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N. U.

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NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

PARLIAMENT CHAMBERS, 14, GREAT SMITH STREET, WESTMINSTER,
LONDON, S.W.

AL/1050

Treasurer:
MRS. AUERBACH.

President:
MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Hon. Secs.:
MISS C. E. MARSHALL
(Parliamentary).
MISS K. D. COURTNEY.

OFFICE HOURS: 9.30—5.30.
SATURDAYS: 9.30—1.

Secretary: ~~Miss GERALDINE COOKE,~~
Miss CROOKENDEN.

Aug 6. 1913

Dear Miss Stacey,

*As the enclosed letter is
from a member of the London
Society, I think you may
like to see it together with
my reply. Will you return
both when you have read
them, as there may be some*

further correspondence -

Yours v. sincerely,

H. D. Country.

Powcett Library
27 Wilfred Street
London S.W.1.

~~7067(a)~~

Reply sent by National Union.

AL/1051

August 6th 1913.

Dear Madam,

Thank you for your letter on the policy of the National Union. I think you have not understood that in the opinion of the Union we are still a non-party Society. That is to say we support a candidate at an election not on account of his party politics, but on account of the attitude that he or his party has taken on the Women's Suffrage question.

When the National Union was supporting the Conciliation Bill it did not take into consideration the attitude of the party to which a candidate belonged, but only his individual attitude towards Women's Suffrage. After the defeat of the Conciliation Bill it was clear that we could not count on the support of members who had pledged themselves to vote for Women's Suffrage if in their opinion their party would be embarrassed by the passage of a Women's Suffrage measure. We therefore resolved to take into account the attitude of the party to which a candidate belonged as well as his own views. Later on after the fiasco over the Reform Bill last January, it was clear that we had nothing to hope from this Government while Mr Asquith is in power. We therefore resolved not to support Liberal candidates at by-elections as the return of a Liberal candidate obviously strengthened the hand of the present Government. A Unionist candidate would of course only be supported if he himself were personally satisfactory on the Women's Suffrage question. I enclose a couple of leaflets about our policy and also our annual Report. On page 8 you will find an explanation of the election Policy of the Union.

I think when you say that to call ourselves non-party is not straight-forward, you are interpreting the words in a different sense from that understood by the majority of the Union. We care nothing for the party politics of any party only for its attitude on Women's Suffrage, and this in our opinion is to be non-party in the real sense of the words.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) K. D. COURTNEY

Miss D. H. Coleman.