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WOMEN'S FREEDOM
LEAGUE.

CONSTITUTION

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ONLY

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Conference, April 13th, 1929.

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CONSTITUTION.

NAME.

The Women's Freedom League.

OBJECT.

To use the power of the Parliamentary vote now won for women on equal terms with men to elect women into Parliament and upon other public bodies; to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

METHODS.

The objects of the League shall be promoted by—

I. Action entirely independent of all political parties.

ELECTION POLICY : (1) *Women Candidates*.—The policy of the Women's Freedom League shall be to support or run suitable women candidates, approved by Head-quarters and our local Branch.

Financial Support of Women Candidates.—Contributions to the Women-in-Parliament Fund to be used for the candidature of approved women, under the direction of the National Executive Committee, contributions earmarked for a special candidate or party to be so used.

(2) Failing a suitable woman candidate in Parliamentary General and By-Elections, it shall be the policy of the League to question candidates and carry on general propaganda.

II. The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for equal opportunities, equal rewards, and equal responsibilities with men throughout all branches of our national life.

III. Education of public opinion by all the usual methods, such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence, and deputations to public representatives and other bodies and their members.

MEMBERSHIP.

MEMBERSHIP to be open to women and men who approve the objects and policy of the League, and who pay a yearly subscription, the minimum subscription being One Shilling.

ASSOCIATESHIP to be open to women and men who approve the objects and general work of the League, and who pay a minimum subscription of 1s. per annum. Associates to have no voting power.

AFFILIATION.—Bodies of women who accept our objects, and who are approved by the National Executive Committee, may be affiliated to the Women's Freedom League on terms to be drawn up by the Committee.

ORGANISATION.

I. COMMITTEE AND OFFICIALS.

(1) The National Executive Committee shall consist of a President, an Honorary Treasurer, and twelve members, to be nominated by the Branches and elected by the Annual Conference. It shall appoint its General Secretary (who shall be a paid official, if necessary), heads of departments, Press Secretary, and such assistant officers, paid or unpaid, as occasion may demand.

(2) The National Executive Committee shall meet at places

of its own choice not less than six and not more than ten times in the calendar year.

(3) Five members of the National Executive Committee shall form a quorum, only two of whom may be paid officials.

(4) The National Executive Committee shall form such Sub-Committees as are found to be necessary (*e.g.* Political, Finance, Organising, Literature, Social Work, &c.), and shall have power to co-opt one or more members of the League on these Sub-Committees. It shall require reports from these bodies to be submitted at its meetings.

(5) Special work may at any time be given to a Sub-Committee by the Executive, such Sub-Committee to dissolve when the special work is completed.

(6) The National Executive Committee shall not initiate any new policy between one Conference and the next, save in case of grave emergency.

(7) In case of a temporary or a permanent vacancy occurring among the officials on the National Executive Committee between the Conferences, the vacant office shall be filled by a member of the League chosen by the National Executive Committee. In the case of a temporary vacancy the member so appointed shall retire on the return of the original official.

(8) Organisers shall be eligible for election to the National Executive Committee, providing always that not more than one-quarter of the elected persons be salaried persons.

(9) Elected members of the National Executive Committee should, except in cases of ill-health or urgent private business, regard their offices as binding for the year.

(10) If any member of the National Executive Committee resign during her year of office, the vacancy shall be filled by the candidate who had the largest number of votes after the candidate elected, provided more than six votes were given.

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(11) Any member of the National Executive Committee failing to attend 50 per cent. of its meetings throughout the year shall be ineligible for re-election for the ensuing year.

(12) If any member or members of the League shall, after due defence, be considered by the National Executive Committee to have acted in a manner at variance with or prejudicial to the objects and methods of the League, the matter shall be brought before a Committee of Appeal (to be elected by the Conference), which shall consist of ten members of the League who are not members of the National Executive Committee, seven to form a quorum. The duties of the Committee of Appeal shall be to arbitrate in cases of serious differences arising within the League, and the said Committee alone shall by a majority have power to expel members from the League. The Committee of Appeal shall sit at a request from the National Executive Committee, or a request signed by fifty members of the League. The Committee of Appeal shall appoint one of its members to be Chairman, and the Chairman shall present an annual report of its work to the Conference.

II. BRANCHES AND COUNCILS.

(1) The basis of representation shall be one Delegate for any number from twelve up to fifty members, after which an extra Delegate will be allowed for the next twelve to fifty members. A Branch shall consist of at least twelve members.

(2) A capitation fee of 6d. per member shall be sent to Head-quarters annually.

(3) Branches having paid their capitation fees shall be entitled to representation at the Conference.

(4) No Branch shall be represented at the Conference which has not been in existence for three months prior to such Conference.

(5) GROUPS of the Women's Freedom League may be formed when there are less than the necessary twelve members to form a Branch. Groups shall elect their own officials and work locally for the W.F.L. They shall be invited to send reports of their work to the Committee, but can have no representation at the Annual Conference.

(6) If a member of the League belong to two Branches, she shall vote with only one Branch on any matter which affects the League at large.

(7) Branches may helpfully federate in their own districts for propaganda and organisation work, such federations being called Local Councils. These bodies obviously cannot act as intermediaries between the National Executive Committee and the Branches, nor can they claim representation at the Annual Conference; otherwise the principle of plural voting would be established.

(8) That any Council representing a group of Branches federated together to aid in carrying on the work of propaganda and protest be recognised as an established body and a proper channel for the transmission of resolutions and recommendations to the National Executive Committee.

III. CONFERENCE.

(1) The ultimate power of the League shall rest with the Annual Conference, which shall be held annually in London in the Spring, the exact date and place to be fixed by the National Executive Committee.

(2) A record of attendances of members at the meetings of the National Executive Committee shall be forwarded to the Branches at the end of each year, together with the Conference Agenda.

(3) The fares to the Annual Conference of one delegate per Branch shall be added together, and each Branch represented at the Conference shall pay an equal share of these pooled expenses, in proportion to the number of votes to which its capitation fees entitle it.

(4) At the first meeting of the National Executive Committee in the calendar year there shall be fixed and shortly after published in *The Vote* the following arrangements for the Conference :—Latest date for nomination of officials and National Executive Committee candidates; for sending in of resolutions; and for sending in and circulation of amendments. At that meeting of the National Executive Committee there shall be elected for the Conference an Agenda Committee and a Credentials Committee, whose respective duties shall be the orderly compilation of the agenda and the scrutineering of the delegates to the Conference.

(5) Special Conferences may be called if one-third of the Branches desire it.

(6) A report of the work done during the year, including work done by Organisers, shall be given fully in the Annual Report, to be in circulation within three months after the Conference.

(7) The National Executive Committee should carefully consider whether holding some of the Conferences in the Provinces might not be advantageous.

GENERAL.

All members of the Women's Freedom League should subscribe regularly to *The Vote*, the official organ of the League, and a form for this purpose should be included in the membership card.

For further particulars and for literature on the question of the freedom of women apply to :—

THE SECRETARY,

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE,

144 HIGH HOLBORN,

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