

CHARLES HEBBERD
Spokane, Washington

February 19, 1944

To The Members of the
Republican State Central Committee:

In a statement mailed to members of the Republican state central committee on December 29th, I urged the filling of the vacancy now existing in the office of Republican National Committeeman from this state and declared my candidacy for appointment to that position.

In that statement I said concerning Frederick E. Baker, Seattle, who has been acting as political agent of one of the Republican candidates for the nomination for President while serving as acting National Committeeman under proxy of William G. Reed, resigned:

"The first qualification of a National Committeeman or party official is impartiality among the various candidates for Republican nominations. Baker has disqualified himself by acting as agent for a candidate and I feel that this vacancy should be filled at once by the State Central Committee, as the new national committeeman nominated by the State Convention in May will not take office until the National Convention in June has met and adjourned.

"If appointed to fill the vacancy I pledge impartiality and a square deal to the friends of all candidates for the Republican presidential nomination."

On January 8th, replying to a committeewoman from a west-side county who asked me about my position in reference to activities of a national committeeman, I stated:

"As to my own attitude toward the National Committeemanship, I stated in effect in my letter to the state committeemen and committeewomen, of which you received a copy, that if they thought I was best qualified to handle the matters of the office, I should appreciate their support; or, if they knew of someone else better qualified, to please bring him forth. I then said, "In any event, let's get this present mess in state party affairs cleaned up before the 1944 campaign starts." I stand on those statements. The office is of no importance to me and I may be of no importance to the office.

"I note in a Baker-inspired J. W. Gilbert article in the Seattle Times of about December 26th that the statement is made that "Opposition to Hebbard is based upon the belief that the veteran Spokane leader represents a phase of the Republican Party which has gone forever." This "belief" of Baker or his friends is likewise of no importance to me. But if the Party has to depend in 1944 exclusively upon Republicans who have arrived since Baker emerged into politics in 1940, God pity the Party and the country.

"If I were national committeeman, I would conceive it my job to help get every Republican, of whatever age, sex, or condition, active in the Party affairs. And we'll need a lot of others too, if we are to win in 1944.

"Answering your questions: (1) whether I am committed to any respective candidate and (2) whether I feel that a national committeeman is entitled to take any position whatever in advance of the convention and in the selection of the candidate:

"(1) I am absolutely not committed to any candidate or any candidate's managers or committee. If I were so committed and under obligations, I wouldn't consider myself fit to represent the Party as national committeeman. If I was national committeeman and felt myself impelled to get out and beat the tom-toms for a particular candidate, I'd resign the national

committeemanship and join up with the organization of my favored candidate. I'm not anti- or pro- any candidate--Willkie, Dewey, Bricker, MacArthur, or anyone else. As I stated in a public meeting the other day, I'm for the candidate who has demonstrated, by the time of the National Convention, that he is the best candidate. I don't know who that is yet.

"(2) I certainly feel that a national committeeman is entitled to take his personal position in reference to candidates in advance of the convention, but it must be his personal and not his official position; and he must not use his office to advance his personal preference."

In conclusion I wish to urge upon the members of the State Central Committee the reason why this vacancy should be filled by the State Central Committee at this time. The new committeeman nominated by the state convention in May does not take office until the National Convention meets and adjourns. Baker, under the Reed proxy, will continue to act as National Committeeman from this state through the National Convention.

Notwithstanding statements that have been made in Seattle to the contrary, the National Committee will meet in Chicago about a week previous to the National Convention. One of its principal jobs at this meeting will be to hear and pass upon, in the first instance, all cases of contested delegations and delegates and to prepare the preliminary roll of delegates to the convention. This preliminary roll determines the right of voting in the convention until the permanent organization of the convention is effected and the convention credentials committee is appointed, re-hears the contested cases and its report is adopted by the convention.

In the regrettable National Convention of 1912 the convention met on Tuesday and the permanent organization was not effected until Saturday. For four days the convention acted under the control of the delegates included in the National committee's preliminary roll of delegates and it was the claimed unfairness of the national committee in deciding contests and making up the preliminary roll of delegates that precipitated the "Bull Moose" split in the convention.

It seems obvious that a candidate's manager can not act with perfect impartiality on contests and preparing the temporary roll of the convention. It is for this reason among others that I earnestly urge the filling of the vacancy in the office of National Committeeman for Washington at this time.

In view of the foregoing, my name will be presented as a candidate to fill the vacancy now existing in the office of National Committeeman from Washington at the meeting of the Republican State Central Committee called by the majority of that committee to meet at Yakima, Washington, Saturday, February 26, 1944 at 10 o'clock A.M.

Respectfully submitted

CHARLES HEBBERD

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'C. Hebbard', with a large, stylized initial 'C' and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.