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SALINE COUNTY  
Stark-for-Governor Club  
Marshall, Mo.

Office of the Secretary  
74 1/2 North Jefferson

August 12, 1936

Major Lloyd C. Stark  
Louisiana, Missouri

Dear Major,

The hardest job I have had during this campaign was calling you up in the early hours of the morning and telling you that Saline county had let you down and it was fine of you to take it as you did.

Two weeks before this round up you would have carried this county by three to four thousand votes but there was a combination of units and circumstances that ruined us, and I have been trying to see where I might have done differently and I have about come to the conclusion that our greatest mistake was my fault in that I advised you not to appoint an official manager for this county. Had we done so I believe it would have caused all factions to work under one head and have stopped the self appointed campaign managers from talking and losing votes.

What I am going to say I hope that you will keep confidential and in the spirit in which I write it. Here is the situation as I found it and I believe Walter Robertson will verify my statements.

In the first places the M.F.A. claim Saline county as their strongest county — have a large store and elevator and a lot of members-- and those members certainly worked and there was a lot of money spent by them here.

Second, there are 2800 Republican votes in this county and only 600 voted in the Republican column, the rest -- 2200 -- voted for Hirth to cripple us and the organization.

Third, two years ago, when I was ill, the K.C. organization appointed Clarence Rittersbacher as their representative in this county without consulting anyone but George Robertson, and it was a big mistake. He was made Labor Commissioner of W.P.A. at Sedalia and when I refused to handle the patronage of the W.P.A., appointed Percy Brown, circuit clerk, to do so. Percy then gathered the idea that be was all powerful and had the organization in K.C. behind him and picked Dan Porter to run for

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sheriff and tied your campaign in with him, making the statement that he was the representative of Mr. Pendergast in Saline county and threatening all those who were against Porter with the wrath of Mr. Pendergast. He lost all around and caused a great deal of strife and discord and made more enemies for the organization and we had a lot of antagonism to Mr. Pendergast to overcome -- and couldn't do it.

Then Ruth Vawter, daughter of the committee woman from Marshall, and secretary for Percy Brown, fought the Saline county Stark-for-Governor Club by selling buttons for the Traveling Mens' Club, which she said was the only official one and claiming that she would dispense all the patronage when you were elected. That hurt too -- and her mother was defeated at the polls 2 to 1.

Then there was the Insurance fight. George Robertson is a good friend of mine and what I say is in all fairness to him and I only blame him for using poor judgement. His brother, Marion, ran for prosecuting attorney and George came up here Friday before the primary with four other employees of the Insurance department and made every precinct in the county, working for you and Marion. In the first place, George never had any part in Politics here until 1932 and he worked then for his brother Marion and to some extent for Senator Wilson. He received his appointment through the efforts of his father-in-law, Mr. Hunt, the banker at Columbia, and it caused a lot of criticism here at the time, for the general public didn't feel that he deserved it and that it shouldn't be credited to Saline county. With the Insurance scandal the only thing the Republicans had to fight us on, it looked like the Insurance department was over anxious to support you and that is the cause of the town of Marshall going against you. Until he came in, you had no opposition here at all and, as I said, George thought he was doing the right thing and I can't blame him in the least but facts are facts and I sure hope he will not come back just before the November election and repeat the offense because we are going to have a hard time holding the line, as it is.

Then there was our county chairman, Dr. Davidson, we all thought he was for you but he and Jim Alyward had a controversy about 6 months ago and it looks like he laid down on you, at least, he made no

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efforts for you in the last two weeks of the primary race and did favor the Hirth regime in the round up, although he was a member of the club and one of the advisory board. Someone had Grover Childers sent here Saturday night to speak for you and though I remonstrated with Col. Bouchard, he wouldn't do anything about it. Childers came in, made a fine Grover Childers for Governor in 1940 speech, and eulogized the three K.C. organizations and that in front of a crowd of 5000 people lost you a lot of votes.

That is the cause as well as your friends can find it out and if you are in Jefferson City I

wish you would go to see Walter Robertson in Dwight Brown's office and talk to him. Walter came in and really did some good and George Bryant did exactly the right thing -- came in, called on some of his friends quietly, voted, and left.

As to this fall — I am afraid we are going to need a lot of help here. The state senator, Joe Kennedy, was defeated -- barely carrying this county and I understand Ewen is not popular in Pettis, so it looks like Paul Groeschel will win and we still don't know what the Hirth men are going to do. Frankly, I am alarmed for the first time. There is so much sentiment against the organization and the Insurance department that it is hard to say what turn state politics will make. Roosevelt is safe here and that may balance things in our favor.

Please do not quote me about George Robertson, as I said, I think a lot of him and don't want to hurt his feelings. However, anything else that I have written, you may quote me if you see fit.

Hoping to see you in the near future and with best personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

H. R. Conway