

[page 1]

August 15, 1940

Honorable Manvel H. Davis,
315 Commerce Building,
Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Senator:

The light vote cast in the primary, it seems to me, indicates great lack of interest on the part of the voters in the terrible conditions present today and threatening in the future in the country at large and the ease with which the machine candidates were nominated in the Democratic primary indicates great indifference to the outrages of the Pendergast machine. These conditions, together with the fact that the Democrats cast 650,000 votes to 300,000 for the Republicans shows, I believe, we have a very hard fight ahead if we are to win Missouri this fall.

The most important element in any election, and one almost universally overlooked by campaign managers, is an honest count of the votes.

I have served repeatedly as election judge, clerk and challenger, and know there are many ways to miscount the votes.

There are 4,431 precincts in Missouri, and the miscounting of an average of 5 votes to the precinct would make a difference of 44,310 votes in the state.

Two years ago Governor Bennett, the Republican nominee for Congress in this district, was counted out in Henry and Pettis Counties. He lost on the face of the returns by 615. Dishonest or inefficient Republican election officials were responsible for this cheating. In the recent primary, I am informed, the Democratic machine in Henry County ran Democrats for county comitteemen in the Republican primary, the object being, no

doubt, to control the election judges and clerks.

The law provides (see section 10206) that county committees, not members of the county committees, are to recommend election judges to the county courts. This contemplates that judges recommended are to be selected at a formal meeting of county committees, but the practise is for the individual members of the county committees to recommend judges to the county courts. Election clerks are selected by election judges.

It frequently happens that county committeemen are much embarrassed by the necessity of recommending judges whom they know to be incompetent, and sometimes committeemen

[page 2]

2 - Hon. Manvel H. Davis (8-15-40)

are bribed to recommend crooked judges. These conditions could be overcome by having the whole committee select the judges.

I strongly urge that the state committee organize an honest election bureau whose duty shall be to educate county committees concerning the great necessity of the selection of honest and efficient judges and clerks and to warn the people generally of the dangers of the crookedness in the polls.

If it should be desired I think I could arrange my affairs so that I could take charge of a bureau of this character and give it practically my whole time until the election.

Sincerely yours,

EYM-R