



Mass Vote Fraud Arrests



Tribune Photos by James O'Leary

State Opens Vote Fraud Probe

A parade of witnesses yesterday told a special legislative subcommittee of massive vote fraud in Chicago polling places last March. Among them were (from left) Mrs. Marie Horton, a lifelong Democrat who served as a Republican judge; Wesley Spraggins, chairman of L. E. G. A. L., an election watchdog

group; Marilyn Freeman, another Democrat who served as a Republican judge; Lee Rankin, a Brookfield student who was a pollwatcher for Operation LEAP; and Edna Bourn, a Republican judge who said she voted twice in March primary. Story of their testimony on page 2.

40 Reported Cited by U.S. Grand Jury

BY WILLIAM MULLEN AND PAMELA ZEKMAN

A federal grand jury investigating vote fraud during the March primary reportedly returned 12 indictments naming 40 persons yesterday before Chief Judge Edwin A. Robson of Federal District Court. He ordered them suppressed until noon today.

The suppression order was entered to enable federal agents to arrest the defendants named in the indictments. Reporters observed at least 35 persons leaving the United States marshal's office after signing recognition bonds following their arrests.

U. S. Atty. James R. Thompson refused to comment on the indictments. He said he was bound by the suppression order not to make any statements. A special task force of assistant United States attorneys headed by John B. Simon, chief of the civil division, has been presenting evidence before the grand jury for weeks.

Use Tribune Disclosures

The grand jury investigation has centered on Tribune Task Force disclosures of dozens of cases of vote fraud, including multiple voting and forged ballot applications signed in behalf of South and West Siders who did not vote.

The information was uncovered while a Tribune reporter worked undercover for three months as a \$20-a-day clerk in the office of the Board of Election Commissioners. All evidence was turned over to the federal prosecutors.

The indictments reportedly include both judges of election and precinct bosses. Both could be indicted for violating sections of the Civil Rights Act by depriving legal voters of their constitutional right to vote.

Canceled Others' Votes

The theory behind using those statutes is that the defendants diluted or canceled legal votes by forging or accepting forged ballot applications so they or others could vote more than once.

The judges of election could be imprisoned for one year and fined \$1,000. Others could be sentenced to 10 years or fined \$10,000 under a conspiracy section of the statute.

The arrested, looking morose, filled the 24th floor corridor of the Federal Building leading to

Continued on page 2, col. 4

Task Force Report



Witnesses tell a special House subcommittee investigating election fraud of vote buying, forgeries, and phony election judges. George Bliss and William Currie, members of The Tribune's Task Force, report the testimony on page 2.

Report U. S. Cites 40 in Vote Probe

Continued from first page

the marshal's lockup, where they were being fingerprinted and booked behind closed doors, an unusual security provision.

Usually bonds are signed in the clerk's office on the 20th floor of the building, but this paperwork was done on the 24th floor to expedite the entire booking process.

These procedural changes were ordered to try to bring

some order out of the confusion resulting from the arrests of so many persons at one time.

A veil of secrecy was thrown around the entire process with deputy marshals, federal agents, and assistant prosecutors refusing to comment on the activity. The defendants would not discuss their arrests and did not even know with what they were being charged because the suppression order kept them from being given copies of the indictments.