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OFFICIAL ORGAN

OF THE MISSOURI FARMERS' ASSOCIATION — THE MOST POWERFUL FARMERS
ORGANIZATION IN THE CORN BELT.

THE MISSOURI FARMER

Missouri's Greatest Farm Paper

Columbia, Missouri

January 1, 1936 [1937]

Hon. Jesse W. Barrett,

506 Olive Street,

St. Louis, Missouri

My dear General:

I have your letter of December 29th, and I herewith inclose a statement which I am releasing to the newspapers in the premises you mention. I hope you will seek the first opportunity to comment on this situation yourself, as I don't want to be placed in a compromising position in times to come. I think you will agree that nothing that you or any other Republican leader did influenced my support of you, but that I did this wholly in the interest of decent politics as I saw the situation.

We are sending you the extra copies of our Christmas issue, and I hope the New Year will deal kindly with you and yours,

Sincerely,

William Hirth

WH:GB

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A Public Statement

Recently certain Pendergast newspapers have charged that my support of Jesse W. Barrett for Governor against Major Stark in the recent campaign was influenced by certain contributions the Barrett for Governor Club is alleged to have made toward my campaign for the Democratic nomination, and they have also charged that the above Club carried extensive advertising in my farm paper, and I take this opportunity to brand these charges as deliberate and malicious falsehoods. The first Mr. Barrett knew of my intention to support him was when my statement to this effect appeared in the newspapers some two weeks after the Primary, and neither Mr. Barrett nor any other Republican leader in this State contributed as much as a thin dime to my campaign either directly or indirectly. As we approached the November election we printed 153,000 copies of Mr. Barrett's main campaign address and other literature, and our bids for this work were subject to bids by other printers, and we lost some of Mr. Barrett's printing because others offered to do it for less, but every penny of the money referred to by the Barrett-for-Governor Club in its statement of campaign expenses was for work of this kind, and we didn't carry a single line of advertising for Mr. Barrett in The Missouri Farmer.

I make this protest because I am tired of being lied about by the machine hirelings. Of course I could obtain Judgment against the above newspapers if I cared to go into court, but since the most of them are without financial responsibility a judgment against them would be worthless. During the last 25 years I have helped the farmers of Missouri build the greatest farm organization that exists in any State, and one that has saved them millions of dollars, and so for many years I have fought for honest legislation at Jefferson City as I conceived such legislation, and again and again I have opposed the most powerful and selfish influences in Missouri in these efforts, and thus I don't believe that any responsible leader in either party in this State will think that my attitude in public

matters can be swayed by monetary or other questionable considerations. The high lights of Governor Park's administration consist of his "economy program" in the Legislature in 1933, and in his repair of the state institutions, and his demand that municipalities be permitted to adopt municipal ownership by a simple majority vote, and I believe the Governor will agree that I had much to do with initiating and supporting these things in which he takes such justifiable pride.

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So far as I am personally concerned, for the time being the recent gubernatorial contest is water over the dam, and I have no regrets either over my futile challenge to the Pendergast machine, or because of my support of Mr. Barrett. Incidentally, when the National Democratic Committee asked me to make appeals for the re-election of Roosevelt in the doubtful Corn Belt states I informed them very definitely that I did not intend to support Major Stark, and thus when they gave wide publicity to my addresses at such points as Des Moines, Minneapolis and Omaha, they did this with full knowledge of my attitude here in Missouri.

Everything I said during the campaign about the Pendergast machine was more than warranted, and had all the votes that were cast for me been counted for me the result of the Primary would have been vastly different than it was, as the recent grand Jury investigation in St. Louis demonstrated. That as our people study the wholesale vote frauds that were perpetrated in Kansas City and St. Louis, and which are now the subject of grand Jury investigation, and the increasing buzzards' feast the lawyers are having from the impounded fire insurance funds, and other recent scandals at Jefferson City, if the henchmen of the machine don't think that a day of reckoning is coming in these premises let them continue to dwell in their fool's paradise.

During recent weeks Mr. Pendergast has given every evidence that he intends to demand his "pound of flesh" all along the line in the now administration, and how Governor-elect Stark will meet this challenge remains to be seen. Certain it is that he cannot serve the big boss and the people at the same time, and if in his vital

appointments, and in his championship of important legislation he should see fit to do his own thinking, then no man will be quicker to commend him than I. A wonderful opportunity beckons to Stark in these premises, but I repeat that he must choose between Pendergast and the people -- there is no middle ground.