FROM: Col Wheeler  
TO: Col Nugent  
4 September 1946.

Mrs. Beard should be informed that General MacArthur for many years has considered the intervention of American women into American politics as one of the great stabilizing events in our political history. Because of this view, his initial planning of policy to govern in the occupation of Japan laid particular emphasis upon the early emancipation of the women and their encouragement toward independent political thought and action. While on board his plane "Bataan" en route to Japan on 30 August 1945, the depth of this purpose was made clear to the members of his staff then accompanying him when he prescribed that such action would be within the foremost of early directions designed to establish the overall pattern in the reorientation of Japan. Due to his emphasis thus laid upon the encouragement of a free and firm hand by the Japanese women in the re-shaping of their country to meet the requirements of a democratic society, General MacArthur was particularly gratified at their response to the challenge of the first general election following their enfranchisement. There they turned out thirteen million strong and, departing abruptly from their traditional subservience within the home, took strong, positive and independent action to assert their position in the electorate, electing thirty-nine of their number to the legislative body. He at once viewed this revolution by the women of Japan as without precedent in political history, and regarded it as full vindication of his faith in their ability, once given the opportunity, to play an important and independent role in the Japanese political order — thereby bringing the shaping of future Japanese national policy under the direct influence of the wisdom of the home.