, and because of husbands who, when it comes to drying dishes or changing diapers, are neither aloof nor unskilled. In the cross country tours arranged for such visitors, the cooperation of the more than a thousand local Leagues of Women Voters is invaluable; and conversely, opportunity to see themselves through the eyes of strangers supplies material for self-analysis to many Leagues.

An example of the type of experience made available through Fund resources to citizens of newly independent countries is that of a Philippine lawyer, who came to the United States in 1954 as a graduate student at New York University, eager to observe U.S. electoral procedures. She was Chief Attorney to the Commission of Elections in Manila, where thumb-marking was then

used as a means of identifying voters. With CCCMF help, she observed on the spot various American and Canadian systems of establishing and maintaining registration lists. After touring eighteen U.S. and three Canadian cities, she thought the best equipment was to be found in Toronto's highly mechanized arrangements, regarded New York's practices as poor. On one of Manila's problems she got no help at all: Philippine voters don't like to queue up for voting, but no technique for avoiding this necessity seems to have been developed elsewhere!

A member of the League of Women Voters of the Philippines, now in its 22nd year—its older members recall Mrs. Catt's encouragement of Philippine suffragists on her visit to Manila in 1912—this visitor's current post is executive trustee for the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, which offers annual awards, open to persons in the Philippines and other countries of Asia, in the fields of government, public service, international understanding, community service, journalism and literature.

At the same time that the CCCMF has made it possible for incoming visitors from newly organized countries to see more of the U.S., invited consultants have continued to go overseas under CCCMF auspices. The outbound exchange that began with Mrs. Law's trip to Italy has included visits by Anna Lord Strauss to various countries, under State Department and UN auspices, and by others, with CCCMF introductions, to most major world areas.

Beginning in 1955, Mrs. Elizabeth T. Halsey spent fourteen months in the Far East. She went to the Philippines, to Ceylon, where she was consultant to the All Ceylon Women's Conference, and to Pakistan, where she worked with the All Pakistan Women's Association. Among the fruits of her time in Pakistan is a "Leadership Handbook for Office-Bearers and Members of Organizations in Pakistan;" adapted from the "Handbook of the U.S. League of Women Voters," it gives brief directions for setting up an organization, framing a constitution and by-laws, making and financing a budget, running meetings and discussion groups.



In India, a CCCMF grant financed a primer for use in the simultaneous teaching of literacy and government, called "We the Government." First printed in English, and later in Hindi, it won a prize offered by the Ministry of Education. Then came "Vote and Be a Partner in Government," which explains, in pictograms and simple text, what a vote is, how to register, for what candidates one is eligible to vote, how to assess a candidate's merits, how to recognize the party symbols at the top of ballots, how to go to a polling place, mark a ballot, put it in the box.

The most recent CCCMF overseas programs are in Latin America. From March to May, 1956, Mrs. John Gillin, a former president of a state LWV, fluent in Spanish, was cosponsored by the CCCMF and the State Department on a consulting trip to Brazil, Uruguay, Peru, Costa Rica and Guatemala. In February, 1957, the Pan American Union with the cooperation of CCCMF brought together in Washington representatives of women's organizations interested in Latin American countries. Then in November a CCCMF representative who was already in Peru was asked to go to Argentina to meet with delegates of 17 women's associations that were engaged in a cooperative effort—their first—toward citizen organization. That same year, an Argentinian, sponsored by her government and the State Department, and in the U.S. as an official representative on the UN's Status of Women Commission, was enabled by the CCCMF to travel and observe the procedure of local Leagues of Women Voters and other non-governmental U.S. groups that cooperate with the Women's Bureau.

#### MILEAGE ON A SHOESTRING

In practically none of the above cases has the CCCMF made expenditures that could be called anything but modest. Over and over, a grant of a few hundred dollars has enabled a visitor whose

time would otherwise have been spent in a single place or at a single university to supplement this experience with illuminating travel—rounding out what she saw in the U.S., observing an additional demonstration in the field of her specialty, becoming aware of another facet of American life or government. This ability to make money go far has been an asset in attracting further contributions—over and over, one shoestring has turned into a pair.

#### THE CCCMF'S PUBLICATIONS

Publications as well as persons have carried American women's experience in citizenship abroad under the auspices of CCCMF. Of its publications, the greatest demand has been for "Simplified Parliamentary Procedure." When the CCCMF was started, Mrs. Harry Harvey Thomas, who had for some years been parliamentarian of the League of Women Voters, donated, as her contribution, a twelve-page digest of the 304 pages of Roberts Rules of Order. Successive editions of the digest, which is distributed free, have mounted close to the three-quarter million mark; it has been translated into well onto a score of languages, including German, Japanese, Arabic, Italian, Turkish, Greek, Bengali, Spanish, Portuguese, and Urdu.

Requests for this first aid to the harried chairman likewise pile up from inside the U.S.A.—a single day's demand may range from the Club Activities Section of the Board of Education of Atlanta to the Business and Professional Women's Club of San Francisco; from the Westchester Unit of the United Church-Women of the Greater Philadelphia Council of Churches to the American Legion Auxiliary of Goliad, Texas; from the Future Homemakers of America of Charleston, West Virginia to the Club de Leones of Lares, Puerto Rico.



Another group of widely travelled publications explains various aspects of the United States: when the only woman member of the Virginia House of Delegates wrote "Self-Government, U.S.A.," one of the first orders was for 1,000 copies to go to Accra, now capital of one of the newest of free nations, Ghana. Other titles in this U.S.A. group include: "Individual Liberty," "Making Foreign Policy," "What's the UN to US?" These are out of print. Still available are "Choosing the President of the U.S.A." and "The Role of Political Parties, U.S.A."

A guide for incoming visitors, "You In The U.S.A.," is available in English; it was translated into Hungarian in an edition of 10,000 for the briefing of arriving refugees after the Revolution of 1956, and plans are under consideration for a Japanese edition.

The "Handbook for Leaders of Organizations" and a publication describing "New Patterns for Women" form a third group of available materials.

## THE CCCMF'S DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

Two limited-term domestic activities of CCCMF have also resulted in widely distributed publications.

**THE BIG CITY**—In 1952-53, the League of Women Voters of the United States requested the CCCMF to finance research on the problems of communications in big cities between government and citizenry. In today's metropolitan area, how can citizens make effective contact with their government? Where do they go? Whom do they see? What are the current obstacles to better citizen participation?

Philadelphia was selected as the area for study; between February 15 and May 1, 1952, an intensive analysis was made of

Philadelphia's citizen organizations, their structure, financial base, type of meetings, programs and publications, and the part taken by them in the Philadelphia Charter movement. Based on the findings of this analysis, suggestions, applicable to the circumstances of any city, were made available, covering establishment of citizens training schools, self-analysis by organizations, and organization of a central citizens information center. The CCCMF underwrote the research and the ensuing publication.

**FREEDOM AGENDA**—In 1954-56, a second limited-term program was carried on in a time of national tension to promote wider understanding of American constitutional freedoms. As the *New York Times*, commenting on the program, put it editorially:

"Among the innumerable fine accomplishments of the League of Women Voters is creation of the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, a research and educational group working to promote among the women of America, Europe and Asia the principles and practices of democratic government. But the most interesting project this Fund is undertaking now is right here in the United States. It is known as the Freedom Agenda.

The idea behind Freedom Agenda is the development of a grass-roots understanding of the principles of American civil liberties and constitutional government. The new program—which is supported by substantial grants from the Fund for the Republic—aims at bringing home the significance of the Bill of Rights and basic constitutional liberties through the development of discussion groups among ordinary citizens of diverse political beliefs throughout the country. It rests on the sound conviction 'that honest discussion of the issues involved in contemporary questions of civil liberty is the best way to promote a healthy public atmosphere for constitutional government'."

A national committee, under the chairmanship of Anna Lord Strauss, invited the cooperation of about a hundred national organizations in informing their local branches of the availability of a series of pamphlets on the bill of rights and constitutional liberties and their relation to loyalty programs, Congressional investigating committees, sedition acts. In addition to the League of Women Voters of the United States, which carried the pro-



gram in 797 communities distributed among all 48 states, use was made of these materials in library and school groups, adult education organizations, newspapers and radio stations, the American Association of University Women, Anti-Defamation Leagues, bar associations, religious bodies and many more. In 1958 the pamphlets became the basis of a book, "Foundations of Freedom in the American Constitution," edited by Alfred H. Kelly.

In its domestic as well as its overseas ventures the CCCMF has seen its pilot projects expanded and continued under other auspices. For example, in connection with the Freedom Agenda, during the 1956-57 school year the CCCMF sponsored an in-service training course for teachers in New York City on the law of the Bill of Rights. It began with a one-semester trial run. When it was repeated the following year, advance registration of 1300 swamped the available auditorium; over 900 were turned away. The course now seems likely to become a regular offering in the teacher-training curriculum; the CCCMF has published a report on its inception as a record of an experiment in community education.

#### AN ON-GOING EFFORT

The first source of funds for CCCMF publications was \$3000 from the sale of a beautiful star sapphire which admirers of Mrs. Catt gave her at the Chicago Victory Convention of the suffrage association. Money to purchase it had been raised by a public subscription in which school children were asked to join at a penny apiece. The story has endured of a small boy who experienced some difficulty in explaining to his mother the purpose of his request for a penny. It had, he thought, something to do with a monument to Charlie Chaplin's cat. When the recipient of the star-sapphire heard the story, she asked "Who is Charlie Chaplin?" From such beginnings did the education of citizens acquire a base.

#### *Postscript and Prelude*



he activities of the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund in the last decade, in meeting varying needs at home and abroad as they made themselves felt, have expressed its members' conviction that freedom must be daily earned.

To Mrs. Catt's generation in the United States, and to the generation of many women now living in other countries, the foremost need was to obtain the ballot. But the generation in the United States that has participated in the League of Women Voters since 1920, and the generation that since World War II has been developing Leagues of Women Voters around the world from Japan to Italy, know that the ballot is only the beginning, that citizenship goes far beyond making a mark on a piece of paper, into exploration of the broad area of the rights and responsibilities of man.

This record of the practical political sense and the flexible strategy through which American women obtained the franchise under Mrs. Catt's leadership, and of the projects undertaken after her death as a living memorial, is thus presented as a prelude to a long future, in which still younger generations, active participants in the democratic process, will in similar practical ways find freedom and make it work.



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