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W. FAIRLEIGH ENRIGHT

PRESIDENT

EMPIRE TRUST COMPANY

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

June 21, 1939

Governor Lloyd C. Stark,
Executive Offices,
Jefferson City, Missouri

My dear Governor:

News of a probable shakeup in the WPA administration in Missouri is already beginning to bring retaliations. Mr. Marvin Finch, whom you may recall as the man who gave us the best evidence as to what was going on around here in the WPA last Summer, has been a timekeeper on local projects for years. Ever since Mr. Finch made his affidavits he has been moved around to jobs that were very inconvenient for him and now he was recently called in and moved to a job at Bean Lake approximately twenty-five miles from here which will cost him about a dollar a day transportation. He requested the area timekeeper who I think is one of the old Pendergast and Mat Murray crowd, for the reason for this transfer but he merely told him he would have to find a way to get there. As I have written you before, Marvin Finch deserves our consideration and from what I hear I believe we will shortly be in a position to favor him. However, I wanted you to have this information in your file.

Sincerely yours,

W. F. Enright

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St. L. Star-Times 6/2/39

OUT WITH MATT MURRAY!

Matt Murray, two-job representative of the collapsing Pendergast machine, chooses to risk a defiance of the people of Missouri rather than the people of Kansas City alone.

He chooses to try to hang on to his job as state WPA director rather than his job as director of Kansas City's department of public works.

The temperature of public opinion in Jackson County must be high, indeed, to persuade Murray that his chances of remaining in the WPA are better than his chances of clinging to his \$8,000 municipal post.

But the impropriety of Murray's WPA position did not depend primarily on the mere fact that he continued to draw a salary wrung from the Kansas City taxpayers. This Pendergast lieutenant, master of jobs in Kansas City, should never have been appointed to the state WPA. The chief trouble in administering the WPA honestly, so far as political manipulation is concerned, has been the presence of machine henchmen like Murray, in numerous states, in positions of administrative responsibility.

Gov. Stark has paid just and proper tribute to President Roosevelt for the chief executive's support in Stark's drive to break the Pendergast power in Kansas City.

It would be inexcusable if this support should now be withdrawn and Murray permitted to retain his clutch on the thousands of WPA workers in Missouri.

If the President and Col. Harrington, national WPA administrator, tolerate this, it will amount to last-minute aid and comfort to the discredited Pendergast organization and a direct indignity to the people of Missouri who want to get rid of the Matt Murrays as well as the Tom Pendergasts.

Murray must go as director of the state WPA. If he refuses to resign he should be immediately and summarily fired by Washington.

St. Louis Globe Dem. 6/21/39

Murray Should Resign

Matthew S. Murray has resigned as Kansas City Director of Public Works. His record demands he should also quit the federal post as WPA director in Missouri.

Despite recurrent criticism, Mr. Murray held on to his Kansas City job after he was appointed state relief director. Granted a leave of absence from the municipal office, he continued to draw an \$8000 I salary from Kansas City and contended he administered the Public Works Department. He kept WPA headquarters in Jefferson City and was paid \$6000 from federal funds for relief direction.

When the matter was brought to the attention of Administrator Harry L. Hopkins during his regime as national WPA head, Mr. Hopkins position was that he didn't know anything about what Kansas City paid Director Murray. The WPA has a rule against any employe holding a political job, but Mr. Murray's K. C. berth was regarded as "non-political."

Director Murray was a veteran lieutenant of the Pendergast machine, which accounted for his holding two jobs and which may also have accounted for the broad interpretation of WPA regulations in Washington headquarters.

No one at all familiar with political conditions during the campaign last year for election of a Supreme Court Judge failed to realize that pressure was brought to bear on WPA workers in certain localities to support Judge J. V. Billings, Pendergast candidate. In the 1936 election there was also evidence the WPA was being used politically in the state. If Director Murray did not personally exert political influence on relievers, he could not have failed to know of these tactics.

Now credible testimony has been offered that his Public Works Department in Kansas City was stuffed with chiselers, the pay roll padded. Mayor Smith demanded Mr. Murray quit there or give up his WPA job. Yesterday the director resigned the Kansas City sinecure.

The Murray background politically is the background of a discredited bossism. His administration of WPA in the state has been undistinguished, at times frankly political.

There are too many men capable of intelligent, honest public service to retain Mr. Murray in the WPA office. He should be replaced.