

W. T. Kemper,  
P. O. Box 248,  
Kansas City, Mo.

To Popularize Civic Information and to Spiritualize Our Citizenship  
No. 761 KANSAS CITY, MO., SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 1937 Non-Partisan  
Federal Court Convicts 41 Election Crooks

All honest citizens of Kansas City and in the whole state of Missouri are grateful to federal judges Albert L. Reeves and Merrill E. Otis, and to Maurice M. Milligan, U. S. attorney for the western district of Missouri, for their energetic and fearless action against the perpetrators of ballot crimes in Kansas City, Missouri. The brazen affrontery of election crooks is meeting its just deserts.

So far the federal grand jury has indicted 126 persons in the Kansas City election outrages of Nov. 3, 1936; fifty-three have been tried, forty-one have been convicted, eight have pleaded "nolo contendere" thus placing themselves at the mercy of the court, three defendants await retrial and one defendant pleaded guilty. No defendant has so far been acquitted. The federal grand jury resumed its work June 8. The ninth group conspiracy trial is set for June 21. Ten trials are assigned to Judge Merrill E. Otis' court. Judge Reeves has intimated that it will take a year or more for the federal grand jury to complete its work. The convicted persons have appealed to the U. S. circuit court of appeals where their cases will be considered in October.

Kansas City is nationally known as having most beautiful residential districts; of being a city of fine churches and unusual educational facilities; of being wideawake in business and cultural activities; it has the world's largest Bible Class and probably one of the most corrupt political machines in the country.

This bad political condition has been developed by neglect of civic duties. Too many citizens feel that they have discharged their civic obligations when they vote and pay taxes. But that is not enough. We are shareholders in great corporations that spend over \$6,000,000 in city government, \$6,000,000 more for our public schools and \$2,500,000 for county government. Along with our heritage of opportunities, come obligations which have been neglected.

Purposes of the Citizens' League

The Citizens' League was organized to awaken and sustain civic interest and to promote the accept-

Judge Otis' Charge to Grand Jury:

"If there are higher-ups and if there is evidence to justify indicting them they ought to be indicted. It doesn't make any difference who they are, what they are, or how powerful they may be."

Entered as 2nd-Class matter Oct. 2, 1920, at Post Office, Kansas City, Mo., under act of March 3, 1879

346 THE CITIZENS' LEAGUE BULLETIN June 12, 1937

ance of civic obligations by our citizens. The board of directors is composed of Democrats and Republicans, men and women, persons of varying religious beliefs. We welcome to our membership all those who want to secure the kind of government that will make Kansas City a good place in which to live, and in which to do business.

There has gradually developed in our city a political organization whose main purpose seems to be to get as much as possible out of our city government for themselves, service to

the public being a secondary consideration. The shrewd political boss selects the highest grade of candidates that will do his bidding. The political control of the city is managed according to two underlying principles, favoritism and reprisals.

#### Favoritism and Reprisals Control

Almost every favor the city can bestow is available to those citizens who support and help sustain the dominant organization. But woe to the independent opponent. Taxes are raised, jobs are lost, business is hampered, reasonable requests are denied, and in a score of ways the system cracks down on its victims until they are either subdued or cease their opposition.

This corrupt system has been maintained largely through dishonest elections. Registrations have been made of persons who never lived, and of those who have lived and died. Repeaters have been registered in many precincts and often have been brazen enough to register repeatedly in their own names. Honest voting on election day became almost a joke and the dishonest counting of ballots and falsifying election returns have been recently made public in the federal court.

#### Both Political Parties Guilty

But the dominant political party has no monopoly on dishonest elections. Members of both political parties are being found equally guilty. Justice is being administered to the guilty without fear or favor.

#### League Appeals to Gov. Park

In August, 1936, the Citizens' League invited outstanding clubs and organizations to cooperate with the League in securing honest registrations and elections in Kansas City and Jackson County. Very little encouragement was received from other organizations and the Citizens' League proceeded on its own initiative but with the hearty approval of a great many individual citizens.

On the 8th of October, two Citizens' League members, Col. Frederick E. Whitten, president of the League, and Dr. A. Ross Hill, former president of the Missouri State University, personally presented the Kansas City election conditions to Governor Guy B. Park in Jefferson City, and requested the appointment of four new election commissioners. The governor said that the information presented showed "prima facie evidence of irregularities" and that he would soon see the chairman of the Board of Election Commissioners in Kansas City. Nothing further was heard from Governor Park.

#### More Evidence to Federal Officers

Additional evidence of election frauds in various parts of the city was secured by Col. Whitten. A suite of rooms in the Bryant Building was rented, competent investigators secured, clerks employed to systematize and classify the evidence preparatory to court action. This investigation was made possible by the cooperation of public-spirited citizens who furnished funds and otherwise assisted in procuring evidence.

When this evidence, together with that secured by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and from other sources, was presented to Federal Judge Albert

L. Reeves, the movement for honest elections received his hearty approval. United States District Attorney Maurice

M. Milligan and Judge Merrill E. Otis were equally enthusiastic for honest elections. Judge Reeves called the federal grand jury and the election crooks were stricken with consternation.

#### State Election Laws Violated

During the trials, the defense repeatedly admitted that state election laws had been violated. Judge Reeves intimated that the state authorities should become aroused and prosecute these cases under state laws. He also said, "Someone in the background had given orders for things to be carried out as they were that day."

Hope for the Future

The political atmosphere of Kansas City is clearing. Machine party loyalty is disintegrating as the machine can no longer "take care of the boys" when they get in trouble. It is anticipated that a citizens' organization will be formed to secure what our city charter calls for— non-partisan government.

Five years in prison is the penalty an Italian is paying for saying that he loved his dog better than Mussolini.

June 12, 1937 THE CITIZENS' LEAGUE BULLETIN 347

Citizens' League Bulletin

Published weekly except during July and August at 510-11 Ridge Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

Telephone Victor 7037 President, Col. Frederick E. Whitten Vice-President, B. J. George Secretary and Editor of Bulletin—Nat Spencer Treasurer—Conger R. Smith DIRECTORS Mrs. Chas. W. Avey J. Roy Beach Henry M. Beardsley Paul R. Byrum E. K. Campbell J. Robertson Clagett Mrs. Paul F. Cope Mrs. P. H. Crane Preston Dobbin Francis J. Gable B. J. George Mrs. Wm. C. Hanson John T. Harding S. Herbert Hare Mrs. J. Howard Hart Wm. E. Kemp Chet A. Keyes Herman M. Langworthy Mrs. E. W. Leritz Mrs. J. W. Lyman T. E. Mackintosh R. E. McDonnell Mrs. H. N. Mecaskey H. K. Poindexter Albert L. Reeves, Jr. Mrs. Frank E. Sheldon Conger R. Smith Nat Spencer Bruce R. Trimble Col. F. E. Whitten Press of Gough Publishing Co.

THE FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY Democracy needs local self-government as its foundation. That is the school in which the citizen acquires the habit of independent action, learns what is his duty to the state, and learns also how to discharge it.—JAMES BRYCE

CITIZENS' LEAGUE OBJECTIVES Permanent Registration of Voters. Reorganization of County Government. Scientific Assessment of Real Estate. Economy in State, County and City Gov't. Proportional Representation.

The Short Ballot.

Observance of the Spirit of City Charter. Honest Elections.

Law Enforcement.

The Lincoln memorial at Washington cost \$3,000,000.

Cleveland is making big preparations for her Great Lakes Exposition during the coming summer.

"Fishing," says the American City, "is the only industry in the United States where the demand exceeds the supply."

Ex-Senator Jerome Joffe speaks over KMBC on Friday, June 11, at 4:05 p. m. on the "Accomplishments of the Missouri Legislature."

Return the Stark Petitions

Many organizations and individuals have been circulating the petitions to Gov. Stark to send the attorney-general to Kansas City to investigate the enforcement of state laws. Many of these petitions with their signatures have not yet been returned to this office. Please mail them in by Monday, June 14.

Crime Costs \$15,000,000,000

We cannot avoid the responsibility of our citizenry in the problem of crime. . . . It has been estimated that the annual cost of crime to this country may be fifteen billions of dollars. Our records indicate that 4,300,000 criminals are at the present time pursuing their antisocial careers in this great country of ours. ... A burden borne by each individual in our commonwealth of \$10 every month. The estimate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the number of major crimes committed during 1936 was 1,333,526—a murder every forty minutes—a robbery every ten minutes— a felony every twenty-four seconds! . . .

—J. Edgar Hoover

Sky-Sleepers in Service

Transcontinental & Western Air inaugurated its “Sky-Sleeper” service last Tuesday, putting into regular operation the giant Douglas planes which provide sleeping accommodations for eight of the seventeen passengers. The east- bound transcontinental trip, Los Angeles to New York, is made with stops only at Albuquerque, Kansas City and Pittsburgh, while westbound Columbus is substituted for Pittsburgh. The trip time is 15 hours, eastward, and 17 hours westward, the schedule difference being due to prevailing winds.—The Kansas Citian

After the new law goes into effect all legal Missouri executions will be in Jefferson City and by gas.

Patents are good for 17 years.

How Would It Do

To clean up the downtown business district so well that everybody will be surprised—and then astonish them by keeping it that way?

To follow the examples of Milwaukee and Topeka and plan toward a “pay as you go” system for Kansas City?

Readers are invited to send constructive civic suggestions expressed in single sentences for publication under “How Would It Do.”

Membership in the League is \$1.00 per year which includes the subscription price of the weekly Bulletin. Sustaining memberships are \$5.00. Group subscriptions and Associate Member Clubs, fifty cents. Quantity copies of single issue, \$12 per thousand. Check below the amount of your remittance and send to the Citizens’ League, 510-11 Ridge building, Kansas City, Mo.

\$1\_\_ \$3\_\_ \$5\_\_ \$10\_\_ \$25\_\_ \$50\_\_ \$100\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address -----

348

THE CITIZENS’ LEAGUE BULLETIN

June 12, 1937

Roosevelt After Tax Dodgers

In the president’s message to congress concerning tax dodgers he quotes Secretary Morgenthau’s itemized methods of those who would evade the payment of taxes:

“1. The device of evading taxes by setting up foreign personal holding corporations in the Bahamas, Panama, Newfoundland, and other places where taxes are low and corporation laws lax.

“2. The device of foreign insurance companies.

“3. The device of domestic personal holding companies.

- “4. The device of incorporating yachts and country estates.
- “5. The device of artificial deductions for interest, losses, etc.
- “6. The device of the creation of multiple trusts for relatives and dependents.
- “7. The device of husband and wife or father and children partnerships.
- “8. The device of pension trusts.

#### Two Economy Plans

President Roosevelt has become alarmed at spending two dollars for every dollar of national income. Government bonds have had a sharp decrease in market value. The total slump in the market valuation of government bonds during the month of April was nearly a billion dollars. The president now feels that our national finances need less spending rather than increased taxes.

Senator Byrnes of South Carolina proposes to meet the situation by a flat 10 per cent reduction in all appropriations.

Another plan sponsored by Congressman Cannon of Missouri proposes that 15 per cent of all appropriations (with three exceptions) be impounded in an attempt to subdue expenses. But the president would have authority to release part or all of the impounded funds. The first plan is a mandate from congress to make definite reductions. The second plan gives the president authority to make the savings or not as he chooses.

The constitution requires that the president shall take an oath to “preserve, protect and defend the constitution of the United States.”

The United States has appropriated \$516,258,000 for the navy. Of that sum \$60,000,000 will be spent for two new battleships.

#### Tax Government Salaries

“According to the best figures available in Washington,” reports Westbrook Pegler in the N. Y. World-Telegram, “there are now 4,891,000 employes of the states, counties and municipalities, drawing more than three billion dollars a year, who don’t pay a cent of federal income tax on their salaries. There are also about 1,500,000 federal employes who are exempt from the state income tax, if any, in the states where they live—a tax borne by people in private pursuits who, in some cases, make less money than these guests of the community.

“These exemptions are protected by a series of Supreme Court decisions which hold that the government cannot tax a state or vice versa. Now, I hesitate to hang out my shingle as a constitutional expert; but I can read, and the income tax amendment doesn’t make any exception for salaries drawn out of the public treasury. It says ‘incomes from whatsoever source derived;’ but the Supreme Court has exempted a large class of citizens from the burden of the income tax.

“The Supreme Court’s stand rests in an ancient and fine-drawn decision given more than 100 years ago which didn’t foresee the income tax at all and dealt with an entirely different sort of case. The succeeding Courts have used this as a precedent to deny the plain language of a constitutional amendment and throw the weight of the income tax on less than 2,000,000 people to the profit of the public employes, many of them drawing high salaries met from taxes.”

#### Gambling Houses Closed?

There is said to be a direct relation between book-making in K. C. and at the Riverside race track. Gambling at Riverside is one of the choice pickings of the management. If bookmaking for

Riverside races is permitted in K. C. it reduces the profits of the proprietors of Riverside who are said to be the higher ups in the dominant K. C. political machine.

Therefore, the K. C. gamblers are cracked down on while Riverside is in operation. After the races are over, judging from the past, the city gambling fraternity may proceed with their business unmolested. It is an established working basis that where money-making violations of law are continually permitted, there is a division of profits among the violators of the law and the law enforcing (?) agencies.