

Mrs. Anna George deMille

Dec. 9, 1935.

The day before yesterday, I spent from ten o'clock in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon, with an intermission for luncheon only, in wrestling with the details of the closing of the Twelfth Street transaction, in which nothing but the unusual patience, earnestness, and spirit of accommodation of Mr. Kelly, enabled us finally to bring all the parties in interest into a degree of harmony, that resulted finally in the closing of the transaction. I venture to tell you, my dear Anna, though I do not wish to mention it otherwise, that I had to exercise considerable patience myself on that occasion when we had to deal with the chief counsel for the Guaranty Trust Company, the counsel for the Y. W. C. A., the counsel for the purchaser, (Mr. Coupey,) the sales agent of the property, and some others, in complicated negotiations for the adjustment of the various details of what, I believe, was one of the most complicated real estate title closings that I have ever experienced.

Mr. Leubuscher, though a little ill, sat through from beginning to end and helped. The thing was finally closed, and we have the money in the bank, upon which we can now undertake to base some sort of a budget for next year. Despite the fact that I am working at extremely high pressure in order that I may get away to Florida next Saturday, I am to work with Miss Kaufmann on one or two evenings next week to make up a tentative budget which I can endeavor to "sell" to the other members of the Executive Committee. I am a little hopeless about getting the Board together in numbers enough to pass the budget.

Mr. Post, after Miss Kaufmann and I had worked very hard to get a meeting to pass the authorization referred to, attempted again to upset the meeting upon a perfectly ridiculous legal point that the officers were holdovers and had not been re-elected as there had been no budget meeting during 1935, etc, etc. We managed to get fourteen persons present, and the vote against him was thirteen to one, and then upon the urging of Fairchild he changed his vote, and made it unanimous. He is still, however, extremely bitter, and nobody seems to be able to handle him except Fairchild.

Now, about your proposition that the action granting Fairchild \$500 out of our attenuated capital should be reconsidered and rescinded, I am sorry to have to say that as a practical matter, this seems impossible. Some of our members, including Lawson Purdy, while disgusted with the situation as you are, feel that since the matter was, as far as the record goes, lawfully adopted by a quorum of the Board, that it would now be difficult, if not impossible, to keep the money away

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from him without at least some of those who voted for it being present to make a formal motion to reconsider. Even if you were here to make such a motion, I doubt, as a practical matter, if you could get a majority to side with you under the circumstances, although I do not know of any member of the Board excepting Post who would not feel very much as you do now about the whole mess.

Mr. Polak has come forward with an amendment to the by-laws prohibiting this sort of thing in the future, but I do not consider this worthwhile as long as we retain in the membership of the Board, men whose ethical standards are so cross-eyed as those with which we have had to deal in this instance and others that are now past history. Nevertheless, your telegram to the Board, should, in my opinion, be read to the Board, and I will be glad to associate myself with it in spirit and principle, although I would have to rule, as a parliamentarian, that there was a doubt as to our legal right after an intervening meeting, to reconsider an action that had been formally, and on the record, legally taken. Whatever happens, your telegram to me makes me more proud of you than ever.

Now, as to the future of the Foundation, assuming that I can get some sort of budget in line, I am very much troubled. There are fundamental faults in the structure of the organization that I fear cannot be corrected because of the terms of the Will of Robert Schalkenbach, our benefactor. His Will says there must be twenty-one trustees. To make the organization effective, seven trustees, or nine at the most, will be much more efficient. There are vacancies on the Board but I do not know how to get them filled. There are gentlemen on the Board who are loyal to the things that you and I believe in, but they are unable or unwilling to attend meetings. The last blow that has fallen upon us is that Philip Cornick, who acted as President during my absence in Florida last year, begs me to see that he is relieved, because he is up to his neck, as he puts it, in important research work upon which his living is more or less dependent. In the meantime, I have looked around for a vice-president who will work with Miss Kaufmann and the Executive Committee, and I could find no one willing to take the job. We must excuse Lawson Purdy as well as Bolton Hall, both splendid men although of different capacities and outlook. I may be able to get Cornick to wait until my return from Florida in April. In the meantime I intend to keep in touch with Miss Kaufmann from my hotel at Cocoa.

Please note, by the way, that I have changed my residence down there to The Hotel Brevard, Cocoa, instead of The Cocoa House. You may wish to write me.

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Do not for a moment, believe, my dear girl, that I am going to abate my interest in the work while I am apparently playing in the Southern sunshine. I have a number of things that I want to do, one of which is to cultivate Mr. duPont. He has fallen under the influence of some people who will, I fear, bring the Georgist movement into more or less disrepute because (without questioning their sincerity) they are working along lines that do not inspire either confidence or respect.

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In this matter I fear you must bear a part of the responsibility. You are the daughter of Henry George, and are beloved and respected for that reason as well as for what you are in yourself. You have enough to do, and plus, if you will concentrate on the work of the Henry George School. You will weaken and cheapen the public value of your name, your prestige, and your influence by allowing yourself to be used to give influence ~~to~~ activities controlled by others, to which you cannot, in the nature of things, devote any really directing character.

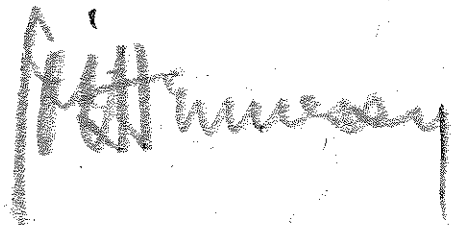
You asked me about the Manhattan Single Tax Club, and I told you frankly not to permit them to use your name. Your name is about the only asset that the Club has at the present time if I am not greatly mistaken, and it is an asset that is not wisely employed by them.

All of this, you will regard, my dear girl, as private and personal and for yourself alone.

As to Mr. duPont, he is a very rich man who could be of tremendous influence and helpfulness if we can ~~retain~~ retain his respect and confidence. That cannot be effected through the Manhattan Single Tax Club and some of the influences surrounding it.

This letter is discursive and unsatisfactory to me as it may be to you, but I had a good stenographer at hand and just let myself talk as if I were talking to you personally.

Very sincerely yours,



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