

Otterville, Mo., July 11th, 1935.

Major Lloyd C. Stark,
Louisiana, Missouri.

Dear Major:-

I don't know you personally but have been following your public record rather closely. I was a close friend and ardent admirer of Dr. A. W. Nelson of Bunceton and out of all the prospective candidates for governor in 1936 your record comes nearer paralleling his record than any of the others. We need a man with both business and political sense and with a stable background that will remove the feeling of too much "professional politics" and "brother-in-law" stuff.

I think that every candidate should invite the support of the Kansas City and StLouis organizations. These organizations are a very necessary part of our party organization but they should be allowed only their proportionate part of the spoils of victory when we are victorious. To allow them to continue to dominate the party outstate is inviting disaster. A smart man in the governor's chair could circumscribe their activities without alienating their support and cooperation, which would leave him free to conduct his administration so as to meet with the approval of business interests and the party in general.

However, should you fail to meet Tom's requirements and not be "picked" by him as our next governor I am not so sure that the Gods have decreed yours a lost cause. Dr. Nelson came to the Springfield convention in 1924 without the benefit of any state wide prestige and left there the most popular candidate in the history of Democratic primaries in Missouri. There is no valid reason why you could not do the same thing, and then you may not have to contend with 500,000 fanatical Ku Kluxers in the general campaign.

I do not presume to offer you political advice so we will call it refreshing your memory. You remember former governor Frederick D. Gardner was strong for individual county organization. A final drive by a few friends in each county is what elected him governor. Doc Kelson was strong for the same thing and it brought good results. Francis Wilson based almost his whole campaign on a few well chosen friends in each county that he

could count on at any time - not mere hirelings, but men who would go out and preach Wilsonism day and night. It was a big job for these men to organize the state county by county but it paid big dividends in votes. Viewing politics from the side lines as I do I cannot get away from the idea that county organization is the basis of any campaign and I hope, if you enter the race, you will not overlook that factor.

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And I am urging you to enter the race. Also, I am throwing my grip, uninvited, on your Band Wagon. This should not cause any great commotion in your home office and neither should it cause any misgivings, for I do not want a job in return for my vote and what little I may be able to do for you. I have been employed by the Missouri Pacific for 22 years and I could not afford to lose my seniority for a little political job of short duration.

However, I dabble in politics as a sort of recreation. I served as county chairman (of Cooper) in 1928-29; was a member of the publicity Staff at headquarters in StLouis in 1926; edited a political column called "Reavis' Review" for the Boonville Advertiser for five years; handled a lot of Doc Nelson's preliminary campaign mail and organization work in 1924 - in fact I get a big kick out of just making myself a sort of handy-man for the boys.

So if you decide to toss in your hat I will be glad to distribute literature or do anything else I can for you in Cooper and adjoining counties - just as one of your supporters. I am sure that we can line up Cooper for you in good shape. Some of our boys who are holding jobs at Jefferson City may be a little slow to come in, at least until Big Tom makes known his preference, but a lot of them couldn't muster a corporal's guard of votes in the county anyway.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

W. R. Reavis.