

THE PROGRAM RECORD

League of Women Voters

**National Presidents
of the
League of Women Voters**



CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, *Founder*

Mrs. Maude Wood Park, 1920-24

Miss Belle Sherwin, 1924-34

Miss Marguerite Wells, 1934-44

Miss Anna Lord Strauss, 1944-50

Mrs. John G. Lee, 1950-

Publication #231

Price: 50¢

October, 1955



League of Women Voters of the United States

1026 17th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

THE PROGRAM RECORD

INTRODUCTION 1

How the Program is Made . . . The
Development of the Program System
. . . The History of the Program in
Brief . . . The Uses of the Program
Record . . . A Note on Method and
Sources.

I. INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY 6

The Principles of Representative Government (Principle 1) 6

Individual Liberty in Wartime . . .
Academic Freedom.

II. GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES 7

A System of Government Responsive to the Voter (Principle 2) 7

The Lame Duck Amendment to the
Constitution . . . Easing Ratification
of Amendments to the Constitution
. . . Suffrage for the District of Co-
lumbia . . . Election Laws . . . Laws
Regarding Political Parties and Cam-
paigns . . . Proportional Represen-
tation . . . Home Rule . . . Voting
Machines.

A System of Government which Fixes Responsibility (Principle 3) 11

A Coordinated System of Government (Principle 4) 12

Coordinated Employment Measures
. . . Coordination of Tax Systems . . .
Consolidation of Local Units of
Government.

VI. GOVERNMENT SERVICES	22
Education (Principle 8)	22
Federal Aid to Education . . . State Educational Work . . . Local Educational Work.	
Government and the General Welfare (Principle 13)	23
Women and Children . . . Housing . . . Industry . . . The Consumer.	
The Conservation of Natural Resources (Principle 15)	32
Tennessee Valley Authority . . . Administrative Proposals.	
VII. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	33
International Cooperation and Organization (Principles 17 and 18)	33
The Development of International Law . . . Limitation of Armaments . . . Steps Toward a Collective Security System . . . The United Nations . . . Collective Security and the U.N. . . . Economic and Social Cooperation . . . Postwar Reconstruction . . . International Economic Development and Technical Assistance, 1950-54.	
Domestic Policies Affecting International Relations (Principle 16)	42
Reparations and War Debts . . . Tariffs and World Trade . . . Immigration Laws . . . Civilian Control of Atomic Energy . . . Constitutional Amendments.	
CONCLUSION	45
INDEX	46

22	VI. GOVERNMENT SERVICES
22	Education (Principle 8)
	Federal Aid to Education . . . State
	Educational Work . . . Local Educa-
	tional Work
23	Government and the General Welfare
23	(Principle 13)
	Women and Children . . . Housing
	Industry . . . The Consumer
32	The Conservation of Natural
32	Resources (Principle 15)
	Tennessee Valley Authority . . . Ad-
	ministrative Proposals
33	VII. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
	International Cooperation and
	Organization (Principles 17
33	and 18)
	The Development of International
	Law . . . Limitation of Armaments
	. . . Steps Toward a Collective Secu-
	rity System . . . The United Nations
	. . . Collective Security and the U.N.
	. . . Economic and Social Cooperation
	. . . Postwar Reconstruction . . . In-
	ternational Economic Development
	and Technical Assistance, 1950-54
42	Domestic Policies Affecting Inter-
42	national Relations (Principle 16)
	Reparations and War Debts . . . Inven-
	tariffs and World Trade . . . Immigra-
	tion Laws . . . Civilian Control of
	Atomic Energy . . . Constitutional
	Amendments
45	CONCLUSION
46	INDEX

INTRODUCTION

The League of Women Voters was projected in 1919, even before the end of the campaign for woman suffrage, as an organization which would "finish the fight and aid in the reconstruction of the nation." It was intended to be a means of teaching all the newly enfranchised women the techniques and duties of citizenship. The members also wanted to work for certain "needed legislation."

The years have gone by. Some items on the original program of work have yet to be accomplished; many women have yet to become interested in active citizenship. The League itself has evolved from an organization concerned with women's needs and with training women voters, to one concerned with the nation's needs and concerned with training citizens.

How the Program is Made

The national Program is made by the members of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It is adopted at the biennial national Convention, as the last step in a long period of discussion and recommendation on the part of the members.

In advance of each Convention, members of local Leagues throughout the country discuss the national issues on which they want to concentrate during the next two years. Their recommendations are sent to the national Board, which uses them as the basis for making up a Proposed Program. The Proposed Program is sent to local Leagues for discussion and suggestion, and their comments are again considered by the Board. The Convention may adopt the Program as proposed, or may amend it, even by adding previously proposed items not recommended by the Board.

State and local programs are also made by the members, and must be in accord with the Principles.

The Development of the Program System

The Program system was gradually developed in the League through the deliberations and decisions of successive national Conventions. The Program itself evolved out of the experience gained in carrying out those decisions. Its form has changed greatly with the years. At first, related issues were grouped under the heading of a Committee, and later a Department, responsible. At one time the Program was divided into national, state, and local sections. There was also a division between the items for action and those for study only. The theory was that the League must study an item for at least two years before action could be taken, but this proved unrealistic. For a long time the League built up its Program steadily, adding new items and changing old ones but only occasionally dropping an item. Finally the Program became long and cumbersome. It seemed desirable to distinguish between the things the League had stood for in the past and items on which action was currently being taken. From 1934 to 1942 this was done by designating certain items for "emphasis." In 1942 the Convention embodied past League experience in a national Platform, and put issues for current emphasis on an "Active List." In 1946 this list was renamed the "Current Agenda." At that time the Platform was divided into Principles on which the League had, through the years, reached agreement, and specific issues which might require attention. As succeeding Conventions added to the national Platform it became a complex document containing items which were out of date, as well as a number which applied only to state and local government. In 1954, therefore, the Platform was thoroughly revised. Outdated items, items on which there was no longer general agreement, and those applying only to state or local government were removed from the Platform. They are incorporated into this Program Record, which is designed to be a permanent account of the main issues on which the League has taken action, with some description of their history.

The History of the Program in Brief

The progress of world affairs and the development of American women as citizens are reflected in the evolution of the League Program. After the right to vote was achieved in 1920, League members worked vigorously to

improve the legal status of women. Their activities included support for jury service for women, legal equality in property rights, and removal of discriminations against women gainfully employed.

The first Program was concerned with women in industry, child welfare, food supply and demand, and social hygiene. To these issues connected with the status of women and social welfare, the traditional fields of interest to women, there were added in the early 1920's the fields of international cooperation to prevent war and efficiency in the operation of government.

In the early years, the League concentrated on the process of voting and supported many election measures to make voting simple and honest. Much work was done to increase the number of informed voters. Citizenship schools sponsored by the League leaned heavily upon experts in the field of public administration. The League was soon tackling basic concepts of government. League members began to realize that passing socially desirable laws was not enough. If such laws were to have the desired effect, much depended upon the persons administering them and the framework of government in which they operated. Members found themselves concerned with problems such as the council-manager plan for local government; the merit system in all branches of government; federal, state, and local governmental reorganization to promote efficiency and economy; and strengthening legislative bodies.

Education was a constant League concern all through the 1920's and 1930's and continues to be an important area of local and state work. The depression of the 1930's led to League action on such things as wages and hours, unemployment compensation, the federal employment service and the merit system. The inflation of World War II, and the succeeding fear of deflation, increased interest in such national and international economic problems as taxation, trade, and the federal budget. The League also studied the establishment of the United Nations, the control of atomic energy, and world-wide reconstruction. At a time when there were so many pressing issues, all apparently crucial, it was hard to make choices. It became obvious that the League could not be effective in so many fields and strong pressure developed among members to "shorten the Program." In a period of domestic prosperity and international crisis, the result was more emphasis on international affairs and less on social welfare.

The Korean War turned public attention once again to problems of defense. In the League, this attention centered on measures which could fundamentally strengthen the Free World, such as the expansion of trade and international economic development. Support had already been given to such undertakings as the North Atlantic Treaty. A renewed emphasis upon efficiency and economy in the administration of the federal government also appeared. Efforts along this line have taken the form of examining reorganization measures in the field of natural resources and the budgetary procedures of the Congress.

For over three decades the League has played a part in the nation's major foreign policy decisions. It has influenced a number of vital decisions in regard to domestic policy.

The Uses of the Program Record

This Program Record should be helpful to the member who wants to know how the League Program developed over the years. It will also serve as a guide to local and state Leagues in selecting their Current Agendas by showing how the Principles originated and what positions were taken by the League in the past. It should help to keep positions consistent throughout the League. However, past positions cannot be interpreted literally as a basis for current stands as League positions have never remained static but have responded to changing events. Furthermore, local and state factors may result in variations in position within a state or in different states. It should be noted that the authority for the adoption of the Program is based on the Principles, and not on the Program Record.

A Note on Method and Sources

Under each of the "Principles" as they appear on the 1954-56 national Program, related national, state, and local issues to which the League has at some time given sustained attention are discussed. The record of national issues is fairly complete; state and local issues are in the nature of examples. Some state Leagues have compiled their own histories which will provide a useful supplement for members in those states.

It may be helpful to remember that the Principles represent an effort to distill from many years' experience the

underlying assumptions of the members of the League of Women Voters. In the beginning, issues were chosen for action because the members felt they were pressing problems demanding solution, not because they fitted a pre-established principle. It was only after the League had been functioning for awhile that an attempt was made to formulate these general statements of agreement on principles.

Some of the Principles, like number 1 ("The principles of representative government and individual liberty established in the Constitution of the United States") or number 13 ("Responsibility of government to share in the solution of social and economic problems which affect the general welfare") are extremely broad. Both were adopted after more than two decades of League experience. For example, many of the League's most active interests in the 20's and 30's are grouped under Principle 13. On the other hand, some of the Principles, such as number 6 ("A merit system for the selection, retention and promotion of governmental personnel") are quite specific, and cover a limited area of League activity. Many activities are based on more than one Principle.

If this Record, therefore, seems to fall into patterns which are not completely logical, it is because—to paraphrase what Justice Holmes once said of the law—the life of the League of Women Voters has not been logic, it has been experience.

The basic sources for the Program Record are the printed copies of the Program which have been issued after each Convention of the League of Women Voters. For interpretation as to reasoning behind the decisions of the Convention, it is necessary to turn to the verbatim minutes, the "explanations" published with the Program, and to the memories of members who have participated. From time to time the League has published summaries of its history, and these too have been drawn upon, especially *The Program Explained* (1936), *Explanations of Federal Items* (1940) and the *History of the League Program* (1949).¹ Information about state and local work is from the national files and from records in the Library of Congress.

¹ All of these documents are out of print.

I. INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

THE PRINCIPLES OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

PRINCIPLE 1: *"The principles of representative government and individual liberty established in the Constitution of the United States."*

From the beginning the League of Women Voters has assumed that every human being has certain rights which should not be abrogated by any government. The woman suffrage movement itself was an effort to extend equal political rights to half the population. The League is based on belief in the importance of the individual citizen in a democratic society. The League's adherence to such concepts as academic freedom and freedom of inquiry, assembly, and discussion has been expressed repeatedly in its Program.

In the early days the interest of League members tended to center on the rights of the unequal members of society: women and children. In recent years the world-wide spread of totalitarian doctrines deepened the belief in the overriding importance of individual liberty to our system of government. League Conventions repeatedly affirmed the importance of maintaining individual liberty. The 1954-56 Program dedicated the League to a concerted effort to bring about understanding of the importance of the rights guaranteed to the individual in the Constitution, and the relationship of these rights to current issues.

NATIONAL WORK

Individual liberty in wartime.

In 1942, League members felt deeply that democratic government must not be impaired by war measures, even though the emergency might mean that certain restrictions were essential to national security. The League wished to preserve the greatest degree of civil liberty consistent with national safety. From 1942 to 1946, League members studied the subject in discussion groups throughout the nation to be prepared to act in the event a civil liberties issue of major significance emerged. No such issue emerged and no action was taken on any federal legislation.

Academic freedom.

From 1924 to 1925 the League studied how to insure freedom of speech, thought, and action on the part of school boards and teachers. From 1936 to 1942 the Program included the subject: "Protection of academic freedom as basic to sound education." This item became part of the Platform in 1942.

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

In several states Leagues have opposed legislation to *restrict civil liberties in such ways as by teachers' oaths*, mandatory salutes to the flag, and anti-alien measures. Several states have carried on intensive legislative activity in this area for a number of years.

II. GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES

A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVE TO THE VOTER

PRINCIPLE 2: "*A system of government which is responsive to the will of the people and which enables the voter to carry out his obligations as a citizen.*"

The basic tenets of League philosophy have been stated as follows:

The League of Women Voters believes that government should be representative, responsible, and responsive, stronger than any political or economic group, capable of rendering, with the least waste and at equitable cost, services adapted to the needs of life of all the people.

Such a government depends upon the adaptation of statutes, charters and constitutions to the facts of life; upon the nomination, election and appointment of responsible officials; upon the acceptance by citizens of participation in government as a public trust.

NATIONAL WORK

The Lame Duck Amendment to the Constitution.

The League was among the sponsors of the so-called Lame Duck Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This amendment shortened the period between the election and the commencement of the terms of the President, the Vice President, and the members of the Congress. Before the passage of the amendment there had been the long interval between election day in early November and inauguration on March 4, during which time the business of the country was often carried on by an Administration repudiated at the polls and Congressmen who had not been re-elected. The problem was especially noticeable to the League when it attempted to work with the so-called Lame Duck or short session of Congress. In 1928, the League decided to work for the proposed amendment. It was passed by Congress in 1931, and state Leagues then took up the campaign for ratification. The amendment became part of the Constitution on February 6, 1933.

Easing Ratification of Amendments to the Constitution.

The following item appeared on the League Program several times in the 30's: "Amendment to the federal Constitution to make the process of ratification of constitutional amendments less difficult and more responsive to the will of the electorate." This item was dropped in 1940 when League interest centered on more pressing issues.

Suffrage for the District of Columbia.

The 1924-25 Program listed "District of Columbia Suffrage: to give the District representation in Congress and the Electoral College, with access to the Supreme Court of the U.S." Since that time the League Program has advocated a constitutional amendment to give national suffrage to citizens of the District. The League supports representation in the Congress but has taken no stand on the number of representatives nor whether the District should have both Senators and Representatives.

In 1938, the item was broadened to authorize support of local as well as federal suffrage. This was a reflection of the growing desire of District citizens for self-government and the increasing burden on Congress in administering the city government. The League position in favor of self-government has not specified the type of local government. (See also Principle 3.)

STATE WORK

Election Laws.

Permanent Registration. Support of an improved system for the registration of legal voters emerged from the League's early study of election laws. Many suffrage leaders felt that the right of women to vote had been almost universally recognized long before the adoption of the constitutional amendment granting such suffrage, but that part of the delay had been caused by faulty election laws and by chicanery.

Registration as a prerequisite for voting on election day had been widely required in the states in order to protect against fraudulent voting. However, upon study the League concluded that many of the provisions of state registration laws were clumsy, expensive and inconvenient to the individual voter. Permanent personal registration, a system under which the voter registers once and does not have to re-register as long as he continues to live at the same address and votes at stated intervals, solves many of these difficulties.

Many state Leagues have worked for a model registration law which provides for business-like procedures in preparing lists of legal voters and keeping them up to date, and for all-year registration at a central office administered by a single responsible official. The signature of a voter when registering and when voting provides a further safeguard. Permanent registration remained on the national Program until 1942 when it was transferred to the Platform. It continues to be a subject of active interest in many states.

Direct Primary. The League actively supported the direct primary for over 20 years, in the interest of securing more qualified people for elective office. The direct primary is an effort to give all voters registered in a party an opportunity to take part in nominations of candidates and party officials. State Leagues were particularly active in resisting attempts to repeal state direct primary laws (many of which had been adopted before the League came into existence).

The Short Ballot. The theory of the short ballot is that by concentrating the voter's attention on a small number of policy-making offices, he will have a better chance of knowing something about the men for whom he is voting and a higher quality of elected public servant will result. The elected officials can then appoint the large number of minor officeholders.

The League supported the short ballot beginning in 1924, and a number of state Leagues worked for constitutional amendments to obtain this goal.

Laws Regarding Political Parties and Campaigns.

The newly enfranchised women recognized quickly that government in practice was inseparable from political parties. For 15 years this was recognized in a study item on the Program.

Corrupt practices legislation, applying to the conduct of political campaigns, was studied intermittently from 1927 to 1934 but no specific recommendations resulted.

Since then, the League's expanding Voters Service work has continued to deal with party organization by distributing information about party structure to voters, and members who do not hold League office have been encouraged to become active in the political party of their choice.

LOCAL WORK

Proportional Representation.

A system which gives each party representation in proportion to the number of votes it receives was of great interest to the early League leaders. Proportional representation was specifically supported by the League beginning in 1936 as part of interest in the city manager plan of local government. Although a number of city Leagues worked first to secure proportional representation, and then defended it against attackers, it did not remain a matter of general League interest.

Home Rule.

Local Leagues have often found efforts to improve local government hamstrung by a lack of local autonomy, and have therefore had to turn their attention to securing a greater degree of home rule for their local government from the state legislature by enabling acts or by constitutional amendment. This has required state League action.

Voting Machines.

State and local Leagues have worked for enabling legislation to permit the use of voting machines and then to secure their adoption.

A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH FIXES RESPONSIBILITY

PRINCIPLE 3: "*A system of government in which responsibility is clearly fixed.*"

This principle evolved from the continuous effort of the League to improve the functioning of representative government.

NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL WORK

The League began supporting the procedure of the *Executive Budget* in 1924, a procedure which was not generally followed at that time. Under the principles of the Executive Budget, the executive of any unit of government should be held responsible for preparing and administering his budget; and the budget should be a complete financial statement for a definite period of time. His budget should give an accurate and understandable statement of the cost of the work to be done, and should be adopted only after an opportunity is given citizens to be heard.

LOCAL WORK

"*Know Your Town*" was one of the early publications of the League and has been used continuously. Almost every local League has made a study of its local government, and since 1946 such a study has been required before a new League could be recognized. As a result there is great interest in improved forms of local government.

The Council-Manager Plan is a form of local government in which responsibility is clearly fixed and which makes possible a combination of non-professional representation and trained officials. The Manager plan was first studied by the League in 1923. It was on the active Program from 1926 to 1942. Many Leagues are still working for a city manager form of government.

A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

PRINCIPLE 4: *"A system of government which promotes coordination of the operations of federal, state, and local governments."*

Coordinated Employment Measures.

This principle represents one aspect of the League's constant interest in making government more efficient, and therefore a better servant of the people. At different times the League has supported: a) A system of federal-state-local unemployment relief, b) Coordinated federal-state employment offices, c) Cooperation in the collection of employment statistics.

Coordination of Tax Systems.

The League has long recognized the difficulties facing independent taxing units. These units—federal, state, and local (with subdivisions under local such as townships, school districts, counties, and cities)—can and often do use the same kinds of taxes. This can result in serious inequities, and often violates the principle of taxation based on ability to pay. These problems led to League support for coordinated federal, state, and local tax systems.

Consolidation of Local Units of Government.

Another item on the Program expressed the League's position on the tax problem from another angle—the development of state and local tax and administrative units large enough for efficiency and economy. Here the problem is to procure local taxing units capable of financing adequately and economically the services they have been expected to perform. Some headway has been made by state and local Leagues in the consolidation of local units of government, but constitutional barriers and local loyalties often hamper reorganization of the structure of government. There has been some success in bringing together local units for specific purposes in fields such as education, health, welfare and recreation.

Improvement of the Budgetary Procedures of Congress.

In 1952 another aspect of congressional procedures became a subject for League work. In response to widespread member interest in methods of increasing economy and efficiency in the federal government, a Program item was formulated calling for improvement of the budgetary procedures of the Congress. A good deal of intensive study went on in local Leagues, but the only legislative action taken was an open letter to the Congress, calling for further coordination and simplification of congressional budgetary methods. In 1954 the Convention moved this item to the area of "Continuing Responsibilities."

STATE WORK

Reorganization of State Government.

This subject first appeared on the League Program in 1923. Many measures for making state government more efficient have been tried since then, but new problems, new functions and expanding services constantly demand examination of administrative procedures. Streamlining state government structure and procedures is therefore a perennial on state League programs.

In the process of working for legislative objectives, League members inevitably became aware of the need for improvement in legislative procedures. Leagues have worked on such diverse items as electric voting, simplified committee procedures, length and frequency of sessions, and measures designed to eliminate chicanery in the handling of bills. The job is never finished, and this subject continues to appear on state programs.

State Constitutional Revision.

In whatever area of state government Leagues undertake to work, sooner or later they find themselves faced with constitutional handicaps. Many state constitutions are incredibly long and outdated, and contain a great deal of minute detail which should not be incorporated in a state's basic instrument of government. The gigantic task of working for the rewriting or substantial amendment of state constitutions has been forced on a good many state Leagues. The desire for home rule for local government has been one of the reasons for interest in constitutional revision in numerous state Leagues. In terms of both the importance of the goal and the number of woman-hours expended, it may well have been the most significant area of state League activity during the 1940's and 1950's.

LOCAL WORK

Reorganization of County Government.

Constitutional difficulties usually appear when any attempt is made to modernize county government. Because of the listing of elective county officials in many state constitutions, the most needed reforms—the shortening of the ballot to concentrate public interest on the election of a few policy-determining officials, and giving executive power to a single administrator—are difficult to secure. County government reorganization first appeared on the support Program in 1932, but progress has been slow.

The problem is complicated in several states by the division of counties into township governments each with its own set of officials to be elected. The governmental unit may be too small to finance adequately or administer properly the public services it is expected to provide. School districts and their attendant problems must be reckoned with, too. Reorganization of county government remains active.

THE MERIT SYSTEM

PRINCIPLE 6: *“A merit system for the selection, retention and promotion of governmental personnel.”*

NATIONAL

The merit system, as a means of staffing government with qualified people, has been a major League interest almost from the beginning. When the Convention voted, in 1934, to concentrate on two issues of paramount importance to the country, the merit system was one of them. The Convention pointed to the waste in every unit of government and the menace to every needed public service caused by the spoils system, and went on to pledge united and continued effort to improve the standards of government service.

The merit system campaign probably reached more people than any League effort up to that time. Contests resulted in such slogans as “Find the Man for the Job, not the Job for the Man,” “Democracy Needs its Ablest Citizens” and “Good Government is Good Politics.” Half a million petition cards asking that the merit system replace

the spoils system were presented to national party conventions. Pamphlets and leaflets on the subject were distributed in greater numbers than ever before. The League initiated "Public Personnel Day" with a national radio hookup and held hundreds of simultaneous League meetings. Due at least in part to the League's efforts, the use of the merit system in the federal government was considerably extended by the Ramspeck Act of 1940.

STATE AND LOCAL

Even before the big national push on the merit system, state Leagues had been busy in the field. For example, as early as 1924 one state was advocating a merit system, and by 1931 the subject appeared on eight state programs.

As a result of the merit system campaign of 1934, local and state Leagues achieved real effectiveness in improving state and town personnel practices, in supporting and improving systems already in effect in some states, and in establishing new systems in others.

The merit system campaign came at a time when the social security program based on federal-state cooperation was being rapidly developed under the compulsion of the depression. Every state was confronted with the problem of securing qualified employees and setting up personnel procedures acceptable to the Federal Social Security Board. The state Leagues almost without exception took this opportunity to advance the principles of the merit system.

Although work on the merit system was concentrated in the years between 1934 and 1942, it continues to be a matter of interest to the League, particularly in relation to state and local governments. The emphasis has now changed to include not only protection against political raids but also improved systems of promotion, transfer, dismissal, training and so forth, in the never-ending effort to make government more efficient.

IV. CITIZENS' RIGHTS

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

PRINCIPLE 7: *"Legal protection of citizens in their right to vote."*

Since voting laws are the responsibility of the states there is no national work under this principle.

STATE WORK

Abolition of the Poll Tax.

State Leagues in four southern states have worked to abolish the poll tax as a prerequisite to voting. Georgia abolished the tax in 1945 and Tennessee in 1951. Virginia and Alabama, where the League has also opposed the poll tax, still have it.

Absentee Voting.

State Leagues have worked on requirements for absentee voting.

RIGHTS OF MINORITIES

PRINCIPLE 9: *"Protection of minority groups against discrimination."*

NATIONAL AND STATE WORK

Fair Employment Practices.

The League of Women Voters has not taken action on federal proposals to enact fair employment practices laws. It has consistently taken the position that if such laws are necessary they should be enacted by the states. Several state Leagues have worked for state fair employment legislation, when they judged such legislation to be feasible.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN

PRINCIPLE 10: *"Removal of legal and administrative discriminations against women."*

During the women's rights movement, "equal rights" was a general term understood to mean that women wanted an opportunity for education, choice of work, the management of their own affairs, and the vote. With women playing an increasingly active role the question arose: "How can men and women, in some respects similar, in some respects dissimilar, be treated equally?" Society has always considered the differences between the sexes in the making and application of laws, and the League believes it must continue to do so. Differences in law are not necessarily discrimination against women; in some cases there is discrimination in

their favor. The League adopted the philosophy that equality for women could best be achieved step by step through attack on specific instances of inequality.

NATIONAL WORK

The Equal Rights Amendment.

In 1921, the League undertook a study of the possibility of amending the Constitution to establish the equality of men and women under law. The following year the Convention concluded that such an amendment would be unwise because it would not solve the problem of discrimination and might create new problems. Each specific discrimination would have to be considered and acted upon separately even if a "blanket" amendment should be adopted. From 1923 to 1954 opposition to the so-called "Equal Rights Amendment," which has been continuously before Congress in one form or another, appeared on the League Program.

Equal Status in Federal Measures.

The League contributed to the effort to establish the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor. The Cable Act giving independent citizenship to married women was enacted by Congress in 1922, with strong League backing. The League also supported both the provisions for equality for women in the federal Civil Service Classifications Act which were enacted in 1923, and the removal of discriminations against women in immigration and naturalization laws, as well as federal bills for equal pay for equal work.

Federal Jury Service.

In 1937 the League supported a bill permitting women to serve on federal juries even though state laws might discriminate against them.

STATE AND LOCAL WORK

Equal Status in State and Local Matters.

The League has worked to eliminate discriminations against women wherever they can be corrected by law, which is principally in the states. Achievements on behalf of the legal status of women through changes in state laws supported by state Leagues are too numerous to mention specifically. After the first two years of League work, 60 measures in 28 states had been enacted, in large part because of the work of the League. This activity continued

over the years until most of the glaring inequalities were corrected. Here and there state Leagues still find it necessary to work for the abolition of a lingering legal discrimination against women.

Vice-repressive laws which would not discriminate against women were an early interest. Jury service for women, equal treatment of women offenders in the courts, legal equality in property rights, as well as removal of discriminations against women gainfully employed, married women teachers, and women in public life were subjects upon which state and local Leagues worked vigorously. Active work on jury service for women continues. Texas achieved it in 1954 and other states are still working for it.

Equal Pay for Equal Work.

The effort to establish the principle of equal pay for equal work began with the first League Program. Innumerable League studies were made over the years on the status of working women. In 1935, a study was begun of employment opportunities for women, married and single. Some of this interest stemmed from a tendency during the depression to discriminate against married women.

The national League office did useful work in this area in connection with the codes set up under the National Recovery Act in 1933. Once they were formulated, the codes were checked carefully for sections on child labor and women's wages. The League opposed a lower minimum wage for women on the basis that wages should be set according to the job to be done, not the sex of the worker.

V. TAXATION AND MONETARY POLICIES

TAXATION

PRINCIPLE 11: *"A system of federal, state, and local taxation which is flexible and equitable."*

Federal Tax Activities.

For many years League interest in taxation sprang from a desire to secure adequate revenue for services in which it had become interested. One of the earliest items was: "Reform of tax systems to provide adequate revenue for

essential services through an equitable distribution of the tax burden." The League position was one of support for a system of progressive taxation based on ability to pay. During the depression years, the League found the two most practical services it could perform were first, to support adequate funds for essential services and second, to support measures which would increase governmental economy and efficiency.

Then came World War II with its tremendous expenses and steadily rising national debt. This led to extended coverage and higher rates of federal taxation in an effort to finance the war as far as possible on a pay-as-you-go basis. The tax power was also used to drain off income that otherwise could be spent in competing for scarce goods and so increasing the danger of inflation. By 1944 the League program emphasized the need for "a war and post-war finance program based as far as possible on tax revenues which take into account control of inflation, fair distribution of the tax burden and minimizing postwar dislocations."

After 1950 there was no tax item as such on the national Program, but that the League was still trying to promote understanding of the problem was shown by the item: "A continued analysis of the federal budget and support of such fiscal measures as make for a stable and expanding domestic economy." (See Principles 12 and 5.)

Federal Tax Limitation.

As the magnitude of federal expenditures increased, a movement began in several states to initiate a constitutional amendment which would prevent the federal government from levying an income tax of more than 25 per cent on any individual income. From its long background of support for the principle of progressive taxation based on ability to pay, and believing that such restrictions should not be frozen into the Constitution, the League decided, in 1953, to oppose this movement.

Sales Taxes.

A number of Leagues have opposed state and local sales taxes because they bear most heavily on those least able to pay, and because of the difficulty of administering them. In recent years, however, some Leagues have supported a sales tax, with exemptions for necessities, when it seemed the only way to provide badly needed services.

FISCAL AND MONETARY POLICIES

PRINCIPLE 12: *"Fiscal and monetary policies that promote a stable and expanding economy."*

The National Economy.

League members were not eager to get into the more technical economic fields of taxation, budget management, monetary policies in relation to the business cycle, regulation of price movements, and so on. However, the pressing importance of these matters to citizens during the depression, World War II, the postwar recovery and the Korean War forced study of these subjects by the League and led to some limited action. The problem of general unemployment which claimed attention in the '30s was seen to be inevitably related to government fiscal and monetary policies. World War II inflation brought a different set of problems, and threatened a disastrous reaction at the end of that war. The League threw its influence behind measures intended to moderate the ill effects of the war economy. It supported direct control of prices, rationing, increased taxes—with collection at the source—and the encouragement of individual purchases of savings bonds: all anti-inflationary measures. When inflation was resumed with the outbreak of the Korean War, League action was confined to the support of fiscal measures directed toward stabilizing the economy: the achievement and maintenance of a balanced federal budget and the regulation of installment credit.

Budgetary Problems.

The study of fiscal policy leads naturally to an examination of the budget itself (an active item from 1948 to 1952) and this to a study of the procedures by which Congress enacts the budget, including the provision of funds to meet programs authorized. This study of congressional budgetary procedures was on the Program 1952-54 and while it did not lead to the active support of any legislation, it did bring a better understanding of the complexities of the problem and the dilemma of the individual Congressman in relation to it. (See pages 11 and 14.) This study had a background in the work done by the League on taxation and the concern of state and local Leagues with state and local budgets. (See Principle 5.)

FINANCING GOVERNMENT SERVICES

PRINCIPLE 14: *"Adequate financing of government functions and services."*

Federal Appropriations.

It is one of the characteristics of League activity that the passage of a law is not the signal for an end to effort. The League customarily goes on to support adequate appropriations to carry out the purpose of the law. In the early days, for example, the League was continually working for adequate funds for the Women's Bureau, the Children's Bureau, the vocational education parts of the Department of Agriculture, etc. In recent years the same pattern has appeared with respect to such things as the European Recovery Program and the Technical Assistance Program, when the League has first supported enabling legislation, and then returned to the subject annually when appropriations were under consideration.

State and Local Appropriations.

The same principle has been followed in state and local work. The concern for adequate appropriations has stimulated local Leagues to a study of budgets, attendance at budget hearings and a constant analysis of expenditures for essential services. This in turn has necessitated re-examination of the services themselves to determine which are essential. (Principles 14, 11, and 13 are closely related.)

VI. GOVERNMENT SERVICES

EDUCATION

PRINCIPLE 8: *"A system of free public education which provides equal opportunity for all."*

The League's long-term interest in education has been concerned with the relationship of government to and the responsibility of government for public education. The League's assumption has been that the public has a responsibility to provide grade school and high school education for all children equally. The League has believed that matters of curriculum should be left in the hands of qualified professional educators while the citizens' responsibility for public education should be demonstrated primarily in relation to such matters as appropriations, sound school laws, improved systems of organization, personnel and finance.

Federal Aid to Education.

For many years the League supported appropriations for the Office of Education and declared itself in favor of a full-fledged Department of Education in the federal government. Support for the use of federal funds to supplement local and state appropriations emerged after several years of study. In 1944, the Convention voted to support federal grants to equalize educational opportunities in the states with the provision that there should be safeguards written into the law to insure state administrative control. The League gave active support to this proposition until 1949. Federal aid to education as supported by the League was never enacted.

State Educational Work.

State Leagues have worked for equalization of educational opportunity through scientific apportionment of state school funds and improvement of state requirements for teacher training. There has been wide activity in regard to state laws, state Boards and Departments of Education, State Teachers Colleges, appropriations, finance and organization, including regional consolidation of schools.

Local Educational Work.

Local Leagues are continually working for adequate school appropriations, as well as for better school laws, improved systems of organization, qualified nonpartisan school boards, better salary schedules and personnel practices, additional school buildings, redistricting and consolidation, adult education programs, vocational education, kindergartens, free textbooks and library appropriations. The subject of education has absorbed a vast amount of League attention from the beginning, and shows no sign of diminishing as one of the major areas of interest.

GOVERNMENT AND THE GENERAL WELFARE

PRINCIPLE 13: *"Responsibility of government to share in the solution of social and economic problems which affect the general welfare."*

This principle evolved as League members became interested in correcting certain social and economic ills and began to think in terms of using government to help solve problems which affected the American people as a whole. The specific areas of League interest developed through the years as members examined proposals, worked for legislation and observed the administration of social welfare legislation.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN NATIONAL WORK

Child Welfare and the Children's Bureau.

The problem of children, their health, care, education and opportunities for well-rounded citizenship were of early and great concern to the League. The first step was to discover the extent to which children were being protected and cared for by the government and then to attempt to secure more adequate protection where it was needed. A successful early project was support for the Children's Bureau; the League worked repeatedly to see that it was given adequate appropriations.

Maternal and Child Health.

The League was concerned by the high rate of mortality of mothers and infants in the United States. The medical profession claimed that most deaths of infants and mothers in childbirth could be prevented. The League gave long and ardent support to the Sheppard-Towner Act for public protection of maternity and infancy and urged that administration of the law be vested in the Children's Bureau. The Act became law in 1921 and remains on the record as a major League achievement.

In 1934 the League worked for the inclusion of a maternal and child health program in the Social Security bill.

STATE AND LOCAL WORK

After the passage of the Sheppard-Towner bill in 1921, state Leagues worked to see that its provisions were carried out. A reduction in the death rate in childbirth gave a real sense of accomplishment. However, during the depression the state programs suffered and some local Leagues began to study the county health unit in relation to maternal and child health.

Child Labor.

NATIONAL WORK

In the '20s and early '30s League members were concerned about the large number of young children still employed in industry, "at unfit ages, for unreasonable hours, under unhealthful conditions." In 1920 the League had come out for a child labor law for the District of Columbia. One of the major League efforts in the early

years was support of a Child Labor Amendment to the federal Constitution. Such an amendment passed the Congress in 1924. In 1938 the child labor provisions of the Wages and Hours Act were supported.

STATE WORK

With the passage of the Child Labor Amendment by Congress, great effort was made to get it ratified by the states. The Amendment never received the requisite number of ratifications.

In addition to the work for a federal amendment, League members made studies of the effectiveness of state administration of child labor laws, the percentage of children of 14 and 15 years of age in school and the status of children unprotected by state laws. By 1930, 22 measures to limit working hours had been enacted with League support in 16 states. In succeeding years, state Leagues urged the enforcement of school attendance laws and the raising of the age of compulsory school attendance to 16 years. Proper physical examination of children entering employment and physical education in the public schools were also objectives.

Dependent and Neglected Children.

NATIONAL WORK

The Social Security Act of 1935, the maternal and child health sections of which the League supported, authorized annual federal appropriations to the states for aid to dependent children. Four years later, the League successfully supported an amendment to the Act to increase federal grants to the states for aid to dependent children on a fifty-fifty matching basis.

STATE AND LOCAL WORK

The recognition of dependent and neglected children as a social responsibility led League members into an examination of their status. They studied proposals for mothers' pensions, institutional care and home placing, and investigated state supervision and local administration of child care agencies. By 1930, 23 state Leagues had seen the enactment of 39 measures for dependent, neglected and handicapped children.

Delinquent Children.

STATE AND LOCAL WORK

The League also concerned itself with the problems of delinquent children. Its studies were concentrated on prevention of delinquency and on juvenile courts as treatment agencies. During the '30s the scope of the work was enlarged to appraise the efforts of visiting teachers, attendance officers and policewomen. With the passage of the Social Security Law, grants-in-aid were available to the states for the protection of children in danger of becoming delinquent.

Leagues devoted time and effort to the establishment of juvenile or children's courts for the purpose of giving individualized treatment to young offenders against the law. During the succeeding years the League urged suitable guardianship of dependent, neglected or delinquent children through welfare agencies or juvenile court procedure. A number of Leagues have worked for children's codes.

Crippled, Defective, and Illegitimate Children.

The concern with child welfare included an interest in crippled, defective and illegitimate children. At an early stage the League began to consider scientific preventive programs for defectives and appropriations necessary for treatment in institutions. Later studies included socially handicapped children, children born out of wedlock, and those hindered by poor living conditions. The Social Security Act aided crippled children and enabled the states to extend their help to rural areas.

Social Measures for the Protection of Women.

NATIONAL WORK

The fact that social hygiene was among the original responsibilities assumed by the League was a natural outgrowth of the close relationship between the early suffrage movement and the awakening demand of women for an equal moral standard. The early programs in this field maintained the principle of equal justice to the sexes under the law and emphasized the social, moral and public health aspects of social hygiene.

In 1921 the League supported the formation of the Inter-departmental Social Hygiene Board (a Board made up of Cabinet members and public officials to attack the problem of venereal disease), protective homes for working girls, reformatory farms for men, women and adolescents and free medical treatment and clinics for venereal diseases. Later studies explored criminal court procedures, education in social hygiene, venereal disease control, probation systems, penal institutions and sterilization of defectives.

STATE WORK

Many Leagues studied the vice control laws of their states.

HOUSING NATIONAL

Housing and Slum Clearance.

League interest in housing began as a concern over living costs and whether housing costs could be reduced without lowering quality standards. The work of the local Leagues in other areas, such as the relationship between juvenile delinquency and overcrowded slum dwellings, emphasized the price that society was paying for poor housing. Study of unemployment relief and the housing costs of those in low income brackets aroused deep interest in this field.

During the depression the large relief expenditures focused public attention on the high cost of rent in slum areas and the cost to society of maintaining such areas. Surveys revealed that policing, fighting fires and maintaining inhabitants of slums in hospitals and houses of correction cost the taxpayer far more than comparable services to other sections of the city. There was a shortage of dwellings due to the lag in home building during previous decades and, in 1934, the League began the study of housing as part of the public works program.

The League did not undertake to reach conclusions on the technical aspects of a government housing program, such as rent subsidies and methods of financing loans for capital investments. In the '40s, however, it did support the bipartisan Taft-Ellender-Wagner Housing bills, on the assumption that a sound housing program would help to minimize postwar economic dislocations. Among other features, these bills provided for loans and grants to communities for slum clearance and urban redevelopment projects; federal contributions and loans for low-rent public housing; long-term insured loans for low-cost homes; lower down payments; insured loans to builders; aids for rental and rural housing and housing research. A modified version became law in 1949.

LOCAL

Housing and City Planning.

As the League studied housing and slum conditions, the relationship between good housing and better cities became more apparent. Planned growth and development of large urban communities with the gradual elimination of slums and substandard dwellings aroused the interest of a number of local Leagues. The importance of city planning with community participation became recognized as a way to attack the blight of the slums that had already affected large areas of many cities. Interest in zoning and city planning has increased rapidly and has formed the basis for a number of items on local League programs.

INDUSTRY

Collective Bargaining.

The principle of collective bargaining was originally supported by the League as a means of improving the pay, hours and working conditions of women and the item appeared in almost all League Programs from 1920 until 1936. In later years this item was redefined to apply to all, not just to women. It came to read: "Laws guaranteeing the right to bargain collectively."

Hours and Wages.

In working to improve the conditions of women in industry, the League has supported minimum wage laws as well as other protective legislation. Goals included wages based on occupation and not sex, a shorter working week, the prohibition of night work for women, factory inspection and the establishment of vocational education for working girls.

State Leagues were active in support of mandatory minimum wages fixed by a state commission and adequate enforcement of labor laws. By 1930, with League support, six laws had been enacted in five states on minimum wages, 12 laws in nine states on shorter hours, two states had prohibited night work and three states were improving the enforcement of labor laws. In the following years with the general establishment of shorter hours and improved working conditions, state Leagues gave special attention to implementation of regulations in certain industries where extremely low wages still prevailed.

Unemployment Insurance.

In 1923 the League began a study of unemployment, based on the Report of the Committee on the Business Cycle which had emerged from the President's Conference on Unemployment. Proposals for unemployment insurance were examined. From 1929 to 1934 unemployment was a major national problem. Numerous proposals to stabilize industry through regulations were made but it was recognized that there were many underlying causes for unemployment and that no one solution was the answer.

Beginning in 1938 the League supported the principle of compulsory unemployment compensation and supported the principles of the Social Security Act providing for state administration with federal cooperation.

Relief.

During the depression the concept of relief changed. Formerly relief had been financed by private charity and local government. However, the vast number of unemployed during the depression exhausted state and local funds. The League urged the establishment of direct relief by federal as well as state and local authorities, and supported the Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Act of 1932. With the passage of the Act, the federal government accepted responsibility for unemployment problems on a national scale.

In 1934 the League supported federal stimulation and cooperation in a compulsory unemployment insurance program established and administered by individual states in accordance with federal standards. In the ensuing years, relief was recognized as a long-time concern with coordinated responsibility exercised by federal, state, and local governments.

In later programs, the League supported extension of the social insurance program to include additional groups of workers. Proposals for the expansion of the social security program in the fields of health, medical care and old age coverage were examined. Because of the postwar dislocation of workers and their movement across state lines, the League supported the nationalization of unemployment compensation in an effort to get a more uniform and equitable program.

Old Age Assistance and Old Age Insurance.

The depression brought with it fears that were to outlast the emergency, among them the fear of dependency in old age. In 1934 the principal of state old age pensions received League support. The Social Security Act of 1935 contained provisions for supplementing old age benefits paid by the states. In 1936 the League added support for federal old age assistance to its Program. Previously, about 28 states had had various types of pension laws and after the passage of the social security legislation, state Leagues worked to bring their old age benefits up to the national standards.

Public Employment Offices.

The first League Convention in 1920 was concerned with public employment agencies where women might have equal opportunities for employment. The League worked for adequate funds for the Federal Employment Service and supported the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 for the establishment of public employment offices.

THE CONSUMER

Food Supply and Regulation of Some Key Industries.

NATIONAL WORK

League interest in consumer problems stemmed from the inflation following World War I. The 1920 Convention called for federal and state laws to prevent food profiteering and hoarding. Disturbed about the high cost of living, the League's Food Supply and Demand Committee urged better distribution of food and increased agricultural production to aid in lowering food costs. The League supported the Kenyon-Kendrick-Anderson bills for the regulation of the meat packing industry, and began to work for increased production of fertilizer, an interest which eventually led to the work connected with the Tennessee Valley Authority (see page 32). The League was among the organizations working to remove the federal tax on colored oleomargarine.

STATE WORK

As part of the over-all League effort in the '20s to increase the food supply, state Leagues worked for public markets, abattoirs, milk depots, and other terminal facilities. They also worked for laws favoring the organization and use of cooperatives. In the late '30s and '40s the League worked to remove state taxes on oleomargarine.

Commissions to Protect Consumers.

For some years the League supported the Federal Trade Commission and opposed efforts to reduce its powers. The need for education in consumer problems was recognized and support was given to the Fess bill for vocational education in home economics. Interest in consumer costs led to support for the establishment of a U.S. Coal Commission and the Act to Prohibit the Shipment of Filled Milk in Interstate Commerce.

The Pure Food and Drug Act.

The effort in the '30s to improve the Pure Food and Drug law aroused great enthusiasm among League members. The original Act, passed in 1906, constituted a legislative landmark but it had many inadequacies. It was the first federal effort to control the purity of food products and to enforce correct labeling of drugs. The Act did not cover misleading and extravagant advertising nor did it apply to cosmetics. There was no requirement for grade labeling or quality rating on foods.

During the '30s the League expended great effort to arouse interest and support for a new food and drug law that would establish grade labeling and quality standards. The Food, Drug and Cosmetic law of 1938, which passed with League support, was a forward step in consumer protection.

The Tariff and Interstate Trade Barriers.

As early as 1924 the League began to study the relation between tariff barriers and living costs. The League soon began to recognize the necessity for free movement of goods between states. It was also apparent that trade barriers tended to increase the cost of food. This led to League opposition to interstate trade barriers as well as to the more prolonged work to reduce international trade barriers.

THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

PRINCIPLE 15: *"Conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest."*

Tennessee Valley Authority.

Living costs after World War I served indirectly to draw League members into problems of conservation. Early studies had revealed a shortage of fertilizer affecting agricultural output, and forcing the consumer to pay a higher price for food. As an aftermath of the war, the U.S. government had on its hands the great Muscle Shoals project, capable of producing fertilizer, chemicals and electricity. The League became interested in the possibilities of this project.

League members urged that the government take steps to increase the production of nitrates and fertilizers and in 1924 supported the idea that Muscle Shoals should be completed and utilized under conditions that would best safeguard the public interest. As League studies proceeded, it was recognized that Muscle Shoals could become a project to conserve the natural resources of a great valley, to produce and bring electrical power to an area still in the age of lamplight, to control erosion and waste caused by unchecked annual floods.

In the ensuing years the League urged that Muscle Shoals be developed to produce electrical power as well as chemicals and fertilizers and that the people's interest in the area be preserved. In 1928 the bill to establish the Tennessee Valley Authority was supported by the League. During the campaign the League stressed the fact that it was not taking a stand on the general question of government production and distribution of power, but was supporting this particular project with the idea that it would provide a yardstick for measuring the cost to consumers of privately produced power.

Administrative Proposals.

In the work on conservation, League members were concerned with the depletion of natural resources. Overlapping agency functions, established by law, as well as conflicting authority and rivalries among governmental agencies charged with conservation duties, were contributing to the waste of many valuable assets. League members believed that good conservation practices depended, at least in part, upon good administrative practices by the governmental agencies involved.

The recommendations of the first Hoover Commission in the field of conservation were therefore of great interest to League members. In 1950 this item was put on the Current Agenda: "Reorganization measures to improve administrative efficiency in the development and use of natural resources." Because of the outbreak of the Korean War and the subsequent inflation, this item received less attention from the members than the others on the Current Agenda. Though studies were made of administrative problems connected with federal conservation of natural resources, no legislative action was taken. In 1952, the item was not returned to the Current Agenda, nor was it included among Continuing Responsibilities, because it had not been given sustained attention.

VII. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ORGANIZATION

PRINCIPLE 17: *"Cooperation with other nations in solving international problems."*

PRINCIPLE 18: *"Development of international organization and international law to achieve permanent means of cooperation."*

All League action in the international field is based on the premise that the nations and peoples of the modern world are interdependent and that our national security and prosperity depend on cooperation with other nations. Acceptance of these principles developed through years of study of the causes of wars and participation by League members in the heated controversies over foreign policy which followed both World Wars.

As early as 1923 the League took the stand that isolation was neither possible nor desirable for the United States and that citizens should unite without regard to party affiliation in support of every constructive effort toward permanent world organization for peace. It was not until 1932 that the Convention voted to support United States membership in the League of Nations. The general League position has been to favor international organization on a worldwide basis to include peoples of all races, religions and political persuasions. However, regional organization has also been supported as a step toward a more universal security system.

The League has continually advocated the extension of international law and cooperation with other nations to discriminate against nations which break the law. The League has followed two general lines of thought. One is the need for collective defense measures to stop aggression. The second is the need for collective action to reduce friction in the world by promoting economic and social justice. It has also emphasized the need for citizens to be informed on international affairs and to understand how U.S. foreign policy is conducted, its constitutional foundations, and the respective roles of the executive and legislative branches of the national government.

The Development of International Law.

The League of Women Voters was born in the isolationist period following World War I. There were only three areas then where it seemed possible for the United States to cooperate in strengthening the new peace machinery. Work concentrated on disarmament proposals, the strengthening of the inter-American peace machinery and the development of international law. "Support for measures providing for the progressive codification of international law" was on the Program continuously from 1925 through 1936.

The World Court. Support for U.S. membership in the permanent *Court of International Justice* was a major activity from 1923 to 1935. Under the slogan "Law not War," League members worked zealously. The World Court was considered the best existing application of the principle of law as opposed to force in the settlement of international disputes. The League supported acceptance by the United States of compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice over disputes to which the United States was a party.

Pan-American Affairs: Arbitration and Conciliation. Inter-American economic, political and cultural cooperation including the development of the Pan-American peace system, was a continuing League interest from 1920 to 1942. Support for the settlement of disputes by arbitration, conciliation and judicial settlement was expressed in work for the adoption of the Pan-American Arbitration and Conciliation Treaties in 1929-30.

The Pact of Paris and the Outlawing of War. The 1923 Program pledged the League to work for a code of international procedures by which war should be declared a crime and outlawed as such. The League worked for U.S. ratification of the Pact of Paris, better known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the signatories of which renounced war as an instrument of national policy. The Pact served a useful function in linking the United States to the efforts which other nations were making to discriminate against treaty-breaking nations. The League along with other organizations worked unsuccessfully to implement the Pact. First it supported cooperation with the League of Nations in matters pertaining to the Pact. Later it advocated automatic consultation and concerted action against violators.

Limitation of Armaments.

Disarmament. The first action the League took concerning international relations came when its second Convention (1921) appointed a delegation to present a resolution to President Harding, urging that the President and Congress initiate a movement to secure cooperation with other governments for the reduction of arms. The following autumn, while the Washington Naval Conference for the Limitation of Armaments was in session, the League made constant efforts to get favorable expressions of public opinion and then supported the ratification of the Washington Naval Treaty which resulted. The League worked for U.S. participation in all disarmament conferences held between 1921 and 1936 and supported the resulting treaties.

Control of Munitions. Following World War I much emphasis was put on the munitions traffic as a foment of wars. Bringing this traffic into the open by getting the nations to agree to a set of regulations to control these "merchants of death" was seen as a possible solution. International control of arms was attempted in the Geneva Arms Treaty of 1925 which was not ratified by the United States until 1935.

From 1933 to 1940 the League advocated "international agreements controlling the manufacture and shipment of arms." The League supported congressional investigations into the munitions industries and the establishment of a national munitions control board as provided in the Neutrality Act of 1935. These activities were the forerunners of the League work to control atomic energy in 1946.

Steps Toward a Collective Security System.

Early League support for the widening of international law and the promotion of arms control laid the foundation for later work in the field of collective security.

League of Nations. Public controversy over the League of Nations was reflected in the attitude of the League of Women Voters. The subject remained on the study program for a decade.

In 1932 the Convention took the decisive step of voting to support U.S. membership in the League of Nations. The League of Women Voters thus took a firm position in support of the establishment of a collective security system founded on law with provision for the enforcement of the law by international action.

Neutrality Legislation. The League of Women Voters opposed the principle, embodied in the Neutrality Acts of 1935, 1936 and 1937, that the United States should treat all belligerent nations alike. As supporters of the principle of collective security, League members thought the United States should discriminate against aggressors. By 1938 the Convention was ready to take a strong stand for "amendment of the Neutrality Act of 1937 to provide, at the discretion of the President, for embargoes on essential war materials and to provide for the application of all embargoes in cooperation with other signatories against those belligerent nations which have violated treaties to which the United States is also a signatory." The 1939 Council went still further and supported embargoes on loans and credits to belligerents who had violated treaties. In 1939 the League also supported the bill which established the "cash and carry" principle for the sale of munitions to belligerents. In 1941 it came out for outright repeal of the Neutrality Act.

Lend-Lease. The high tide of isolationist sentiment in the United States was reached during the "phony war" of 1939-40. When Hitler invaded western Europe in the spring of 1940, public opinion changed rapidly, and in the fall Congress passed the Selective Service Act. On the heels of this came the proposal to aid the victims of aggression, known as the "Lend-Lease Act." The sharp differences of opinion as to whether this was a wise policy were reflected among League members, but the theory of the Lend-Lease Act—that the nations which were fighting Hitler were reducing a threat to the United States—won out. The League supported the Lend-Lease bill and contributed to the passage of the final law

"Battle of Production" and "Wartime Service." In 1941 the League carried on a public campaign to point up the need for increasing the nation's defense effort so that goods could be produced rapidly enough to enable the victims of aggression to survive. This campaign to increase public understanding of defense policy was an experiment in popular citizen education. It was the forerunner of the League's "Wartime Service" for carrying information about government to the public.

The United Nations.

Having once come to the conclusion that a collective peace system was essential, the League never lost sight of that goal. Part of the "Wartime Service" was to prepare for world-wide reconstruction. In 1943, a "Stop Isolation" campaign was carried out. The League strongly backed a congressional resolution which called for the establishment of an international organization to which the United States would belong. Throughout the war the League supported "membership of the United States in a general international organization eventually to include all peoples, regardless of race, religion, or political persuasion, for the peaceful settlement of disputes, with power to prevent or stop aggression."

The Dumbarton Oaks proposals for the establishment of the United Nations became the focal point for the most intensive nation-wide effort ever undertaken by the League. Countless meetings were held and over a million pieces of popularly-worded literature were distributed. In 1945 the League supported U.S. ratification of the U.N. Charter.

Since then, the League has continuously advocated a foreign policy based on support of the United Nations, and U.S. leadership to strengthen the U.N. Specifically, the League has supported increased use of the U.N. and its specialized agencies, adequate budgets, improved procedure, and provision of adequate power to keep the peace. The League supported the U.N. Participation Act in 1945, and the U.N. Headquarters Loan in 1948.

Understanding the United Nations. In 1948-49 the League carried on an intensive information program to build understanding of the United Nations among the American people. The Charter was examined to appraise the accomplishments of the U.N. and its potentialities, including possible ways of strengthening it within the framework of the Charter.

Economic and Social Cooperation.

The International Labor Organization. The League supported U.S. membership in the ILO on the grounds that all nations should work together to establish standards for wages and hours and conditions of work. In 1938 the League worked for ratification of the maritime conventions negotiated by the ILO. This activity was the forerunner of later support for membership in the U.N. specialized agencies.

U.N. Specialized Agencies. The League has emphasized the need for the United Nations to assume broad responsibility not only to prevent the use of force, but also to do away with the underlying causes of war by cooperation in the solution of economic and social problems. To this end the League supported U.S. membership in a number of the U.N. specialized agencies and stands for continued cooperation with them.

Bretton Woods Agreements. The League was especially active in work for U.S. membership in those specialized agencies designed to promote a prosperous and stable world economy. It worked for U.S. membership in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund for currency stabilization.

Anglo-American Financial Agreement. In 1946 the League supported the British Loan as being necessary to make the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank effective. It was hoped that the loan would help reduce currency restrictions and thereby contribute to the expansion of world trade, to the benefit of both our own economy and the new economic agencies of the U.N.

The International Trade Organization. The League advocated international machinery to settle trade disputes in the common interest and agree upon just trade practices. Members made a painstaking study of the proposed International Trade Organization and from 1948 to 1950 worked earnestly, but without success, for United States support for its establishment.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The United States joined in a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1948 through an executive agreement negotiated under the authority of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. The League supported this membership.

Postwar Reconstruction.

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. In 1942, while World War II was still raging, League members became concerned about the necessity for plans and machinery for a world-wide effort for relief and the reconstruction of the economies of the war-torn nations. They soon recognized that assistance in the form of loans and grants from the U.S. and other nations would be needed. UNRRA was supported from its inception, and for several years the League worked for its appropriations and to maintain the international character of its work.

Famine Relief. The League recognized that a return to world stability also required the prevention of starvation. Members worked to reduce food consumption at home and supported grants to send food overseas. At the same time rationing was supported to insure a fair distribution of the remaining domestic supply.

Displaced Persons. The controversy over the fate of millions of displaced persons who were casualties of World War II presented a human and political problem of major proportions. In 1946 the League of Women Voters supported legislation to provide for the admission of a fair share of displaced persons to the United States. The League felt that the law passed in 1948 was unsatisfactory and discriminatory, and it supported liberalizing amendments in 1949 and 1950.

European Recovery Program. By 1947 it had become clear that the war destruction had been underestimated and that a long-range program of assistance was required if European civilization was to survive. Though continually emphasizing that the United States should base its foreign policy on support of the United Nations, the League recognized that there were practical as well as political reasons for independent action by the United States. Members worked ardently for the initial adoption of the European Recovery Program and then annually for its support through adequate appropriations until its successful termination in 1951.

Mutual Security Program. In 1951, as the cold war was intensified, all United States economic and military aid to its allies was combined under the Mutual Security Act. The League supported the Act's provision for defense support and military aid to Europe to strengthen NATO, but took no position on military aid to other regions. The League's greatest interest was concentrated on the provisions for

economic aid and technical assistance to underdeveloped countries. The League worked, against strong opposition, for adequate appropriations for the Mutual Security Program in 1951 and 1952. (See Regional Agreements.)

International Economic Development and Technical Assistance, 1950-54.

Economic advancement in the underdeveloped countries was emphasized by the League from 1950 to 1954 as a primary necessity for world economic stability and to strengthen the economic and military defenses of the nations of the free world.

United States Technical Assistance. The League supported the U.S. program for assistance to underdeveloped countries as essential both to world security and to the expansion of world trade. In 1953 when reorganization and economy measures threatened to curtail the program, the League pointed out its long-range value in helping underdeveloped countries to solve their own problems and urged that the Technical Assistance Program should not be subordinated to other assistance programs designed to serve immediate political objectives. The League has continued to support substantial appropriations, including development funds to make the best use of technical assistance.

United Nations Technical Assistance. Since 1951 the League has strongly supported U.S. participation in the Expanded Technical Assistance Program of the United Nations, and has urged liberal appropriations for its work. The League sees in this multilateral approach to the problems of the underdeveloped countries not only a means of developing within the United Nations cooperation toward an important goal of its Charter, but also a means of allaying the fear of U.S. imperialism, which has at times been a handicap in U.S. technical assistance projects.

DOMESTIC POLICIES AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PRINCIPLE 16: *"Domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems."*

The effect of internal policies on our international relations has long been a major League concern. The League has also put much emphasis on removing economic frictions as possible causes of war. Since 1928 every League Program has contained an item concerning international cooperation in the economic field.

Reparations and War Debts.

In 1925 the League made a study of the Dawes plan for reparations and inter-allied debts, and in 1933 and again in 1938 supported downward revision of World War debts.

Tariffs and World Trade.

League interest in tariffs originally stemmed from a study made in the early 1920's of the effects of tariffs on consumers and the cost of living, but broadened in the 1930's to a general study of the economic causes of war. Support for the Reciprocal Trade Agreements program in 1936 was a decisive step which showed that League members had rejected economic nationalism as they had earlier rejected political isolation. The League took the position that the flow of trade, both domestic and foreign, is in the general interest and should not be obstructed by consideration of private interests, by interstate trade barriers, or by excessive international trade restrictions.

In recent years emphasis has been placed on the basic changes which two World Wars have made in the world's economy, the shift in the position of the United States from a debtor to the world's leading creditor nation, and the serious trade gap created by the continuing surplus of exports over imports. The League saw the need for an export-minded people to become import-minded and worked to explain the importance of a high level of world trade in terms of U.S. prosperity, jobs and national security. The League advocates a tariff policy based on the general public interest, not on special sectional or group interests. Numerous specific measures to expand world trade have been supported.

Reciprocal Trade Agreements. The League repeatedly reaffirmed its stand for a downward revision of tariffs through Reciprocal Trade Agreements. It supported the basic principles of the Reciprocal Trade Program, including the delegation of authority by Congress to the Executive to negotiate trade agreements and the principle of equality of treatment under which concessions to one country are automatically extended to all countries which do not discriminate against the United States.

The League worked for renewal of the Act nine times between 1938 and 1955, and opposed numerous amendments designed to weaken it. Repeated attempts to hamper the program by exempting specific products from negotiations, or by raising the rates on certain articles, were opposed, as well as indirect attacks such as increasing

excise taxes on imported products, or excessive sanitary requirements designed to exclude meats.

The Escape Clause was opposed as creating a constant state of uncertainty as to the availability of the American market. The Peril Point Amendment was opposed because it is based on the principle that under no circumstances should imports be allowed to injure a domestic industry. The League does not advocate free trade, but takes the position that no single industry should be protected at the expense of the public interest or at the risk of endangering our foreign policy objectives.

Customs Simplification. Simplification of customs procedures was supported in 1951 as a means of increasing U.S. imports as well as of improving administration.

Immigration Laws.

A special League committee was set up in 1925 to study immigration and naturalization laws. In 1938 an item for the elimination of racial discrimination in immigration laws was adopted. The League took the position that immigration laws should be based on the principle of racial equality because any other position creates an unnecessary irritant in our foreign relations. While the item was originally directed against exclusion of Orientals, it established a principle under which it was possible to act in later years against discriminatory measures in immigration laws affecting political refugees and the displaced persons of World War II.

Civilian Control of Atomic Energy.

In 1945-46 the League worked very hard for the McMahon Bill to insure civilian control of atomic energy, on the grounds that leaving atomic energy under military control would emphasize its military potential to the detriment of international relations. The bill which the League supported became the Atomic Energy Act of 1945.

Constitutional Amendments.

The great debates over foreign policy which took place as the country emerged from its historic position of isolation have resulted in three attempts to amend the Constitution.

War Referenda (1939). During the period of the "neutrality" attempt, the League waged a strenuous battle to oppose the Ludlow amendment, a proposal that the Con-

stitution be amended to give to the electorate the the sole power to declare war or to engage in warfare overseas, except in case of direct attack. The League opposed federal referenda on war issues as a fundamental change in our representative system, and one that would weaken congressional responsibility, and hamper the successful conduct of foreign relations.

Treaty Ratification Procedure (1944). When the United States failed to join the League of Nations by the narrow margin of seven votes in 1920, a movement began to amend the Constitution by liberalizing the procedure for adopting treaties. This was a League study item from 1923 to 1926. The question again came to the fore at the end of World War II when there was fear that the constitutional requirement of a two-thirds Senate majority for the approval of treaties might prevent the U.S. from joining the United Nations. The League supported an amendment providing for the approval of treaties by a majority vote of those present and voting in both houses. The amendment failed to make headway in Congress.

Limiting the Treaty Power (1954). The League undertook another battle in 1954 when, after over a year of study, it opposed the so-called Bricker Amendment to limit the federal government's treaty-making power. The amendment proposed to alter the constitutional system of checks and balances by removing functions from the Executive and transferring them to Congress, as well as by removing functions from the federal government and transferring them to the states. The League contended that such a change would unnecessarily complicate treaty-making procedures, which are already surrounded by safeguards. In the League's view, if the amendment were adopted, doubt would be cast on the ability of the United States to carry out its international obligations.

CONCLUSION

This, then, in summary form is the record of the League's Program. In substance and in structure the development of the Program is inextricably related to the whole history of the organization. The record is not one of total success, nor of total wisdom in the choice of goals or of means. As these things go in human society, however, it is an impressive record. The women who have made up the League of Women Voters since 1920 have been, as a group, remarkably objective and remarkably hard-working. This Record is their record, and it is one of which they can be proud.

Index

- Academic freedom 6, 7
- Active list 2
- Appropriations 22
- Atomic energy 3
 - Civilian control 44
 - International control 3, 39
- Bretton Woods Agreements 40
- British Loan 40
- Budgets 4, 11, 21
 - Balanced 21
 - Congressional procedures 21
 - Executive 11
 - Management of 21
 - Problems 21
 - Procedures 4, 21
 - State and local 21
- Child Labor Amendment 24
- Children 3, 24, 25, 26
 - Child health 24
 - Child labor 24
 - Children's Bureau 24
 - Crippled, defective and illegitimate 26
 - Dependent and Neglected 25
 - Delinquent 26
 - Juvenile Courts 26
 - School attendance 25
 - Sheppard-Towner Act 24
 - Welfare of 3
- Children's Bureau 24
- Citizens' Rights 6, 17
 - D.C. suffrage 8
 - Fair employment practices 17
 - Poll tax abolition 17
 - Voting 17
 - Women's rights 17, 18
 - Equal Rights Amendment 17, 18
 - Equal Status 17, 18
- Citizenship schools 3
- Collective security 36, 37ff.
 - Battle of Production 37
 - Dumbarton Oaks 37
 - League of Nations 33, 36
 - Lend Lease 36
 - Opposition to neutrality legislation 36
 - United Nations 3, 37, 38
 - U.N. Headquarters Loan 1948 37
 - U.N. Participation Act 1945 37
- Compulsory school attendance 25
- Congress 4, 13, 14
 - Budgetary procedures of 4, 14
 - Reorganization of 13
- Conservation 32
 - Administrative aspects 32
 - Depletion of natural resources 32
- Hoover Commission 33
- Role of Tennessee Valley Authority 32
- Consolidation of local units of government 12
- Constitution of the United States 8, 17, 18, 44, 45
- Bricker Amendment 45
- Easing ratification of amendments 8
- Equal rights amendment 17, 18
- Foreign Policy amendments 44, 45
- Lame Duck amendment 8
- Treaty ratification 45
- War referendum 44
- Consumer protection 30, 31
- Cooperatives 30
- Federal Trade Commission 31
- Food, Drug and Cosmetic Law 1938 31
- Food Supply 30
- Kenyon-Kendrick-Anderson bills for regulation of meat packing 30
- Pure Food and Drug Act 31
- Public Markets 30
- Convention, role of 1
- Coordination of federal, state and local governments 12
- Council manager plan 3, 11
- County Government 15
- Credit regulation 21
- Current Agenda 2
 - Local 4
 - National 2
 - State 4
- Customs Simplification 44
- Defense 4
- Direct Primary 9
- Disarmament 35
- Displaced persons 44
- District of Columbia 8
- Economic development 4
- Education 3, 22
 - Adult 23
 - Federal Aid 23
 - Office of 23
 - Role of Government 22
 - School attendance laws 25
 - School appropriations 23
 - State and local activity 23, 24, 25
- Equal Status 17, 18
- Election Laws 9, 10
- Emergency Relief
 - Reconstruction Act of 1932 29
- Employment measures 30
- Equal Rights Amendment 18
- European Recovery Program 40

North Atlantic Treaty 4, 38
 Organization of 38
 Relation to Mutual Security 40

Old Age Assistance 30
Old Age and Survivors
 Insurance 29, 30
Oleomargine taxes 30

Permanent registration 9
Platform of the League of
 Women Voters 2
Political parties 9
Poll tax, abolition of 17
Price control 21
Principles 4, 5
 Authority for adoption of
 local program 4
 Nature of 4, 5
 Not entirely logical 4, 5
Program
 Definition 1
 Development of program
 system 2
 History of 2
 How made 1
 Movement to shorten 3
 Proposed program 1
 State and local 1, 3
Program Record, uses of 4
Program Record, sources 5
Proportional representation 10
Public Administration 3
Public Employment Offices 30

Ramspeck Act of 1940 16
Rationing 21
Reciprocal Trade Agreements 43
Reconstruction 3
 Displaced persons 44
 European Recovery
 Program 40
 Famine Relief 40
 Mutual security 40
 UNRRA 41
Reparations and War Debts 43
Representative Government 6

Sheppard-Towner Act 24
Short Ballot 9
Social Hygiene 3, 26
Social Security Act 29
State government 14

Tariffs
 Customs simplification 44
 Escape clause 44
 Peril point amendment 44
 Reciprocal Trade
 Agreements 43

Taxes 3, 19
 Coordination of 12
 Federal tax limitation 20
 Flexible and equitable 19
 and Inflation 20
 Limitation of Income tax 20
 Poll tax abolition 17
 Progressive taxes 20
 Sales tax 20
Teachers oaths 7
Technical Assistance 42
TVA 30

Unemployment 21
 Compensation 3
 Emergency Relief and
 Reconstruction Act 29
 General problem 21
 Insurance,
 nationalization of 29
 Relation to fiscal policy 29
United Nations 3, 37, 38
 Charter 37
 Charter changes 38
 Collective security 38
 Korean Aggression 39
 Regional agreements 38
 Specialized agencies 40
 Trusteeships 38
 Uniting for Peace
 Resolution 39
United Nations Relief and
 Reconstruction
 Administration 41

Vice control 27
Voting, absentee 17
Voting Machines 10
Voters Service 10

Wages and Hours 3
Welfare 23, 24
 Child 24
Women 3, 17, 18, 19
 Equal Pay 18, 19
 Equal rights 17, 18
 Equal Status 17, 18
 in Industry 3
 Jury Service 18, 19
 in National Recovery Act
 of 1933 19
 Maternal Health 24
 Removal of discriminations
 in immigration laws 18
 Social measures 19
 Working conditions 28
Women's Bureau 18
World Court 34

