

# Kusper Probers 'Blind' to Fraud

The Chicago Board of Election Commissioners pays \$84,000 a year for eight full-time investigators who apparently do nothing much more than administrative work.

The board offices in the City Hall are an investigator's dream, as revealed by Tribune Reporter William Mullen, who worked under cover there for three months and by himself discovered more than a thousand election irregularities.

Mullen found that the evidence is obvious to anyone with access to the records.

## "Too Many Files"

But Stanley T. Kusper, chairman of the board, told The Tribune in a recent interview that there are too many files.

"It would be an impossible job," he said, because his in-

vestigative team, as well as the rest of the office, is undermanned.

Kusper said his investigators are kept busy checking city demolition lists with the poll sheets, serving notices, and notifying recently-convicted criminals that they no longer will be able to vote.

"They have to check the names to make sure the person convicted is the same one on the poll sheet," he said.

The investigators have been working recently on the charges leveled in the special aldermanic election in the 7th and 2d Wards. But that is because someone leveled charges. There is no time to make a routine investigation, Kusper said.

Another commissioner put it another way:

"If one of our investigators should make the mistake of showing any initiative and develop a fraud case on his own, he would get knocked down so fast that he wouldn't know what happened.

"Our approach to an investigation is first to assure the accused, 'We don't believe you did anything wrong—not intentionally, anyway.'"

Kusper brushed aside allegations that some judges and poll watchers had been mistreated during election day.

Kusper also lectured that it was difficult "to avoid suggesting that unjustified charges inevitably add to disrespect for election laws," and reasoned that LEAP representatives and other certified judges were ousted on election

day because they failed to appear on time. LEAP, which stands for Legal Elections in All Precincts, is a watchdog group.

## No One Checked

The rejected judges, including some Tribune reporters, assert they were there on time, and that no investigator from the Election Board ever asked

their side of the story.

Kusper admitted that before he made the statement he did not make sure his investigators had interviewed the judges who were summarily dismissed.

"Do we go out and root to find it? [election violations]" Kusper asked. "No, we do not."