

[page 1]

April 20, 1940

Honorable William Hirth,  
Columbia, Mo.

My dear Hirth:

I have your letter in which you continue to urge that I support Governor Stark for Senator. I concede you all you say about the courage the Governor displayed in his fight on the Pendergast machine, but since I feel the very existence of our form of government depends upon the overthrow of the New Deal this fall, I cannot support any New Dealer for Senator.

I cannot agree with your statement that "Governor Stark has dealt the machine a death blow", nor do I concur in the Governor's statements in the press that the machine is dead. These statements beside being, in my opinion, entirely at variance with the facts, are the very poorest psychology the Governor could adopt.

The machine is by no means dead, as the recent election in Kansas City when it cast 74,000 votes, and the State Convention in St. Louis Monday, amply demonstrate. The machine is very much alive, not only in Kansas City, but throughout the state. According to an article by Curtis Betts, there were only 400 Stark delegates out of 2,600 in the convention.

You should know the nature of reformers by this time - they will make one good fight and then lapse back into indifference.

As the matter now stands Governor Stark will, in my judgment, be badly beaten in the primary. If it be conceded that only honest votes be cast in the primary the election crooks, not only in the cities but in the counties as well, will miscount at least 25,000

Stark votes, making a difference of 30,000 votes against him in the count.

As I see it, the only thing that will save the Governor the nomination will be to raise a burning issue of an honest primary vote and an honest count of those votes. There were 60,000 votes stricken from the registration rolls in Kansas City. How many bogus votes do you suppose there are in St. Louis? There are, I should think, possibly 150,000, anyway, at least 100,000. It seems to me Governor Stark's greatest weakness is his failure to have cleaned out St. Louis. A lot of people are saying that his efforts in Kansas City resulted from his disagreement with Pendergast, and that if he is sincere about honest elections, he would do a lot more in St. Louis.

[page 2]

# 2 - Hon. W. H. 4-20-40

I do not think Charley Hay, Chairman of the St. Louis Election Board, can be depended upon as a crusader in this cause. Hay is very much a professional politician, who has run for office and held office for years. He is also something of an opportunist. For years he was the driest of the dry and then supported Al Smith, who was the wettest of the wet. He has denounced Pendergast on many a stump, and yet Pendergast endorsed him for Governor of the Philippines.

The Governor should also stress the fact that the machine is not dead and call attention to the election of Graves as a State delegate, Pendergast as a National delegate, and Aylward as National Committeeman. If he wants to get down to smaller change, he can call attention to the overwhelming victory of Little Tammany in Greene County and that H. D. Chinn, leading Pendergast man in this county, was made chairman of this county's delegation of fifty-four.

I think it likely that Truman will stay in the race as long as possible in order to delay the charge being made that Milligan is the machine candidate; then he will withdraw at the last moment so that his votes may be thrown to Milligan.

Sincerely yours,

EYM-R