



Why I Stand for Parliament

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EUNICE G. MURRAY.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

VOTERS' COUNCIL;

103 BATH STREET, GLASGOW.

Voters' Council.

MOTTO:

Maintain your loyalty; defend your rights.

Hon. Organising Secretaries (pro. tem.)—

C. NINA BOYLE,

20 Talbot House, St. Martin's Lane, London.

EUNICE G. MURRAY,

13 Fitzroy Place, Glasgow; or Moorepark, Cardross.

A group of the new voters who are determined that the woman's point of view shall now be made effective in all matters—imperial, international, as well as domestic—are putting forward a wide national programme which includes victory for our country as well as equality between the sexes. If you approve of our aims you are cordially invited to become a member.

MEMBERSHIP FEE, - - 1/- per annum.

Why I Stand for Parliament.

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

In the debate upon woman suffrage in the Upper House, when Lord Curzon spoke against the bill which he forbore to vote against, he declared "that granting votes to women would not satisfy women, that the natural result would be the entry of women into political life, and that they would even invade the sacred precincts of the House of Commons."

Lord Curzon's fears were justified. Women do want into the House of Commons.

We believe in democratic or representative government. It cannot be representative until women as well as men are admitted to its councils.

Personally I do not believe in a woman's party—that is to say, in women forming themselves into woman parties and voting in opposition to men. It is inconceivable that all women will be united on all subjects any more than men are, or that they will ever stand as a sex opposed to men. Nevertheless I believe that the country will benefit by the woman's point of view being heard in our legislative assembly.

I believe that a woman member of Parliament can do more for her sex than men, because, being a woman, she understands the women's point of view and the needs of women.

Because I believe this, I offer myself as a candidate for Parliament.

We realise full well that the Parliamentary vote carries with it a very serious responsibility. It has been granted to us at the most critical period of our history, but we are not afraid of the burdens of citizenship.

As far as we who have joined the Voters' Council are concerned, we believe that our first duty just now is to stand by our country until victory is secured, for until a clean victory is won we can have no hope of a lasting peace being built up on the ashes of to-day.

We rejoice in the knowledge that six million women are now voters, knowing that by these votes we can help our country in its hour of need.

The country will benefit by the woman's point of view being heard.

There are many people in the country who willingly concede that they are glad that women have obtained a certain amount of power, and they even allow that this power will be useful in certain directions; such questions as babies, kitchens, and housing, they acknowledge, are subjects upon which women are entitled to have an opinion. Certainly I agree with this. These matters are specially women's province, but we demand a wider scope for our energies than matters purely domestic and social. We believe that the women's point of view must be made effective in all matters—Imperial, national, and international.

We believe that there is no position in the State that a woman, if she have the necessary qualifications, should not aspire to. Given the chance and equal opportunities, women can do many things as well as men.

I stand for Parliament, then, because I believe there are many things a woman can understand for women better than men.

Our Council believes in equal civil, political, and constitutional rights for the sexes. Equal pay for equal work, and good posts, hitherto regarded as masculine monopolies, thrown open to women. If women prove themselves capable of doing the work, sex should not bar their progress.

The war has broken down prejudices. People no longer trouble themselves whether it is womanly to tend a machine, be a tram conductress, paint a house, or build a ship. In face of national needs, conventions have been scattered to the winds.

Six million women have now been placed upon the voters' register.

We must watch over the interests of all women in the industrial world; we must demand an increasing share in the control of industrial conditions, housing, and public health. We must have responsible women in the higher ranks of the Civil Service.

To get these things we must have a wider education in the elementary and secondary schools. We must have universities thrown open to all classes, with better payment for all grades of teachers.

The entry of women into political life will at once be felt.

If one woman had been in the House of Commons lately, I do not believe that Mr. Macpherson would have answered the questions put to him about certain houses in France in the spirit he did.

Women ask, and our Council reiterate the demand for, the abolition of the double standard in morality. Wrong is wrong, and should be condemned and punished irrespective of sex.

Women have, of course, strong views upon the housing question. They know how the mass of women struggle with inadequate wages amidst wretched conditions to bring up large families. The housing of our working

classes is, and always has been, their most deadly enemy. The vital statistics of the nation show that the death-rate from preventable diseases which flourish in an unhealthy atmosphere is excessively high among the working classes. This shows that the houses occupied by these classes are unhealthy and insanitary.

We believe in co-partnership and co-operation in communal enterprise, as opposed to confiscation and nationalisation.

Much could be done to lighten the burden of house-keeping were we to adopt the co-operative housing, in which we could have central heating and a hot water supply, central wash-houses, drying houses, and laundries; co-operative crèches, and reading and recreation rooms. In this way much could be done to help the individual housekeeper and ease her burden.

Women are required in Parliament to help forward the social reforms. They are needed to grapple with the question of food and see that adulterated foods be swept away. They are needed to see that the children are protected and the aged cared for. These matters will at once engage the attention of women.

Women play an important part in the economic and national life. Men have been withdrawn in vast numbers from the labour market, and their places have been substituted by women's work. When the demobilisation begins we must have women on the reconstruction committees; we must also have women in Parliament to safeguard the interests of the industrial worker.

The Voters' Council is independent of party. Its motto is a fine one—"Maintain your loyalty, defend your rights."

We stand in with the fortunes of our country. We believe in a more vigorous policy of ship-building; in an energetic recruiting of women for national service. Our Council demands a ton for ton restitution of mercantile shipping,

and satisfaction for outrages perpetrated upon our mercantile marine.

We have our own war aims, for besides victory, which we put first and foremost, we ask that representative women be on the peace council or councils, and that recognition of the interests of women, as apart from those of men, be made in the settlements effected concerning any countries whose integrity has to be guaranteed by British blood and treasure, the sacrifice of British lives, and the bereavement of British homes.

We ask for the restoration, release, and indemnification, with all possible compensation, before the actual signing of peace terms, for wronged women, and fullest responsibility enforced against all men, officers, and officials guilty of inciting to, permitting, or committing atrocities.

When we consider the fate of the women in the invaded and conquered countries, we who are women should determine that as far as possible these women should be restored and liberated before peace is signed. If we wait till peace is signed, who will remember them?

Think of it. Eight thousand women alone under twenty years of age, taken from Serbia and sold into Turkish harems.

We stand for the complete restoration of Belgium, Poland, Serbia, Montenegro, Roumania, and Armenia.

As far as Ireland is concerned, we believe that the same obligations should be imposed upon it as upon other parts of the country, and that all preferential treatment should stop.

We believe in equal marriage laws; also in equal parental rights between the mother and father. If their wishes as to the child's guardianship clash, the interests of the child must be the determining factor. We stand for the restoration of naturalisation to women within the British Empire. If you are born British, British you should

remain if that be your desire. A man marrying an alien does not forfeit his birthrights, and it is intolerable that a woman should have to do so.

We believe, however, that the naturalisation laws should be revised, and that in the future we should be more careful of admitting outsiders to the rights of British citizenship.

These are a few of the things that the Voters' Council stands for. It is because I believe that these are urgent matters, requiring the thoughtful attention of all men and women, that I offer myself as a candidate for Parliament.

Every subject, whether it affects the imposing of taxes or the framing of laws, whether it affects the war or the coming peace, affects women as well as men.

All matters discussed in the House affect us all, and I believe, as Emerson once said, "the greatest reforms are not effected by men alone, or by women alone, but by the united efforts of both."

By the entry of women into Parliament, the House of Commons will become representative, the country will gain by having the councils of both men and women. We are marching forward, hand in hand. The best is yet to come. Much will be achieved, now impossible, by the united efforts of men and women.

EUNICE G. MURRAY.