

The following statement is subject to release next Wednesday, August 10th.

The Recent Primary Victory

By William Hirth, Publisher, The Missouri Farmer, Columbia, Mo.

The recent Primary election was not only the greatest blow ever struck for decent government in the history of Missouri, but it was more than this—it demonstrated that when the people finally tire of political bossism they can and will arise in their might, and smite it hip and thigh, and in this respect the election should be a grim reminder to political bosses in our State for years to come. However, while the rebuke administered to the corrupt Kansas City machine was like an avenging wrath, and has started the big boss on the way out as the dictator of our state government, the job is by no means finished, and it will not be until we have made his endorsement of a candidate for state office a liability that will mean the certain defeat of such a candidate. In proof that the job isn't finished, as the smoke of the Primary battle began to lift, Mr. Pendergast's henchmen in Kansas City and elsewhere began saying, "We must forget the bitterness of the past, and face the common enemy as a united party in November, and in times to come," etc., and the real meaning of this pouring oil on the troubled waters is the hope that the corrupt Kansas City machine will soon be doing business at the old stand in the old way, and unless the men and women who were responsible for the recent victory remain awake, this is exactly what will happen.

As for myself, and the small extent to which it matters, I shall not be a party to a love feast of the above kind, and I say this as one who was making Democratic speeches when most of the Pendergast field marshals were still sucking their big toes; at the solicitation of the National Democratic Committee, my voice went out over the leading Corn Belt broadcasting stations from St. Louis to Minneapolis for Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936, and except that I am not of the yellow dog variety, I expect to remain a Democrat as long as I live. But if the time should ever come when Democratic success in Missouri depends upon the Pendergast machine, which during recent years has become a stench in the nostrils of the entire Nation, then, for one, I will prefer defeat, and "if this be treason, let those who will make the most of it."

The sinister meaning of the recent Pendergast challenge involved two things that the people of our State should never forget—first, it sought to place the unclean hands of the machine upon our highest judicial tribunal, and, second, in so doing it sought above all else to "punish" and crush the Governor of a great commonwealth because he had refused to become a tool of the big boss, and in my opinion such brazen effrontery should not be forgotten or forgiven. During recent years Mr. Pendergast has for all

practical purposes been the state government of Missouri — not only has he named a U. S. Senator, Governor and other high state officials, but he has determined vital state policies, as witness his o. k. of the impounded fire insurance fund scandal by which the policy holders of this State were defrauded out of millions of dollars.

In his recent addresses Governor Stark declared that either the Democratic party must purge itself of corrupt boss control, or suffer repudiation at the hands of the people, and he is everlastingly right—no political party can live, or deserves to live, that is in league with a political machine that has cast tens of thousands of fraudulent votes in times gone by, and which, until a fearless U. S. District Attorney took a hand, assumed the insolent attitude of, “What are you going to do about it?” I note that the big boss and his lieutenants are indignant because thousands of Republicans called for Democratic ballots in the recent Primary, and thus contributed to his undoing, but so far as I am concerned, I freely pay tribute to their stalwart citizenship. During recent years have not these Republicans shared with us Democrats the humiliation of Pendergastism in the control of our state government? Do they not love their State just as much as we do, and do they not pay burdensome taxes to its support as the rest of us do? Are they not rearing and educating their children in Missouri? In my opinion the vast majority of these Republicans will go through, and vote the Democratic ticket in November, and thus the suggestion of certain Republican politicians that they come back into the party fold is an insult, and especially is this true of those who made affidavits in the above premises.

Meanwhile, as I said in a recent statement, the next job that confronts the Democratic voters who gave Pendergastism a smashing blow on August 2nd is to clean out the State Capitol of those state officials who owe their offices to the Kansas City boss, and who did everything in their power in the recent campaign to help him extend his influence over the Supreme Court, and to “punish” the most courageous Governor Missouri has had in many a day. I have nothing against the above gentlemen personally, but as matters stand their hundreds of employees are at the constant beck and call of Mr. Pendergast, and thus in the recent campaign, and at the expense of our taxpayers, they beat the brush for Judge Billings from Iowa to Arkansas, and should we permit this vast power to remain in his hands in future elections? The answer is from now on to send to certain defeat any candidate for state office who bears the Pendergast brand.

Also we need to clean out the “court house rings” which did yeoman service for Judge Billings in the recent campaign, and this because during late years these politicians have wanted to stand in with the Kansas City boss in the division of political spoils—here again the people need to remain awake, and defeat for re-election every county official who bears the Pendergast brand. Again, no doubt the machine will endeavor to harass Governor Stark in every way possible in the coming Legislature, and the time to settle

this matter is between now and November, and therefore unless candidates openly pledge themselves to work with the Governor, and to vote against spending the taxpayers' money like drunken sailors as recent Pendergast controlled Legislatures have done, they should be defeated, and this regardless of which party ticket they are on.

Now that we have shown Mr. Pendergast that the people still rule, and that they are tired of his arrogant dictation in State affairs, we should finish the job, and thus for all time remove from our great State the stigma of corrupt boss control.