

Lerida before," she said, "and I won't leave now." She couldn't see any sense in abandoning her home after seventy-eight years.

The Chief of Staff, twenty-seven years old and a former school teacher, took another gulp of cognac and a bite of cracker. He said apologetically: "They are going to start bombing in a little while, comrade. It will be better if you are not here when they bomb. They are shelling the bridge you came over into town. They might hit it."

He was sorry that we couldn't stay. "It will be warm," he said. "If we had two hundred planes more, comrade, two hundred planes more, they wouldn't advance an inch." He didn't say it reproachfully, but as an American I got a guilty feeling.

"They're going to debate the Neutrality Law in Congress soon," I said in defense. "Seventy-five percent of the people are for loyalist Spain."

"Good," he said. "Do you think the law will be changed?"

I said, "If the debate reflects the will of the people, it will."

"And Roosevelt," he asked, "isn't he a great democrat?"

Our conversation terminated when a runner came in, saluted, and everyone suddenly got busy.

I spoke later to Antonio Cordon, newly appointed head of the southern sector of the army of the east. With him was the slim, youthful, former U.G.T. head, now leading the twenty-seventh division. Both were confident the drive would be halted. "Their infantry," they said, "isn't worth a centimo compared with ours. Their mechanized army is what is gaining ground. Our men will catch on to how to stop tanks with hand grenades like the Madrilenos learned. Planes are chiefly psychological weapons—if you have good entrenchments." They too asked me what our

great brother democracy of America was doing. "If we had two hundred more planes," they said, "they couldn't advance an inch."

— has one of the finest records in the war. Less than thirty-five, he had already won his spurs as the foremost trade union leader in Catalonia—heading the U.G.T.'s hundred thousand men. "Interview me?" he said. "That's one thing I can't face—an interview. It takes too much emotion from me."

The burden of his message was that the fascist reports of the demoralization of the Spanish army were hokum. The men were fighting like the heroes they were against the best that Krupp and Milan could send. It was monsters of steel against men of steel. "Machines can never beat men in the last analysis," he said. "Not men steeled by political convictions. The last battle in a war is won by infantry." He urged me to cable trade unionists and "all true democrats" to amend the Neutrality Act. "Do not let our friends lose faith in us," he said. "We shall fight to the very end for democracy's victory, not only for Spain, but for all the world."

Spanish Communists in the U.G.T. place great stress on the necessity for a political army. Hence their insistence upon the importance of commissars. They differed with Prieto. He wanted an apolitical army. The other day he rescinded a statute that had limited their powers. "Experience has shown that commissars are valuable." The parties and organizations of the People's Front, bereft of necessary machines, try to make up the difference by making giants of men. "It is better to die fighting than to live on your knees," La Passionara, the Communist leader, said. "Resist, resist, resist; create, create, create," Negrin, the Socialist Premier, said. "Every man a giant, every Catalan a man," Companys, the Republican, said.

I toured the fronts in a propaganda truck.

Literally half a million copies of leaflets and Barcelona newspapers were given to every man, woman, and child on the highway from Barcelona to Lerida that morning. All reflected the same story, "Resist, resist, resist today to attack tomorrow." I talked to a jubilant soldier at four in the morning going up to the front. He had just brought an "evadido," fascist deserter, to headquarters. "I saw cannon coming up," he said. "Today we had planes. Maybe France is sending us planes now." I hoped he was right, but I hadn't seen them. "If we had two hundred planes more, they couldn't advance an inch. We'll lick them with or without planes. We've done it before, but planes would save us a lot of damn trouble."

The Spanish rearguard is firm, despite indubitable fifth-column plotting. The Cabinet is at the helm, steering the ship through the worst storm of the war. If there are changes in governmental structure, it will be with the consent of all concerned in the interest of greater efficiency. The Popular Front stands as one man.

Trade unionists in the anarchist C.N.T. and the Marxist U.G.T. work together through their committees of coordination. They are appealing to their men to resist. "Women, take your men's places in factories," *Las Noticias*, U.G.T. organ, said today. To men it said, "If you can't handle a gun, get a pick and shovel." They are raising an army of fifty thousand *fortificadores* to put up walls of cement throughout Catalonia, as Madrid did in the darkest days of November.

We held at Madrid, we'll hold in Catalonia. Spain says today. The people have been heroic in crises hitherto. The Spaniard today is fighting, with his back to the sea, the battle of all progressive mankind. All day long this brilliant Barcelona Sunday the drums are beating.

DELEGATION TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT

By Lester Cohen

AS we entered the corridor there was a stench, and with it the odor of dis-infectant. The doors were shuttered, like hospital doors. And against the walls, a number of frames, like stretchers.

We were in the State Department. An attendant showed us to the office of Walton R. Moore, Counselor of State.

Judge Moore is an old man, one side of his face more deeply creased than the other, as if that side had suffered more.

He nodded to us, and indicated the chairs that were placed before his large desk, most of them folding chairs, like those hastily set up in undertaking parlors.

Dr. Walter B. Cannon said we had come on behalf of Spanish democracy, and wanted to present a petition.

Dr. Cannon is dean of the Harvard Medi-

cal School. His face is pink, his hair is white, his gray-blue eyes spread directness and clarity. "Will you read it?" said he, presenting the petition.

Judge Moore read it, his voice quavering and thin; he was flanked by two assistants; he was reading it for their benefit. The petition set forth our feeling that the Neutrality Act offers no protection against war, is an impediment to peace, that it is helping choke the people of Spain in their death struggle.

Judge Moore put the paper down. "If you want to change the existing laws," said he, "hadn't you better see your Congressmen?"

Jerry O'Connell nodded; he had expected this. "I'm a Congressman myself," said he, "and to speak realistically, you know that any change in laws regarding foreign policy has to be initiated by the State Department."

Judge Moore said Congress made the laws.

"Yes," said O'Connell, "but to speak realistically, you know that those things are done only after advice and consultation by this Department. For instance, this Neutrality Act. I happen to know the Department of State was consulted."

Judge Moore thought a moment. "We didn't get what we wanted," he said.

O'Connell said this might be the time to try. "And I know there's a considerable number of men in Congress would be interested."

Judge Moore raised his tired eyes and looked at O'Connell. "Have you tried the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee?"

"Yes," said O'Connell, "and he threw it right back at you."

Judge Moore considered the matter, he spoke of its legal ramifications, there were

two Acts, the Act of May 1, and the Act—

O'Connell wasn't interested in the Acts.

"Yes, but something could be done."

"Perhaps you might introduce an Act," said Judge Moore.

"I have," said O'Connell, and proceeded to tell about it. "Besides, the President might do something by proclamation," he said, "something could be done if the President and the State Department used their prestige."

Judge Moore mentioned some of the obstacles, things like this took time.

"You moved fast enough against Mexico," said O'Connell.

That was different, said Judge Moore, there were perfectly defined precedents against expropriation. "Besides, you came about Spain."

"Yes," said Congressman Bernard of Minnesota, "and every day made a difference, every day was helping the 'fascist monsters'—"

"Fascist monsters" didn't do so well with Judge Moore. You could see that he was temperamentally indisposed to dramatic phrases. "Of course we're all democrats," he said, "I'm a democrat, we want democracy to prevail, peace and democracy."

"Yes," said Vincent Lobach, "but how are we going to get them, particularly if we don't cooperate with the democracies that want peace?"

Judge Moore looked at Vincent Lobach. Vincent Lobach was plainly a man of distinction, plainly of German features, and his name wasn't Vincent Lobach. He had told Judge Moore his real name, but said he didn't dare put it on the petition, didn't dare have it in the public prints in connection with this matter—he had relatives in Germany.

Judge Moore nodded. He indicated that the world wasn't all one might've hoped, perhaps if there were more people interested in this thing—

"The Gallup poll," said Dr. Riegger, of the American Musical Society, "showed 75 percent of the American people in sympathy with Republican Spain."

"Did it?" said Judge Moore.

"I am a teacher," said Mrs. Riegger, "representing six thousand teachers. I hate to think what history will say of our present policy."

Ralph Pearson, of the American Artists' Congress, spoke of the inconsistency of the policy as it affected China and Spain.

Judge Moore looked unhappy. He spoke of a difference between a war and a civil war—

"Whatever the Spanish war might have seemed at the beginning," said the Rev. Dr. Herman Reissig, "you certainly can't consider it a civil war now."

There was a deepening unhappiness about Judge Moore. Yes, he said, the aspect had changed, there were foreign troops in Spain, but still, despite China and Spain, he hoped peace would prevail. "I don't see any other nation about to declare war," he said.

"The fascist nations don't declare war," I said.

"Realistically," said Jerry O'Connell, "we



Lithograph by Michael Lenson

have to face the tactic of the undeclared war."

Judge Moore said that was true, there was this new tactic of undeclared war.

"Suppose it's tried in France," I said, "will the policy of the State Department be the same?"

"How in conscience," said the Rev. Dr. Reissig, "can we let this thing go on?"

"And if it goes on," said Pearson, "may we not be the only remaining democracy? And then where are we?"

Judge Moore's unhappiness became more intent. His suffering face began to take on the "realistic" quality O'Connell had asked for— "Isn't it about over with Spain?" he said.

Josie Herbst said you couldn't tell. "I was in Madrid for four months while they were bombing it, and every day the spirit of the people rose. Barcelona may yet be another Madrid," she said. "But it's awfully hard when you have only rifles and machine guns, and the other side has any amount of tanks and planes, then it's awfully hard."

Judge Moore looked at Josie, then at the rest of us. "You want us to let Spain buy arms?"

"Yes."

"Can they pay?"

"I talked to them about that too," said Josie, and she told of a conversation with Defense Minister Prieto. "They don't want credits or anything, they'll pay in cash."

We were warmer now, and everyone spoke,

and on the human side. Sometimes we faltered, but the faltering was all right, it was the faltering of honest and inexperienced people. A strange thing seemed to happen, the moral weight shifted to our side. We were for reality, we were for democracy—and Judge Moore was out on the limb of a Neutrality Act he couldn't believe in. It was a strange moment, for him. In many years in the State Department he had felt in the right, on the honorable, reasonable, and workable side of things, and now—

Now the interview was over. Judge Moore picked up the petition. "Your petition will be passed on to the Secretary," said he. He nodded to the assistants who flanked him. "With certain notations," he said, "summarizing what has been said here."

He rose and shook hands. When he came to Josie he smiled and said, "You must make good speeches."

"No," she said with a little laugh, "I don't."

We nodded goodby, one of the assistants held the door, we went out.

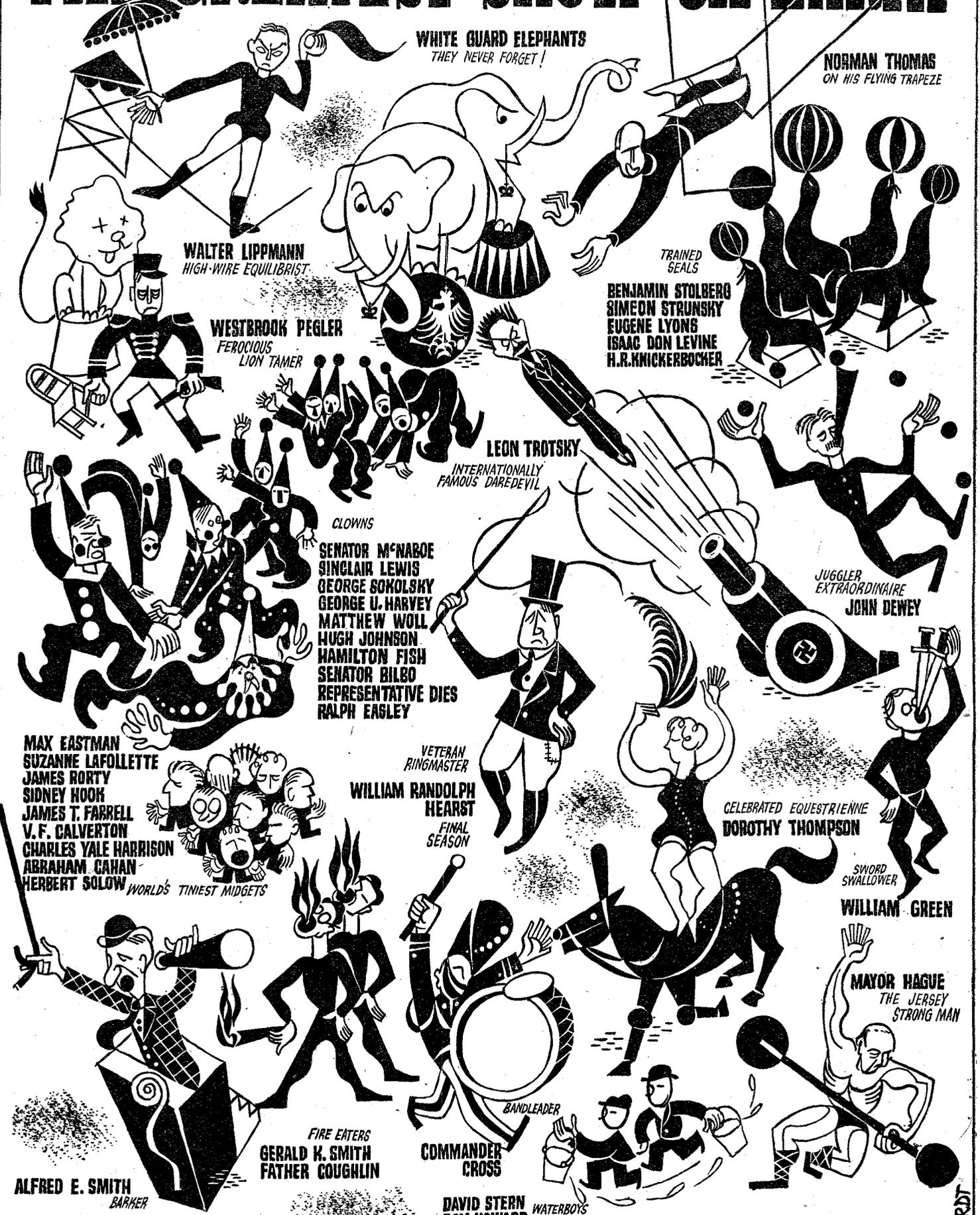
What was behind this? Why could the State Department feel the insincerity and criminality of the Act, and still not move against it? Did this have to do with that hearing some time back, the hearing in which the admirals denied cooperation with England, but still. . . . Was this a policy of isolationist cooperation with England? And was England employing Hitler and Mussolini to do a job in Spain and Czechoslovakia—while perfectly willing to let the rival empire of Japan pile up trouble for itself in China? Was this what it came to?

Nothing was said about that.

We went down the marble hall, past the doors with shutters, like the doors of hospitals, past the frames like stretchers which you see in hospitals. . . . it was almost as if we were in a hospital, and behind those shuttered doors, patients symbolic of nations, Spain, Czechoslovakia, France. . . . and slowly moving doctors approximating the ebbing strength of the patients.

Had something died, some nation expired in a final putrescence? For again we were at the end of the corridor, there was that strong stench, and the odor of disinfectant.

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH



WHITE GUARD ELEPHANTS
THEY NEVER FORGET!

NORMAN THOMAS
ON HIS FLYING TRAPEZE

WALTER LIPPMANN
HIGH-WIRE EQUILIBRIST

TRAINED
SEALS

BENJAMIN STOLBERG
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EUGENE LYONS
ISAAC DON LEVINE
H.R. KNICKERBOCKER

WESTBROOK PEGLER
FEROCIOUS
LION TAMER

LEON TROTSKY
INTERNATIONALLY
FAMOUS DAREDEVIL

JUGGLER
EXTRAORDINAIRE
JOHN DEWEY

CLOWNS

SENATOR McNABOE
SINGLAIR LEWIS
GEORGE SOKOLSKY
GEORGE U. HARVEY
MATTHEW WOLL
HUGH JOHNSON
HAMILTON FISH
SENATOR BILBO
REPRESENTATIVE DIES
RALPH EASLEY

CELEBRATED EQUESTRIENNE
DOROTHY THOMPSON

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WILLIAM GREEN

MAYOR HAGUE
THE JERSEY
STRONG MAN

ALFRED E. SMITH
BARKER

FIRE EATERS
GERALD K. SMITH
FATHER COUGHLIN

COMMANDER
CROSS

DAVID STERN
ROY HOWARD
WATERBOYS

COMBINED RED BAITING CIRCUS

REINHARDT

Machine Politics and Relief

By Marguerite Young

WASHINGTON, APRIL 2.

ALARGE hot potato rolled into Washington last week from Kansas City. You remember Kansas City. Where on Election Day in 1934 Boss Tom Pendergast's men rode past the polls without license plates and with machine guns bared to the sky; and by night there were many wounded and four dead innocents who had thought they had a secret ballot.

Kansas City where, you probably know, federal authorities were prosecuting 1936 vote fraud scandals when 1938 Election Day rolled around last Tuesday. The federal authorities themselves worked under deadly threats. One of them was awakened by a telephone call at 2 a. m. and, answering, he heard, "You dirty sonofabitch, you better get out of town quick or you'll get a bullet in your back."

Kansas City where the *Star*, a southwestern New York *Times*, finds page one news in the sudden closing of the honkey-tonks before sunrise in honor of this year's "clean" election. Where a homecoming gangster snorts disgustedly to the reporters about the low quality of the hot spots. And girls stand behind windows tapping with a coin to signal the sad price . . . tapping on the glass with four bits, two bits, even a dime.

Boss Tom's machine, founded in the Eighties and supreme since 1926, won again Tuesday over an opposition coalition including Democrats, Republicans, and Labor's Non-Partisan League with its affiliated twenty-six union locals. But it was no rout for the League, all things considered. And the League comes out of it with experience that will be mighty useful in summer and fall contests throughout the country, and with proof that Kansas City's "clean" voting was preceded by practices constituting another scandal.

I saw the evidence. It proves that Boss Tom, frightened beyond depending on his control of municipal offices, moved in on the federal work relief apparatus and turned it to Pendergast machine ends that shocked New Dealers in Washington.

Two classic forms of intimidation were used. Votes were bought with federal relief jobs, and votes were coerced with threats to take federal relief jobs away.

Such general charges are not startling. But the batch of affidavits which League officials have laid in Federal Administrator Aubrey Williams's lap are. I will have to make judicious deletions in quoting them, for the affiants made them in peril of Boss Tom's retaliatory power.

Here is one from an intelligent worker—and remember he names names where I leave them out:

My name is — and I live at —. I have been

on the W.P.A. this last time since —, and am still working on W.P.A. at —. The Assistant Superintendent, Mr. —, was talking to a number of us workers, and he said he wanted us to go to the polls the next day to vote. He said, "I never tell a man how to vote but I am a great believer in the old adage, 'Never bite the hand that feeds you.'"

And "the hand that feeds you" in Kansas City is not the New Deal federal Democratic Administration in Washington, which supplies the funds, but its local representative, who is mixed up with Boss Tom's machine. This representative at times actually is a known worker for the machine. Indeed, the Missouri State Administrator of the W.P.A. is Matthew S. Murray—who is also Pendergast's City Director of Public Works. Murray gets \$8,000 a year from Boss Tom's city administration, and only \$6,000 from Harry Hopkins's administration!

Non-Partisan League officials in Washington assert that a great many of Kansas City's administrative relief jobs are filled by ward and precinct workers for Pendergast—and the affidavits prove there is a relationship between them. The Kansas City *Star* reported quite simply: "Sweeping use of political pressure should be no surprise in any organization that is completely in charge of the Kansas City machine. *The whole state organization of W.P.A. is dominated by it. The foremen and timekeepers in Kansas City are machine workers.* . . . Many cities have had vote scandals; but Kansas City went farther than most of them. Several cities have had W.P.A. scandals. It remains to be seen whether Kansas City has outdistanced them." One affidavit now before Washington W.P.A. officials reads:

On March 8, which was Primary Day, I voted the Coalition ticket, and shortly thereafter, Mr. —, who is the precinct worker for the machine, came to me and asked me why I voted the Coalition ticket and did not vote for the machine. He informed me that he was going to take — [the affiant's sole support—Ed.] off the W.P.A. . . . It is my information that this was done today. Mr. — said he was under orders from —, whose last name I do not know, but he was indicted recently by the Federal Grand Jury.

Sometimes the local W.P.A. executive intimidated directly, while Boss Tom's regular precinct headquarters finished off the job. As one bold worker tells it under oath:

I was interviewed and signed the application (for W.P.A.) which was okayed last Monday by —, who stated to me there would be no more W.P.A. employment after the first of April if the machine lost the city election. I was told to go to the headquarters of — and see the precinct captain's assistant, a Mr. —, who said he would get me on the W.P.A. He advised me to do my bit and said, "If you will show us you are all right, we will give you employment on the W.P.A."

The backbone of the labor forces in the campaign was the Chevrolet auto workers' union, Local 93; and Boss Tom's boys, using the traditional tactics of striking from within where a frontal attack could not smash the opponent, went right to work among the union men. This is what happened, again in the documented words of a union man:

I was employed at the Chevrolet plant and continued to work there until — when I was laid off, with many others. . . . About a week ago I was approached by —, who I understand is employed by the Police Department and he asked me if I wanted to do some work for the Democratic machine and said there would be money in it for me. I said "Yes" and he explained to me that he wanted me to see Union employees, and he gave me a number of cards containing names and addresses of Union men. . . . He promised me a job on the W.P.A. and gave me a letter dated —, on W.P.A. government stationery, addressed to me, to register at — where I secured an identification card. . . . The letter was signed by — and —. [Two well-up relief officials—Ed.] This job was promised me if I would do the work which he requested. I have known Mr. — since — and he told me that he had secured employment on the W.P.A. for 275 men. When he talked to me, I asked him how he knew he could get work for me on the W.P.A., and it was then that he informed me that he had obtained employment for 275 men.

Boss Tom thus offers the New Dealers heading work relief in Washington an opportunity and a test. The Kansas City situation is a culmination rather than a beginning of a problem to which the NEW MASSES pointed some time ago. Then, W.P.A. labor policies that look nice on paper here in Washington were being reversed in practice by local administrations—including the Missouri administration—dominated by reactionary pre-New Deal machines. The authorities here sympathized with complaints that local "two-bit dictators" were influencing local relief officials, but did little. They pointed out what is an unfortunate fact: local appointees by long established patronage practice are approved by state Congressional officeholders, and when the latter are allies of the local machine, they make it tough to put a non-machine man on the job.

"Well, the flagrant violation in Kansas City of the strict rule against the use of relief for political pressure on relief workers offers a chance to clean house," they told me at the League's headquarters. "We, who support the W.P.A. and are fighting to get adequate appropriations for relief, cannot and will not tolerate abuses."

The League—and the League alone of all the coalition forces in Kansas City—exposed and made an issue of Pendergast's hoisting his flag over the W.P.A. administration. Complaints and affidavits were fired into Washington. The