

An Open Letter to Senator Norris

If Senator Norris doesn't sit up and take notice when he gets this letter, he'd better. ETHEL LYMAN STANNARD, its writer, is not a person to be ignored. She refused to be ignored in 1914 when she found herself with her own way to make and two small sons to support. An intensive training course at the New York School of Filing, an apprenticeship at the Brooklyn Trust Co., and B. Altman's in New York City, and then to Hartford where, for twenty-five years, she has been Supervisor of the Filing Department of the Phoenix Insurance Co., proves that whatever else was buried in the archives, she wasn't.

Mrs. Stannard has done special feature writing for the Hartford Times and the Associated Press. In 1941 she published a book of verse entitled, Chiefly My Enjoyment, which title is grossly misleading, since it is a volume of charm, sentiment and humor, a combination all too rarely found, that could hardly have failed to please its readers. In her odd moments, Mrs. Stannard makes rag rugs for her two married sons and her brand new grandson. (And for the sake of the human interest element let it be noted that a most youngish-looking and altogether attractive grandmother she is, too.)

She is a teacher in the Hartford Extension of the Henry George School, and among her more important extracurricular duties, is the bombarding of legislators and members of Congress with letters in support of such measures as H. J. Res. 338 and its like.

HARTFORD, CONN.,
November 11, 1942

Senator George W. Norris
Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR:—This is your personal copy of an open letter which I am mailing to the Editors of THE FREEMAN (a monthly critical Journal of Social and Economic Affairs—published at 30 East 29th Street, New York City).

The Press wirephoto and notation (enclosed) which appeared on the front page of our *Hartford Courant* just

after election day, distressed me extremely; and has prompted the message that I am sending you herewith—in spite of the fact that the next day's editorial (also enclosed) made me see your honest utterance of a first reaction mood in a little different light.

Yes, I am remembering that you are getting on (I'm not too young myself, being a grandmother), and that you were coaxed to run again, perhaps against your better judgment, except for the desire that all pioneering souls seem to have, to die with their boots on. But I'm also remembering that you have a record of struggle for the fulfillment of ideals and principles, along with much achievement that can never be taken away from you, and I am mindful of the fact that, to those who seek Truth and Justice, when one door is closed, another opens. Moreover, we may often serve valiantly by only keeping our spirits humble, our hearts clean, our minds clear, and our thinking straight, (please God) even if our frames begin to feel the wear and tear and disappointments attendant upon what we have tried to accomplish.

So, just the same, this is what I want to say about personal or political defeat of any kind, anywhere, any time.

To be defeated is not to be vanquished. Oh, no, Mr. Senator, you have not "reached the end of the road" by a long way—

Not unless you are self-centered—

Not unless you believe politics and legislative halls to be the only avenues of service to human progress—

Not unless you believe all possible freedom and justice and equality of opportunity for your fellows has been achieved—

Not unless you can work for these things only while you stand in the limelight.

It is entirely possible that your greatest of all contributions to true democracy is yet to be made—perhaps outside Washington altogether.

So when you do lay down your arduous legislative tasks (if not before) I beseech you to give an honest hearing to us common folk who are working so hard to spread that sound economic knowledge that must precede the dawn of true economic freedom—without which our civilization will one day collapse, beyond repair.

Please read studiously the material I send you—and follow up by studying such challenging works as—

"Factories in the Field" by Carey McWilliams

"Progress and Poverty" and "Protection and Free Trade" by Henry George

"Democracy versus Socialism" by Max Hirsch

"State of War Permanent Unless—" by Louis Wallis, and much else that these will lead to.