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KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Lebanon, Mo.,

January 26, 1936

Mr. Jesse W. Barrett

1117, 506 Olive St.

St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Jesse:

I am answering yours of a few days ago with inclosure and will endeavor to give you a true picture of the situation down here in Laclede and Camden counties. Other than a few days when it was published in the papers that you and Mr. Winters were holding conferences, I have heard no outward expressions on the subject whatever by anyone here or in Camden County, but since receiving your letter I have interviewed several of the leading Republicans - committee men and so on - and they all seem surprised as they were under the impression that you had withdrawn in his favor. They could give no reason why they had formed such an opinion other than his immediate announcement after your consultation with him. You know how these things go so early in the campaign; no one seems interested enough to talk very much about it. Therefore, so far as I can find out, there is no outspoken sentiment for or against anyone.

Now, Jesse, for the sake of old friendship, I would hate to see you make the race and lose, but, as you know, I have had a lot of experience in this political game, both in and out of the city. I started in early to defeat old Bill Bitch at Hannibal with Dick Giles and after three attempts we succeeded, but even at that I had to come to St. Louis and get three carloads of voters off the Union Station, which was being bult at that time, and take them up to Hannibal and vote them. My last endeavor in the political field was the three campaigns of Henry Kiel for Mayor, and, as the negro said "I had sperience" and know just about what it takes. Just before leaving St. Louis my best friend and family physician - Dr. D. C. Todd - formerly President of the Board of Education- confided in me that he was a potential candidate for Mayor of St. Louis on the Republican ticket. He wanted to know what I though of it as he and I had worked together in the Kiel campaign. I told him frankly that unless he had some way, and some undeground system, of raising a hugh campaign fund it would just simple be "love's labor lost, "for no one knows those dirty rats there in the city better than I do. They nave traded many a good can off the midnight before election day. It seems to me that the same thing will apply to the gubernatorial campaign. Pendergast is going to make a hard fight, but I believe and

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hope he will be defeated, and it can be done with the proper organization, but a half hearted fight would be just a waste of time and money.

For your enlightenment, I will say that I sat in the game with Ed. KoeLn when Hyde was being considered for Governor. He made three trips to see Koeln and one of the times I was there. When Mr. Hyde promised that Koeln could name the Police Commissioners and Election Commissioners right then and there he became a candidate and was elected, but, of course, not all of these same elements enter into the coming campaign as I think the Kiel and Koeln political prestige has been somewhat dimmed by the hard times and the age of both of these men as Koeln is now about seventy-three and Kiel

about sixty-six. So all and all, much of their influence has faded out and a good live organization in the city with the spilt up of the Democrats there ought to win out.

Seventy-five per cent of the Italians voters of St. Louis, if properly handled, will vote the Republican ticket. I know whereof I speak because I have many friends among those people and about December 1 attended a political meeting - quite a gathering of these people, many of whom were my personal friends. Don't be misled about the Italians as generally spoken of. There are two separate classes of them in St. Louis- one is the genuine Italian from Northern Italy and these are separate and apart from the bandit class of Sicilians who come from the island and Southern Italy. As little as you may think of it, these two classes will kill each other quicker than they will kill a stranger. This same thing applies to the Assyrian. They are divided into two classes with about four hundred in each class. The higher class and better class are represented by E. C. Soufori, a very fine man, a mason and Knight Templar, a Presbyterian. I have been acquainted with him since the World's Fair. He is now a solicitor for the Advertising Department of the Union Labor paper - I have forgotten the name of it. The other four hundred are more or less the bandit type and inhabit Chouteau Avenue from the free bridge east and south and in that neighborhood. I merely mention these things to show you that I pretty well understand the St. Louis situation. Should you decide to run, it would be well for you to get acquainted with Dr. D. C. Todd for he practically controls Dago Hill, and also the majority of the Women's clubs in the city.

Another fine fellow for you to meet is C. A. Neuenhahn, Pres. of the Central States Tie and Lumber Company, in the Arcade Building. He formerly lived in North St. Louis and he and I served on the Board of Deacons of the Fourth Christian Church together and are long time friends. He has a wonderful influence in the city among the church people, and also at Herman, Mo., as this is his old home town and he has many relatives and friends there. However, these are matters for further consideration should you decide to run.

So, Jesse, I am with you like I was with Dr. Todd, if you are in a position, and you

should be, to influence a good sized campaign fund distributed throughout the State to people who know how to use it legitimately and not double cross you and use your money to elect the other fellow, I see no reason why, with your clean political record, you should not win. whatever little talk there is about M. Winters, conceding that he is a good can and that he ran a good race before, yet the fact remains that he was defeated and this will be

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used against him. So, all in all, I have tried to give you just simply my personal opinion of the matter and without any knowledge whatever of what is going on in the rest of the State. I want you to know, however, that whichever way it goes, I am with you and ready to do whatever you command.

Cordially yours,

C. E. Blair