

Confidential and Private

Kansas City, Mo., July 11th, 1935

Hon. Lloyd Stark,  
Louisiana, Mo.

My dear Major:

This is going to be quite lengthy, so kindly hoar with same. I have things in my mind that I want to say to you. Knowing you to have been an officer in our Navy, taught to watch for "danger ahead", it has occurred to me I ought to give you a picture of a situation that might "could be", then you will be prepared to combat a situation that is remote, unmatured and a natural thought of mine, no groundwork for a fact; just a plain hunch as I see it and one that could come to pass. I do not mean to confuse you, to lead you to believe any such thing exists, yet it could be in the making. It could be a situation that would be honorable in every sense so far as Mr. P., is concerned. When he left he said the track was wide open. If the one who develops the strength-the great strength, then it would net be amiss for him to throw the Organization to that particular strength. Here is what I have in mind, and I want to warn you away from the trap. Sometimes, no matter new smart we might be, how much one is schooled in intrigue, yet he can be caught napping, innocently enough, just as the abyss at Ohain, France, caught Napoleon and lost him Waterloo.

Has it ever occurred to you that Mathew Murray, Director of Public Works, now Relief Director thru the good graces of our brilliant administration down East, might be something sinister in the making? You know he is an out state man, is extra close to T.J., and has proven himself LOYALTY itself to the man. Murray came here thru Willie Ross of the Ross Construction Company, off the State Highway Department, was put in as Director of public works over the violent protest of Cas Welch. He was unknown to T.J.P. Yet, he played ball, made good and soon was a schooled and closed mouthed public official, has more than made good with the local citizenry. He is highly regarded by all creeds, colors and politicians. Just the other night a great ovation in the way of a goodbye dinner was given him. Quite a crowd attended. Quite a bit of cheering and hurrah there.

Can't you see with this great weapon of public money in his hands, Murray will be sent throughout the state to build up here and there those political fences for the renomination of the distinguished Mr. Roosevelt? Can't you picture him putting across a great project here and there, shaking hands with every hillbilly in the state, and not forgetting Mr. Murray? Can't you visualize Mr. Murray when the ten or twelve months of spending this "dough" is up, having a statewide knowledge of everything, everybody, and then

emerging out of the picture the potential BLACK HORSE? Don't you see that picture?

Now, what I want to say is: get busy in a dignified way, tip off your workers in the rural, don't you get eloquent and make any fine tributes about this national money in our state, what a fine and splendid man and masterly way he is disbursing same. You would hang yourself, promote him at your expense, and completely annihilate that supreme moment that can be yours right now. Just ignore all expressions about this RELIEF SETUP. It's going to prove something, perhaps. Just don't get caught napping with the bait. You might innocently want to sugar up T.J., with a tribute or two to the good work of Murray's, then drop, if Murray turned out to be the black cloud behind the horizon.

I talked a long time with Cas Welch and Gil Burke this morning out at their kingdom on Fifteenth Street. I painted this same picture to him. Welch liked to have dropped out of his chair. He raised his eyebrows a number of times. I told him he ought to get busy and talk to Jim Aylward and try and get Jim interested. Welch I am sure is your friend. But as he said, 'Stark ought to be kept in the local back-ground, we don't want to show too much interest in him just yet, or, T.J., will smell a mouse and say we have been having Stark up the sleeve altogether. He thinks the farther we stay away from each other and work for the time being as we go along, better results can be made in these sort of strides.

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Gil is your friend, but he says we should let Stark go ahead and fight off anything like what I expressed. They can see it in the form of making. I did not intimate to them I was going to put you next to the thought. I know our correspondence is sacred, but with Tennessee blood flowing in my veins, I am not going to prove false and try and send a lot of flowery reports, misleading information to you. I am sincerely your friend as far as I can go. I am doing everything I can, but when I feel a thing of this kind can be in the making, I would be false to a friendship if I did not put you next to a situation that can take form.

I am not going to be unfaithful and say I heard this rumor. There is no such thing in any man's mind but my own, yet it can develop into just the thing as I have painted it. I simply am putting you on guard not to go out and boost any fine work of Murray's, because you might be boosting Murray right to the mantle you hope to drape your own shoulders with.

Another thing: You are going to see a lot of funny names here and there showing up as prospective candidates for the office, many will be phony. That is to confuse and get the strong men they might fear to run their races now, and the black cloud to sweep as the compromise. You will remember in the outset of our letter relations, I stated to you to watch that feature. You do that, too. You are getting in front of the city workers, voters and outlying counties in the campaign of "he's a friend of a friend of mine". Too much

heat ahead, as Welch says; won't do any good.

Welch will fight off the Murray thing to a frazzle if that should be the setup. He will start working on Aylward. He listens, does not commit himself, but I believe Gil Burke, myself, Stocker, Stokes and others are going to make him work harder now- especially since I gave him the Murray picture. He will work hard to sew up Aylward.

Pendergast's return is premature indeed. None can figure it out. I knew Mrs. P., wasn't well, but whether that is the direct cause I don't know. But I wanted to get this off to you before the big return.

This all may sound like a lot of hooey to you, but then a lot of bad ideas, bad dreams- some times, a fellow can glean a fact from them.

With every kind wish, I am,

Your friend.

Jim Hurst

P.S. - Just a week ago I received an invitation to come up to Parkville and attend the closing Chamber of Commerce reception. I was given to understand with great gusto - that the honorable Dan Nee would make the big address and was the feature.

Just put this in your little black book: This is some fine Italian work of the Hon. Henry Dillingham, Platte City brother-in-law of the late Francis Wilson. For your information in confidence, this Mr. Dillingham is passe' and poison with T.J.P. Maybe when he gets back and I get the right moment, I won't dramatize this incident to Mr. P. Maybe that will stop nephew Jim Pendergast. Also, gives you the lowdown on Henry. The invitation was extended me thru Mr. Ed Breen of the Farmers' Exchange Bank.