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FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, April 21

A REMARKABLE POLITICAL CONVENTION

On April 18th, William Hirth, Publisher of THE MISSOURI FARMER, and President of the Missouri Farmers' Association, gave out the following statement at Columbia

In my opinion, the recent so-called State Democratic convention in St. Louis was the most shameless gathering of its kind in the history of Missouri. In commenting upon it, George Wallace, veteran political correspondent of the Kansas City Star, calls it "the strangest convention in a half century," while Curtis Betts, veteran political correspondent of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, properly designated the leadership that overwhelmingly dominated it as the "Clark-Pendergast forces," and both of these men, who have grown gray watching the political pots boil in Missouri, emphasize the intense hatred which these "Clark-Pendergast forces" and the old "court house ring" delegates manifested toward Governor Stark — and this hatred was abetted by the 505 delegates from Kansas City and Jackson County who were headed by James M. Pendergast, heir apparent of the old boys, and yet only some two weeks ago the indignant voters of Kansas City dealt this old crowd a smashing defeat by a majority of over 20,000! The first opportunity the delegates had to show their teeth to the Governor was when the chairman mentioned the name of ex-Governor Park, an erstwhile idol of the machine, who was greeted by a

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storm of applause, while when a moment later he mentioned Governor Stark, the latter was roundly hissed and booed.

As the convention got under way, a movement was started to defeat the Governor as one of the delegates at large — a courtesy that has been extended to governors from time out of mind — and it was all that Senator Clark and his chief lieutenants could do to stop this effort, and the Senator did this not out of personal consideration for Stark, but

because he realized that it would have been a blunder to have carried the convention's open hate this far. In trying to find an explanation for the intense bitterness of the "court house rings" toward the Governor, some of the newspaper reporters opined that possibly it was because he has not treated them generously in the matter of patronage, but this doesn't hold water — unlike most governors, Stark has made no effort to build up a personal political machine, and therefore there is no occasion to hate him on this score.

The reason the several thousand self-seeking politicians who spoke for the Democratic party of Missouri in St. Louis the other day, and who were overwhelmingly dominated by the "Clark-Pendergast forces", feel so bitter toward the Governor is because they regard him as a "traitor" — instead of permitting himself to become the pliant tool of the Big Boss as they had expected him to,

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he became the champion of all the men and women of Missouri who love decent government, and started the ball rolling by appointing an honest board of election commissioners in Kansas City, and then he followed this up by demanding that the Legislature take the Kansas City police department out from under the machine's control. Through these two simple acts Stark dealt the machine a death blow, breaking up the evil playhouse through which for some dozen years or more it had been casting tens of thousands of fraudulent votes in Kansas City and Jackson County, and by this fraudulent means nominating and electing every important public official in Missouri, and also dictating the State's chief governmental policies. This is why, as he sat in their midst, they booed and hissed the Governor's name in St. Louis the other day. This is why in their blind hate they wanted to defeat him as a delegate to the National Convention — this is why the old Kansas City crowd, and the "court house rings," are sending out the word into the highways and byways of Missouri these days, "Beat Stark for Senator! Let's teach the governors of the future that political death will be their reward if they dare to do their own thinking!"

Meanwhile, as they many thousands of Democratic men and women in Missouri whom the "court house rings" can't control contemplate what happened in this so-called Democratic convention, what will their reflections be?

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What will be the answer of the legions who gave Judge Douglas such a smashing victory for the Supreme Court two years ago? What will be the reaction of the fighting men and women of Kansas City who dealt the remnants of the machine such a crushing defeat only a few days ago? As these men and women realize that the same old gang whose erstwhile leaders robbed the taxpayers of this State out of M millions of dollars, including the ill-fated millions in the impounded insurance funds, as it dawns on these voters that this same old Plunderbund still overwhelmingly controls the machinery of the Democratic party in this State, won't there be "blood on the moon"? When the August primary rolls around, will these men and women with whom decent government has become a passion permit the most courageous Governor Missouri has ever had to be slaughtered by the minions of the most conscienceless gang of political crooks that ever fastened their dirty hands on the public affairs of a great state?

To show how completely the convention was dominated by the old machine crowd, it took delight in re-electing James P. Aylward National Committeeman by acclamation -- Aylward, often pridefully referred to in the good old days as the "brains of the Pendergast machine"! And although Stark's name has become nationally famous as a champion of clean government, his name wasn't

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even mentioned in the convention resolutions, nor by a single convention speaker, except by insulting implications. Verily, what an inviting situation for the Republican leaders of Missouri, as they plan for the big battle in November ! Meanwhile as I have said, what effect the insolent challenge of this convention will have in the August primary upon the hosts of Democratic men and women of Missouri who do their own thinking will be tremendously interesting. The overwhelming object of the old machine leaders of Kansas City and the "court house rings" is to "punish" Stark by defeating him for the Senate, and if they succeed, two things will happen -- first, with Stark's scalp dangling at their belt, the old machine crowd will have been triumphantly restored to power, and second, the Democratic voters of our State will stand revealed before the Country as

having abandoned to the wolves a man who took his political life in his hands in an effort to restore the fair name of Missouri to National respect. And with the fateful issue clearly before them, will the Democratic voters of Missouri permit this to happen? I cannot believe so. In my opinion they will answer the insolence of this so-called Democratic convention in a manner the politicians will not forget in many a day. In Its Issue of April 17, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch concluded a scathing editorial in these words: "The sterling service of Governor Stark's

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administration is a value that cannot be tarnished by the venom of machine politicians. And the political future of Lloyd Stark is in the hands of the people of Missouri — not in the claws of the 'court house rings!'"

Four years ago when I announced against Stark for governor, I did so not because I thought I could win, but because I wanted to do what I could to arouse the people of Missouri against the Pendergast machine, the rottenest crowd of political crooks that ever obtained a strangle hold on a great American commonwealth. When Stark took his seat, and when sometime later he turned on the machine, I immediately gave him the benefit of my modest support, and this I expect to continue to do. In my opinion, Stark is entitled to the fighting support of every lover of decent government in Missouri. In a final word on this convention controlled by the 'Clark-Pendergast forces," there is an old saying, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad."