

## Politics in 1940

Written by Ann Middleton

Tuesday, 26 February 2013 17:56 -

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Edwin W. Rice was the publisher of The Planters' Press in 1940. Rice was not shy about editorializing about Earl K. Long. In the paper's January 25th issue of that year he wrote the following:

"For the past several days now the state machine, headed by Earl K. Long, its candidate for Governor, has been lambasting Sam Jones for running off the election on the grounds that the machine's vote was impressive enough to make Long's ticket the popular choice of the people."

"Along with Sam Jones and thousands of other people throughout the state, we hereby take issue with Mr. Long and his machine."

"A perusal of the vote [in the first primary election] shows that Long failed of a majority by more than 100,000. In a campaign in which all other candidates ran in direct opposition to the machine, it seems to us correct to assume that every vote for all candidates was an anti-machine vote."

"In proof of what we say above, we invite our readers to make a close inspection of the entire official state returns and prove for themselves that we are right. It will be noted that Long lost the 'country' by a resounding plurality. It is also true that if the charges of fraud and corruption in several Orleans precincts are proved, Mr. Long will not carry Orleans over all his opponents."

"... we would like to make what we feel are a few pertinent comments on some other aspects of the election."

"It is with regret we note that Prof. Sims, the Morrison candidate has gone over to the T. H. Harris camp. This news was a great disappointment to all his friends and supporters in Bossier Parish. However that may be, we sincerely hope that his vote will go to John E. Coxe, who, in our opinion, is the man for the position of State Superintendent of Education."

"In closing, we might observe that one of the best indications that the Long-Leche-Maestri

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machine is definitely on its way out is the fact that Jimmy Noe and his organization have come out whole-heartedly for Sam Jones. They are pledged to a fight to the finish and it won't take near all their votes to put Jones in office. But, we would also warn all the friends of clean government, whether they voted for Jones, Noe or Morrison last week, there is danger in sitting down and counting the election won in advance. With the powerful state machine, with all its office holders, jobs, workers and money, it is no setup. It will take hard, continuous fighting, but victory is assured if the work goes on."

Sam Jones won a resounding victory in the second primary and Rice announced "Louisiana is Happy" in an editorial in the February 22, 1940 issue of The Planters' Press.

He wrote:

"Lest this editorial seem a bit off key, we hasten to add that this is the first victory editorial we have ever penned. We have so long been on the losing side that we know nothing about writing winning messages. But, we are happy, along with all of you, and we predict a new day and a new deal for Louisiana. Let's pull together for a new dawn of Democracy in Louisiana."

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