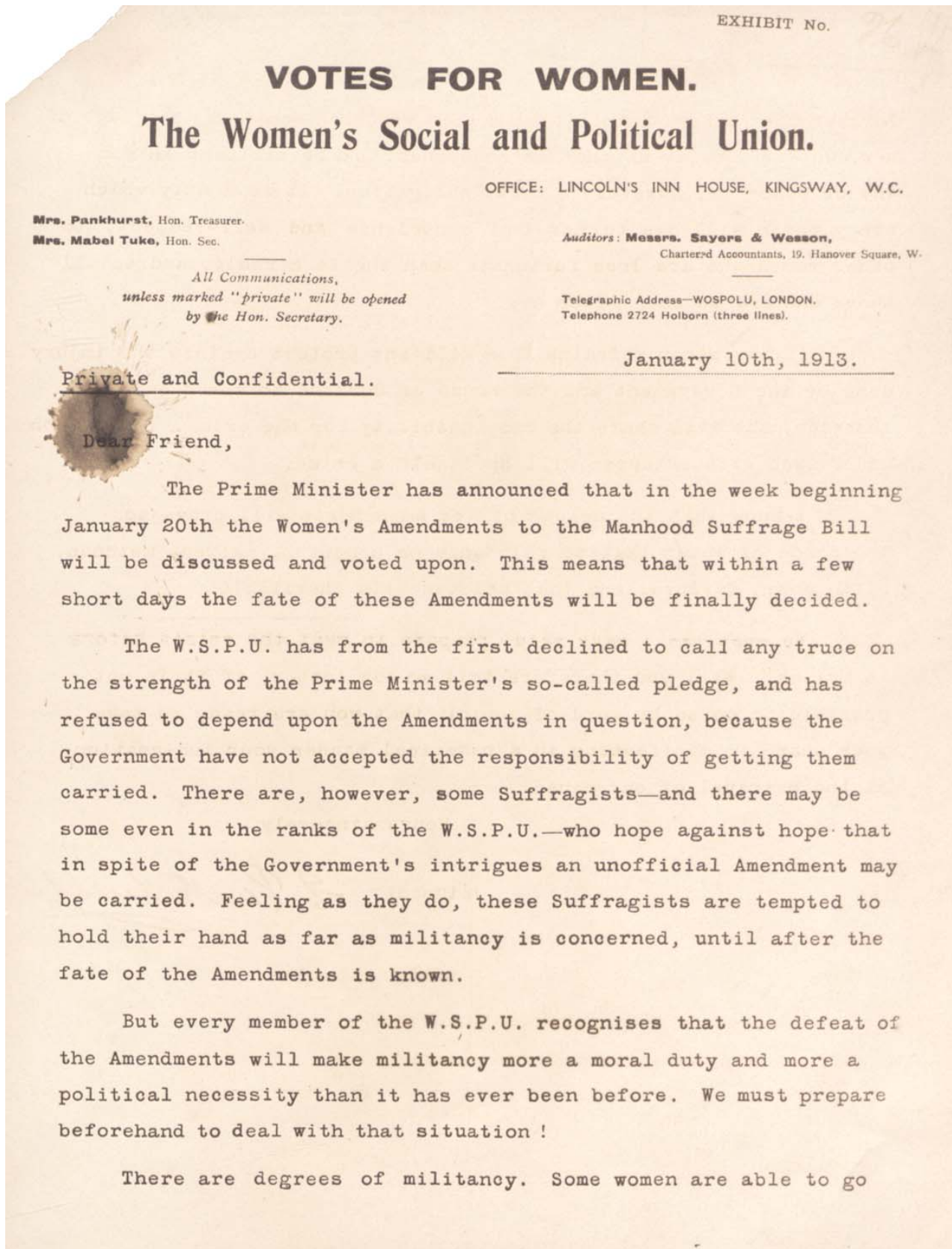


Document: CRIM 1/139/2

Letter written by Emeline Pankhurst to members of WSPU, 10th January 1913, outlining the case for militancy.



Document: CRIM 1/139/2 (continued)

Letter written by Emeline Pankhurst to members of WSPU, 10th January 1913, outlining the case for militancy.

further than others in militant action and each woman is the judge of her own duty so far as that is concerned. To be militant in some way or other is, however, a moral obligation. It is a duty which every woman will owe to her own conscience and self-respect, to other women who are less fortunate than she is herself, and to all those who are to come after her.

If any woman refrains from militant protest against the injury done by the Government and the House of Commons to women and to the race, she will share the responsibility for the crime. Submission under such circumstances will be itself a crime.

I know that the defeat of the Amendments will prove to thousands of women that to rely only on peaceful, patient methods, is to court failure, and that militancy is inevitable.

We must, as I have said, prepare to meet the crisis before it arises. Will you therefore tell me (by letter, if it is not possible to do so by word of mouth), that you are ready to take your share in manifesting in a practical manner your indignation at the betrayal of our cause.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

E. Pankhurst

Transcript: CRIM 1/139/2

VOTES FOR WOMEN

The Women's Social and Political Union

Mrs. Pankhurst, *Hon. Treasurer*
Mrs. Mabel Tuke, *Hon. Sec.*

OFFICE: LINCOLN'S INN HOUSE, KINGSWAY, W.C.

*All communications,
unless marked "private" will be opened
by the Hon. Secretary*

*Auditors: Messrs. Sayers & Wesson
Chartered Accountants, 19. Hanover Square, W.
Telegraphic Address-WOSPOLU, LONDON
Telephone 2724 Holborn (three lines)*

January 10th, 1913

Private and Confidential

Dear Friend,

The Prime Minister has announced that in the week beginning January 20th the Women's Amendments to the Manhood Suffrage Bill will be discussed and voted upon. This means that within a few short days the fate of these Amendments will be finally decided.

The W.S.P.U. has from the first declined to call any truce on the strength of the Prime Minister's so-called pledge, and has refused to depend upon the Amendments in question, because the Government have not accepted the responsibility of getting them carried. There are, however, some Suffragists-and there many be some even in the ranks of the W.S.P.U.- who hope against hope that in spite of the Government's intrigues an unofficial Amendment may be carried. Feeling as they do, these Suffragists are tempted to hold their hand as far as militancy is concerned, until after the fate of the Amendments is known.

But every member of the W.S.P.U. recognises that the defeat of the Amendments will make militancy more a moral duty and more a political necessity than it has ever been before. We must prepare beforehand to deal with that situation!

There are degrees of militancy. Some women are able to go further than others in militant action and each woman is the judge of her own duty so far as that is concerned. To be militant in some way or other is, however, a moral obligation. It is a duty which every woman will owe to her own conscience and self-respect, to other women who are less fortunate than she herself is, and to all those who are to come after her.

If any woman refrains from militant protest against the injury done by the Government and the House of Commons to women and to the race, she will share the responsibility for the crime. Submission under such circumstances will be itself a crime.

I know that the defeat of the Amendments will prove to thousands of women that to rely only on peaceful, patient methods, is to court failure, and that militancy is inevitable.

We must, as I have said, prepare to meet the crisis before it arises. Will you therefore tell me (by letter, if it is not possible to do so by word of mouth), that you are ready to take your share in manifesting in a practical manner your indignation at the betrayal of our cause.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) E. Pankhurst

Simplified transcript: CRIM 1/139/2

[Extra explanations are in square brackets]

VOTES FOR WOMEN The Women's Social and Political Union

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January 10th, 1913

Private and Confidential

Dear Friend,

The Prime Minister has announced that in the week beginning January 20th, the Women's Amendments to the Manhood Suffrage Bill will be discussed and voted upon [Asquith planned to introduce amendments giving the vote to women when the Bill was discussed by the House of Commons].

The WSPU has always refused to call a truce [agreement to stop fighting] on the basis of the Prime Minister's promise and has refused to depend upon the Amendments in question. The government have not told us that they will become law. There are some Suffragists, and possibly some Suffragettes, who hope that an unofficial Amendment may be turned into law. They think that they can stop any militant acts until the fate of the Amendments is known.

But every member of the W.S.P.U knows that the defeat of the Amendments will make militancy a moral duty. It will be a political necessity. We must prepare ourselves now.

There are different levels of militancy. Some women are able to go further than others. To be militant in some way is a moral obligation [a duty]. Every woman owes this to her own conscience and self-respect, and to future generations of women.

If any woman does not take part in militant action, she shares in the crime of the Government [by not enabling Female Suffrage].

I know that the defeat of the Amendments will show thousands of women that militancy is inevitable. Peaceful methods fail.

We must prepare for this now. Tell me by letter, or by word of mouth, that you are ready to take part in militancy.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) E. Pankhurst