

WISCONSIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

State Headquarters

Madison, Wisconsin

1728 North 59th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
February 3, 1942

Regional Forester
United States Forest Service
623 North 2nd Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Dear Mr. Price:

Several weeks ago we wrote to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and presented to her the plan of Mrs. Max Schmitt (Conservation Chairman of the Women's Federation of Garden Clubs) for carrying on the conservation activities on federal and state forests during the period of the war.

Mrs. Roosevelt evidently thought that the plan had possibilities, because we are informed that she sent our letter to the Chief of the Forest Service in Washington. We believe this information to be correct but as we have not heard from Mrs. Roosevelt we are now inquiring of you whether or not you have heard anything from Washington which would indicate that such was the case. We would further appreciate it if you could advise us as to what progress, if any, has been made between the Forest Service and Mrs. Roosevelt.

The various women's organizations which we have approached are enthusiastic about this program to give young women - between the ages of 14 to 60 (?) - an opportunity to carry on with the forests of the nation while the men are fighting the enemies which seek to destroy our way of life and our democracy. These women's groups feel that this contemplated march into the forests would not only be a patriotic gesture on the part of American women, but the work which would be accomplished would be of inestimable value to the future of our country.

We are told that through the establishment of the C.C.C. by the New Deal, forestry has been stepped up about fifty years in the United States. With the closing of the camps, is the whole forestry program to be allowed to slip back to the pitiable position it was in before Mr. Roosevelt entered the White House? The women voice a loud and emphatic "no"! They say they can plant as well or better than men; their hands are gentle and they are natural gardeners. They say further that they can be trained to

do men's work. In Germany and Russia women are today doing the hardest kind of manual labor - on farms, in mines and industry, and from all reports, they are doing it exceedingly well. American women can do as much if they are given the chance. Perhaps there is not yet the need to operate large tractors because some men are still available to do the heavy tasks connected with forestry work, but the "weaker sex" can plant millions of trees that are in the nurseries now and must be planted this spring. Besides planting, the women can "man" the lookout towers and put out small fires - and they will do all this without wages and for their "keep".

We conservationists feel that trees must be planted - WAR OR NO WAR - because forests are a necessary part of national defense, and unless human nature changes entirely during the next twenty years, we will probably be confronted with another war and growing forests will help us to meet the challenge.

May we hear from you regarding this matter at your earliest convenience.

Very respectfully yours,

/s/ Wilhelmine LaBudde

Mrs. Edward LaBuddé

/s/ Aroline H. Schmitt

Mrs. Max Schmitt

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