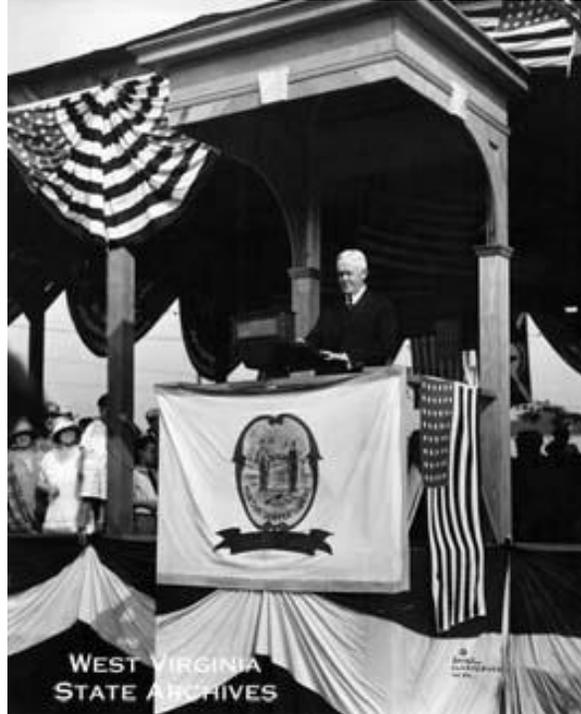


ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY APRIL 13



John W. Davis, Clarksburg, August 1924

John W. Davis, the Democratic nominee for President in 1924, was born in Clarksburg on April 13, 1873.

CSO: SS.8.24, ELA.8.1, ELA.8.22

Investigate the Document: (MacCorkle Collection, John W. Davis to William MacCorkle, Sc91-70)

Document 1

1. To whom is John W. Davis's letter directed?
2. What does Davis ask the recipient to include in a one-page statement to be returned to him?

Document 2

3. Using your own words, outline the issues facing the state that are mentioned in the return letter to Davis.
4. What issue is stated to be the most significant?

Think Critically: In your opinion, what is the most fundamentally urgent issue in our state, and why do you feel this way? If you were running for president as John W. Davis did in 1924, what would your top three priorities be and why?

JOHN W. DAVIS

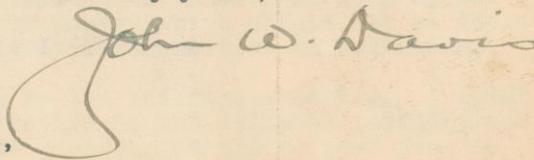
July 21, 1924.

Dear Mr. ^{MacCorkle} MacCorkle:

I wish to express to you, personally, the sense of obligation that I feel as a result of the great honor tendered me by the Democratic National Convention. It is a solemn duty that you have called on me to perform -- that is, to lead a liberal Democracy to the realization of its program. Assured of your co-operation, I am ready to lead, and to attempt fully to justify your confidence.

In order that I may be informed of the situation in the state in which you live, I would be grateful to you if you would send me a one page statement, in duplicate, setting forth what you believe are the principal issues of the campaign in your state, and pointing out what you believe should be the attitude of the Democratic party with respect to these issues. It would be a great convenience to me if you would let me have this report as soon as possible, and I trust that throughout the campaign you will keep me personally advised of the developments of the situation in your state.

Sincerely yours,



Mr. W. A. MacCorkle,
Charleston,
West Virginia.

July 28, 1924.

Hon. John W. Davis,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Davis:

In reply to your letter asking me about the situation in this State and to set forth what I believe to be the principal issues in the campaign and to point out what I believe to be the attitude of the Democratic Party in respect to those issues, in the first place, there occurs the question of economy and extravagance in this government, and the misappropriation of the funds and the taking away of our reserves of oil. It is a question of honesty in government which must be adverted to, because the people demand it and it is a political question which has a great deal of weight with many people.

Then, secondly, there is the question of the tax laws. They should be revamped in such a way that they will bear equally upon all people. The people believe, in this State, and elsewhere, that the tax laws, especially the income tax law, bear unequally upon them, and that the income tax and other taxes of similar kind should be placed so as to bear equally upon all the people. There is a feeling against the proposed Mellon Tax Law which is very evident.

And here let me mention another phase which is being considered very earnestly by the people. The government has been, in the popular sense of the word, deflating the money and the people are understanding a great deal about it. I think that an important proposition is that there should be sufficient money for the needs of the people. I do not mean by this, inflation, to which I am opposed, but I mean an adequate volume of money, which should not be deflated. The people feel very gravely this question of deflation.

Then, there is the railroad question. I think there should be a modification of the railroad tariffs, and the whole railroad tariff question should be gone over so that the transportation question would be one that would allow the people to have their goods carried to market at a fair transportation charge, which will at the same time allow a fair freight charge to the railroads. This will reach the farmer.

Hon. John W. Davis - No. 2

Then again, the question of the farmer. I do not believe in any nostrums as to the farmer, but I believe that the machinery of their selling and producing and getting money can be modernized and be made up to date with ordinary business ventures. I mean as to getting money, as to marketing, and the general work of that kind which they claim has made them hard up and made prices low.

But it seems to me that the principal issue is the foreign issue. The isolation in which this government has placed itself is not beneficial to the people, and the people know this fact. If this government, in the last three years, had devoted itself to the question of reparation in Europe, and a settlement of financial affairs there, vigorously and earnestly and wholeheartedly, there would have been none of this question of markets and low prices of all the farm products and of the manufacturing products which we have been in the habit of shipping. This administration has not done so. They should have made a vigorous effort to straighten up affairs in Europe, for Europe cannot buy when its affairs are entangled, while it has nothing settled, while it has no money, while the money it has has decreased to an alarming figure and values have been reduced accordingly. I think this is the chief question. This government should have offered to provide and should have provided machinery by which the European condition should have been cleared up, and then we could have had sufficient markets to which we could have taken and in which we could have marketed our products. That is the real cause of low prices today. We have no markets, and as ancillary to that I believe the League of Nations should be stressed because the people believe that the League of Nations will have a great influence in repairing the loss of Europe and of opening up their economic as well as political side. I think the League of Nations should be stressed vigorously as ancillary to the opening up of Europe, for the markets for this country in Europe will do away largely with the low prices, congested condition here, both of the manufacturer's and farmers' produce.

I think these are hurriedly the principal questions that are exciting the interest of people in this State, and in the hopes of your success, I remain

Very sincerely yours,