



7-3-1941

Letter From Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson to Walter E. Batterson, July 3, 1941

Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson

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Recommended Citation

Huntington-Wilson, Francis Mairs, "Letter From Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson to Walter E. Batterson, July 3, 1941" (1941). *World War II Era Documents, 1939-1945*. 58.
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Thursday, July 3, 1941.

My dear Batterson,

I went to the New Haven meeting of the Fight for Freedom Committee last Monday, the 30th, and told Major Phillips that you had been unable to come and had suggested that I do so. I showed them our posters etc., which were greatly admired and approved, and gave them a few samples. There were only fourteen people present, but they were extremely earnest. Mr. Horace D. Taft and I were the only members of our Committee. I joined and subscribed a small sum to Fight for Freedom, and I advocated union of the two committees. Mr. Cusick, executive secretary of the national headquarters of Fight for Freedom, approved of amalgamation in Connecticut, if we worked it out; but he thought that, nationally, it should not be forced. (I know you have heard the idea expressed that perhaps the apathy of our national headquarters towards union with Fight for Freedom might be due to a few careerists there; and I have heard, confidentially, that the Fight for Freedom people showed their disinterestedness by offering to resign all offices, if it would conduce to amalgamation of the work of the two committees.). Whether through prodding or because the sea how the wind is blowing, our headquarters have just now become as bold as Fight for Freedom. All the more reason for union. Also, "Fight for Freedom: Defend America", or "Defend America: Fight for Freedom" is a name with more appeal than either of the present names, I think. Mr. Taft accepted a very honorary State chairmanship. Major Phillips's selection by the national committee was confirmed, etc.; and Mr. Taft, Mr. Bennett and I were asked to supply names for a State committee and for local chairmen. I said I would consult you and give Mr. Taft some suggestions by the middle of next week, if possible.

You at our State headquarters no doubt know who are the most ardent and active members of our local chapters. It occurs to me that, if you would give me a list of them, each one might be asked to join Fight for Freedom also and to assume local chairmanship for it. Then, if you yourself would also join Fight for Freedom, and be chairman of and select a State executive committee, we should not only get the most useful people into the joint work but we should also have a practical union which would almost automatically become official. It seems to me silly and inefficient to have two separate organizations doing the same work; Up to now, Fight for Freedom have been the shock troops in our campaign to awaken the people to their peril, and to force Congress and the President to do their duties. I think Mr. Cusick still thinks we are too much for defense and not enough for attack. When he looked at our poster he said he would like to see "victory" instead of defense. I said I should like to see "alliance" instead of cooperation. However, in my opinion, the masses are interested in victory only as defense and are not quite ready for the word "alliance": so I think our emblem is perfect and should be adopted by our committee (national) and by Fight for Freedom as well. I sincerely hope that you will agree to the role it seems to me you and the rest of us should play in the organization of Fight for Freedom in Connecticut,--being a merger of persons and facilities and efforts,--forcast, indeed by the joint sponsorship of your recent Hartford meeting.

Very sincerely
F. H. Taft