

ident, to Suffrage delegation, the Waldorf, January 27, 1916

es:

I ought to say, in the first place, that the apologies I think ought to come from me, because I had not understood that an appointment had been made. On the contrary, I supposed none had been made and therefore had filled my morning with work from which it did not seem possible to escape. I can easily understand the embarrassment of any one of your representatives in trying to make a speech in this presence. I feel that embarrassment very strongly myself, and I wish very much that I had the eloquence of some of your speakers so that I could set my views forth as adequately as they set theirs forth. It may be, ladies, that my mind works slowly. I have always felt that those things were most solidly built that were built piece by piece, and I felt that the genius of our political development in this country lay in the processes of our states and in the very clear definition of the difference of sphere between the state and federal governments. It may be that I am a little old-fashioned in that.

When I last had the pleasure of receiving some ladies urging the amendment that you are urging this morning, I told them that my own mind was unchanged, but I hoped open and that I would take pleasure in conferring with the leaders of my party and the leaders of Congress with regard to this matter. I have not fulfilled that promise and I hope you will understand why I have not fulfilled it, because there seemed to ~~me~~ ^{be} questions of legislation so pressing in their necessity that they ought to take precedence of everything else; that we could postpone fundamental changes to immediate action along lines in the national interest. That has been my reason, and I think it is a sufficient reason. The business of government is a business from day to day, ladies, and there are things that cannot wait. However great the

principle involved in this instance, action must of necessity in great fundamental constitutional changes be delivered, and I do not feel that I have put the less pressing in advance of the more pressing in the course that I have taken. I have not forgotten the promise that I made and I certainly shall not forget the fulfillment of it, but I want always to be absolutely frank. My own mind is still convinced that we ought to work this thing out state by state. I did what I could to work it out in my own state in New Jersey, and I am willing to act there whenever it comes up; but that is so far my conviction as to the best and solidest way to build changes of this kind, and I for my own part see no reason for discouragement on the part of the women of the country in the progress that this movement has been making. It may move like a glacier but when it does move its effects are permanent. I had not expected to have this pleasure this morning and therefore am simply speaking offhand and without consideration of my phrases, but I hope in entire frankness. I thank you sincerely for this opportunity.

THE END.