HOPKINS REFUTES CHARGES OF POLITICAL COERCION IN KENTUCKY.

Harry L. Hopkins, Works Progress Administrator, today pledged a relentless fight against those who, in their efforts to undermine any activities in behalf of the unemployed, attempt to discredit the Federal Works Program by wholesale charges of political favoritism backed only by malicious partisan gossip.

"We will deal swiftly and summarily with any proven charge of political coercion," Administrator Hopkins said, "but we will be equally prompt in exposing any accusations trumped up to serve the political ends of those who are opposed to this administration."

Specifically, Mr. Hopkins referred to the charges of political activity by WPA in Kentucky, as contained in a series of newspaper articles just concluded by Scripps-Howard newspapers. Of these accusations, the WPA Administrator said:

"Every charge in which a WPA worker or official was named has been thoroughly investigated and documentary evidence conclusively establishes that out of more than a score of cases in which political activity was alleged, only two instances of improper conduct could be found.

Mr. Hopkins presented the facts concerning these charges, case by case:

Charge No. 1. From Paintsville, Ky., the reporter Thomas L. Stokes, wrote on June 11:

The son of the wealthiest man in this town has recently been given an administrative job at headquarters here of WPA's eastern Kentucky district.

The young man, John B. Wells, Jr., who previously had worked in his father's hardware store, happens to be president of the Young Democrats of Jackson County and campaign manager in the county for Sen. Alben W. Barkley, President Roosevelt's Senate leader, whose right to return to the Senate is being challenged in the Aug. 6 primary by Gov. A. B. Chandler.

Mr. Wells's new job is reported to pay from $250 to $300 a month.
The facts concerning Charge No. 1: John B. Wells, jr., is not now and never has been employed by the WPA in Kentucky or anywhere else. This has been verified by the records of the WPA in Kentucky and John B. Wells, jr., himself. Had Mr. Stokes gone to the trouble of asking Mr. Wells whether he was employed by the WPA, he would have gotten the same answer we did. In a voluntary affidavit this is what Mr. Wells says about the charge: "I am not employed by the WPA in the State of Kentucky or any agency of the Federal government. I am employed by my father in his business at Paintsville. I am not an applicant for any position of any kind with the WPA and could not accept a position if it were offered to me." Incidentally, Mr. Wells is not even the Burley campaign manager for Johnson County, nor has he ever been appointed. The manager for Johnson County is Dr. Paul Bryan Hall.

Charge No. 2. On June 13, Mr. Stokes wrote:

One Republican worker in McCreary County, Prince Barnett, told in an affidavit how a foreman, Carson Hamlin, had 15 or 20 Republican workers hauled to the county clerk's office in a WPA truck to change their registration.

The facts concerning Charge No. 2: Carson Hamlin at no time hauled anyone to the county clerk's office in a WPA truck, or any other conveyance, to change registration. This is attested to in the sworn statement of the workers on Carson Hamlin's project and they also state that neither Mr. Hamlin nor any other WPA official has ever, at any time, credited them for time that they were absent from the project for any reason other than that allowed by the rules and regulations of the WPA.

The fact is, as even Mr. Stokes admits, that under the Kentucky registration and election laws, no Republican registered for the 1937 general election could since change his registration and vote in the Democratic primaries on August 6. It would therefore be perfectly silly for anyone who wished to aid either of the candidates to seek to influence any Republicans to change their registration.
Charge No. 3. On June 13, Mr. Stokes wrote:

In Somerset, Pulaski County, one WPA foreman was reported to have been seen 13 times in one day going into the county clerk's office to check on registrations. There have been some 300 changes of registration from Republican to Democratic in Pulaski County, of which about 75 per cent were WPA workers, according to the county clerk.

The facts concerning Charge No. 3: While the foreman remains anonymous, a careful checkup developed the fact that no visits of this kind were made to the county clerk's office. The facts about the changes in registration, as attested to by the county clerk, are that Pulaski County has 13,000 qualified voters of which only 242 Republicans have re-registered as Democrats since the last general election, and none of these can vote in the coming Democratic primary. Mr. Stokes charged that 75 per cent of these were WPA workers. A careful check shows that only 31 per cent were WPA workers. Further evidence proves that the changes in registration from Republican to Democrat and Democrat to Republican are no more than the normal number of changes during an election year. Each and every foreman employed by the WPA in Pulaski County has sworn in an affidavit that he has never visited the county clerk's office for the purpose of making any check as to the registration of any WPA workers, and this fact is borne out by the county clerk of Pulaski County.

Charge No. 4. Continuing on June 13, Mr. Stokes reported:

A revealing letter was sent to WPA workers in Martin County on the eastern border of Kentucky, by Russell Williamson, Barkley campaign manager in the county. How Mr. Williamson got hold of the list is not clear.

The facts concerning Charge No. 4: What Mr. Stokes did not say, but could have learned easily, was that this letter was mailed not to a list of WPA workers alone, as he inferred, but to all the voters in Martin County, according to the sworn statement of Russell Williamson. Mr. Williamson states that letters mailed by him went to both Democrats and Republicans throughout the county and that he never requested or received a list of Martin County WPA employees from anyone. Mr. Williamson's statement concerning the list of WPA workers is supported by the sworn
statement of Arthur Gamble, the director of the WPA for the Kentucky district which includes Martin County. So long as WPA workers have their names on the voting list, and so long as the mails are delivered, we cannot, and, in a Democracy, we should not, prevent them from receiving campaign literature urging them to vote for one candidate or another.

Charge No. 5. On June 11, Mr. Stokes charged:

J. Amos Runyon, county attorney, was reported active with WPA in the Pikeville area.

One affidavit testifies to this from Cleve Thacker, WPA worker, who said that "on or about the first day of March, 1938, Amos Runyon said if I signed a pledge for A. B. Chandler that I would have no job on WPA.

"He also told me he would find out how I voted, and that all men that signed pledges and voted for Chandler would lose their jobs."

The facts concerning Charge No. 5: This charge does not accuse any WPA official of anything. J. Amos Runyon, the county attorney, is not employed on WPA and has no connection with this organization.

He has no authority to hire or fire Cleve Thacker or any other WPA employee. Had Mr. Stokes gone to the trouble of interviewing Mr. Runyon concerning this charge, he would have found out that Mr. Runyon has not only never discussed politics with Cleve Thacker, but that he does not even know Cleve Thacker. In a sworn statement Mr. Runyon further sets forth that he has never attempted to coerce, intimidate or improperly influence any WPA employees by threats regarding their jobs in order to alter their political actions or opinions. It is interesting to note that Cleve Thacker is still in the employ of the WPA in Kentucky.

Charge No. 6. On June 7, Mr. Stokes wrote:

On March 14 Garland H. Rice, director of the employment division for WPA's First District, embracing eastern Kentucky, called in his office force at district headquarters in Paintsville and told them what they were expected to do.

According to an employee who attended the meeting, Mr. Rice explained that he was a Republican but had changed his registration to Democrat in order to vote for Sen. Barkley and that he expected them to do the same.
Further, according to the story, Mr. Rice asked a 2 per cent contribution from salaried for the Barkley campaign. Some money was collected, according to the story, but was returned two days later, with word that the collection would be made later. Mr. Rice's charge of registration is shown on the county clerk's books.

The facts concerning Charge No. 6: While it is difficult to investigate a charge which is alleged to have been made by an anonymous employee, the fact of the matter is that Mr. Rice and the members of his staff deny that any such statement was ever made. Mr. Rice, under oath, states that he never at any time has attempted to coerce any member of his staff into voting against his or her will and that he has been opposed to political activity or pressure from any and all sources in connection with his department of the WPA. He has never demanded any contribution from any of his employees for any campaign fund or for any political candidate. And his statements are substantiated by the members of his staff. But the members of his staff go even further in their statements. Ten of them certify that of their own free will and accord they offered contributions for the benefit of Mr. Barkley's campaign and asked Mrs. Alma R. Greene to turn it over to the proper authorities, but these contributions were refused by Mrs. Greene and the employees were told that she would not accept any money for campaign purposes. The charge is wholly without foundation.

Charge No. 7. Continuing on June 7, Mr. Stokes wrote:

It was in March also that B. C. Collis, director of operations for district No. 3, with headquarters at Lexington, called in his staff and announced that he expected them to be 100 per cent for Sen. Barkley, adding that they would be called on later for "something else," according to one who attended the meeting. The "something else" was presumed to refer to a contribution.

The facts concerning Charge No. 7: Careful investigation shows that politics did come up at this meeting and that Mr. Collis brought up the subject. He mentioned it as a warning to his men that they would be subjected to much pressure from both sides because of the heat of the campaign and he told them to take no part in it. An affidavit signed by Mr. Collis states these are the facts concerning the matter and that no mention wha-
soever has been made of any campaign contributions at any time
and none was solicited. Supporting affidavits by every member
of his engineering staff say that they have never used their
official positions with the WPA to coerce, intimidate or compel
anyone operating under their supervision or anyone connected
with the WPA in Kentucky to vote for any candidate or to
support any political party.

Charge No. 8

On June 8, Mr. Stokes declared:

In Edmonson County, in middle-western Kentucky,
a significant political project is being carried out.
WPA timekeepers have been making out political check­
lists of WPA workers, apparently with the object of
finding out their affiliation and lining up the
vote.

The cards call for the following information:
names of all legal voters in family; addresses;
registered, yes or no; precinct where registered.
On the lists I saw, this information had all been
filled in.

Lee Gorden, chief WPA supervisor for the
district, is reported to be directing this political
project.

The facts concerning Charge No. 8: Lee Gorden did distribute registration cards.
We have taken steps to see that this man minds his own business.
He was told that "any such activity on his part in the future
would result in his being fired."

Charge No. 9.

On June 8, Mr. Stokes quoted an affidavit by Frank Starr, WPA
project superintendent, as follows:

That while project superintendent at the
Ft. Thomas Army post I took a man named Lawrence
Connit to Mr. Maynard, assistant supervisor,
to be qualified for a position as carpenter
foreman; that this man was very closely questioned
by Mr. Maynard regarding his attitude toward the
senatorial race between Gov. Chandler and Sen.
Barkley, and Mr. Connit made the statement that
he and Gov. Chandler were very close friends.

Mr. Connit did not get the job.

Affiant (Starr) states that he did not commit
himself and because of his inactivity for Sen.
Barkley he was removed for the ostensible reason
that he would not follow instructions and failed
to cooperate.

The facts concerning Charge No. 9: Lawrence J. Connit (spelled Connit by
Mr. Stokes), who had worked for a considerable length of time
as a carpenter on this project was offered a promotion to the
job of foreman on March 25, 1938. He refused because the
local union requirements prevented him from holding a position.
which would give him authority over both union and non-union
workers. Mr. Connett, in a sworn statement, declares that
politics was never mentioned in his discussions with Mr.
Maynard regarding the promotion. Had Mr. Stokes cared to
have investigated fully the circumstances surrounding
Mr. Connett's employment, he would have discovered those
facts and that Mr. Connett continued as an employee in good
standing of the WPA under April 18, 1938, at which time he
resigned in order to accept a better job with the War
Department at the Ft. Thomas army post.

As to Mr. Starr, there is not a word of truth to the
charge that he was dismissed because of his inactivity for
Sen. Barkley. Documentary evidence shows that Mr. Starr
was fired from the WPA on April 15, solely because he was
incompetent and inefficient and his release was specifically
requested by Major James W. Younger, U.S.A., quartermaster
at Ft. Thomas, where the U.S. Army sponsors the project upon
which he worked.

Charge No. 10. Continuing on June 6, Mr. Stokes reported:

An assistant supervisor in Russell County in
southern Kentucky is involved in charges of
political activity in an affidavit by Forest H.
Lawless, 33, who said he has been employed on
WPA about two years and was discharged March 21
on the ground his work was not satisfactory.

"About two weeks before I was discharged,"
Mr. Lawless swore, "it was rumored among the
workers that a paper would be brought out on
the job by some of the officials of the WPA
for the workers to sign pledging their support
to Sen. Barkley or lose their jobs.

"Before the paper was presented on our job
I had talked before the foreman and hands that
I would not sell my vote for a 20-cent job, and
what I said was turned in to the WPA office, and
I was later showed a paper that I was marked
unfavorable to Barkley.

"After I received notice that I was laid off
I asked the assistant supervisor why I was laid
off, and he said that the talk I had on the road
was the reason, and he would do every man he
heard talking against Barkley the same way."

The facts concerning Charge No. 10: County Judge Porter Dunbar of Russell County who
requested by Lawless to investigate his case. After a complete
investigation of the charges made by Lawless, the Judge stated:
A man by the name of Lawless came into my office and told me that the WPA foreman had a meeting the night before and that everybody was going to have to sign a pledge card to Barkley in order to hold his job. I told him that he had been misinformed. That I was at the meeting and if anything like that had been said or done I would be the first to kick. I further told him that there had been criticism in regard to his work and that the way to hold his job was to go ahead and work and tend to his business and not go around starting rumors that he knew nothing about.

"Sometime after I talked to Mr. Lawless the first time, he came in and said he was fired because he would not support Barkley. I said to him that I would investigate the matter. I did. He was a republican working under a republican foreman and I was told that he was fired for not giving satisfactory work. After I had investigated the whole matter he came in and wanted me to write the Louisville office and see if he would not be put back on. I told him that after my investigation I did not think I could afford to do it in face of the facts regarding his dismissal. I have heard no more from him since except his affidavits I have read in the papers."

The officials in charge of the project testify under oath that the only reasons for discharging Lawless and the only reasons given to Lawless for his discharge, were that he constantly shirked on the job and failed to do a reasonable and honest amount of work. They also swear under oath that no papers asking the support of Senator Barkley were ever brought on this project or any other project in Russell County.

charge No. 11. On June 9, Mr. Stokes wrote:

A 65-year-old foreman, E.T. Rich, in charge of a quarry project, swears in an affidavit that he was fired because he would not become active for Sen. Barkley, and that the WPA engineer for Pulaski and Russell Counties told him the only reason was that he was for the Governor. In his affidavit, Mr. Rich said that "George Nelson, the timekeeper on the job, brought some papers out on the job for the boys to sign up showing whether they would support Barkley, that some of the boys came to me and said that they wore for Chandler and did not want to sign the papers and asked my advice.****

The facts concerning Charge No. 11: Careful investigation clearly establishes that Mr. E.T. Rich was guilty of wasteful practices, refusal to follow orders and attempts to delay completion of the job and was therefore dismissed. Sworn documentary evidence supplied by workers under Mr. Rich asserts that the timekeeper, George Nelson, did not at any time present to them or ask them to sign any paper or document pledging their support to any political candidate.
Charge No. 12. On June 9, Mr. Stokes continued:

In adjoining Russell County, Alvin Flanagan, 31, who was laid off in April after working for WPA for three years, said in an affidavit:

"Before I was laid off the foreman called me off and said that I have a paper here that I would like for you to sign pledging your support to Sen. Barkley, and I told him that I would rather not sign a petition supporting anyone.***

The facts concerning Charge No. 12: Flanagan was fired simply for failure to report for five consecutive work days and was automatically dismissed in accordance with a long-standing regulation of the Works Progress Administration. Sworn testimony discloses that neither Mr. Flanagan nor any other WPA worker in Russell County has been asked to sign any paper pledging support to any political candidate. Further investigation discloses that Alvin Flanagan failed to report for WPA work because he had secured a job with the Kentucky State Highway Department. This may account for Mr. Flanagan's unfounded political charge.

Charge No. 13. On June 9, Mr. Stokes wrote:

Art Hargis, 36, said the foreman on his job, Cleve Keeney, told him about two months ago "that the fellows on the job were going to have to support Barkley if they stayed on the WPA."

The facts concerning Charge No. 13: Mr. Keeney and Mr. Hargis, returning one night from a meeting addressed by Gov. Chandler at Newport, Ky., did discuss politics and Mr. Keeney did say that they should support Sen. Barkley. An affidavit was obtained from Mr. Hargis on which this charge was based. We regard this remark by Mr. Keeney as reprehensible and State Administrator Goodman has been instructed to take the necessary punitive action. Mr. Hargis is still employed on the same WPA project.

Charge No. 14. Continuing on June 9, Mr. Stokes reports:

The same Cleve Keeney is mentioned in another affidavit as approaching Volantus K. Burgin, 44, who said he was told that he would have to support the Senator if he stayed on WPA.

Subsequently, Mr. Burgin said in his affidavit, he sprained his back and, on doctor's orders, was given lighter work as water boy. Before he had recovered, he said, the foreman told him he would have to give up the lighter job and go back to the quarry because he was for Gov. Chandler. Later he was discharged. The reason given on his papers was that he "quit because he could not get a higher rate of pay."

The foreman, he said, offered him a better position with more money "if I would support Sen. Barkley but I refused to do so."

The facts concerning Charge No. 14: Documentary evidence shows that Burgin was fired solely because he was totally unreliable and...
witnesses, he frequently reported to the job while intoxicated and on one occasion threatened the foreman with a revolver.

**Charge No. 16:** Continuing on June 9, Mr. Stokes wrote:

John Johnson, 40, of Eubank, who has been on WPA for a long time, said he refused to sign a paper for Sen. Barkley when it was presented to him by a foreman, and a week later was fired, the slip saying he had disobeyed orders and was loafing on the job. He can prove by every man on the job, he said, that he was guilty of neither offense.

The facts concerning Charge No. 15: Had Mr. Stokes taken the trouble to interview Johnson's fellow workers, he would have discovered that there was no foundation whatsoever to this charge. Johnson says he can prove by every man on the job that he never disobeyed orders or was guilty of loafing. The facts are that every man on this job has sworn, under oath, that Johnson was guilty of both loafing on the job and disobeying orders, not once but many times. They further swear that at no time have they ever been solicited by anyone to sign a paper for Sen. Barkley.

**Charge No. 16.** Continuing on June 9, Mr. Stokes reports:

A foreman, Jim Yancy, was represented in an affidavit by G.W. Maynard, 71, as talking to the men on the job about the election and saying that those who did not sign a paper for the Senator would be fired.

Mr. Maynard also mentioned in his affidavit another foreman, Joe Lewis, saying that while lots of men were on a job "Joe Lewis said in a loud voice so we could all hear him that all of you have to re-register and support Barkley for it was your meat and bread, and if Chandler was elected all the jobs would be cut off."

The facts concerning Charge No. 16: Investigation discloses not only that no such conversations ever took place on this project, but that Maynard has not worked under the supervision of Joe Lewis since June, 1937, so that Maynard could hardly have heard Lewis make the alleged statement regardless of how loud Lewis yelled. The persons in charge of these projects deny, under oath, that any papers for Sen. Barkley have ever been brought on the job and it is interesting to note that Mr. Maynard is still employed on the project as a carpenter under the supervision of James L. Yancey.

**Charge No. 17.** Continuing on June 9, Mr. Stokes wrote:

From Knox County, James Disney, 48, related in an affidavit how a timekeeper, Paul Bain, handed out Barkley campaign buttons to the workers on the project. He said he told the timekeeper he was not for the Senator and would not wear a button.***
"The next day Parker Hemphill, who is the foreman on that job, came and called affiant off from where the rest of the WPA men were working and took him down the hill over a hundred yards and put him to work by himself in a mud hole standing in the water and mud almost up to his knees. Affiant had no boots and neither the said Hemphill or the said Bain did obtain or attempt to obtain any for him."

The facts concerning Charge No. 17: Affidavits signed by his fellow workers, Parker Hemphill, his project foreman, and Paul Bain, his project timekeeper, declare that politics has never been mentioned on this job and that Disney has never worked away from the crew in any mud hole. Mr. Disney's fellow workers further swear that they have worked beside him in the same crew, that boots were needed only on rare occasions, and were furnished to the workers, including Mr. Disney, on those occasions. It is interesting to note that Mr. Disney has not reported for work since giving this false information.

Charge No. 18: On June 11, Mr. Stokes wrote from Paintsville:

Recently a WPA job paying $50 a month more than he was getting as a state highway employee was given to John L. Wells, of this town, a brother of R.G. Wells of Pikeville, 40 miles away, who is campaign manager for Sen. Barkley in Pike County and a Democratic state committeeman.

The facts concerning Charge No. 18: John L. Wells had been paid $125 a month by the state highway department before he was assigned to a supervisory job paying $19 a month more—not $50—on WPA. He has been working for the WPA for the past three months. The salary paid Mr. Wells is the uniform rate of pay for this type of work on WPA, and investigation discloses that he was hired solely because of his ability, by reason of experience and qualifications, to perform certain supervisory work. R.G. Wells, campaign manager for Sen. Barkley in Pike County, swears under oath that he did not approach or use his influence in any way with any WPA official in order to secure the assignment of his brother to his present position; that he had no knowledge whatsoever of any contacts between his brother and WPA officials regarding this matter and took no part in it whatsoever. R.G. Wells' affidavit is supported by sworn testimony of officials in charge of the WPA program in Johnson County.
Charge No. 19. On June 11, Mr. Stokes wrote:

R. G. Wells himself was reported to have angled for at least three employees of the state highway department—a agency particularly active for Gov. Chandler—who were regarded as good political workers in Pike County. The letter suggesting better jobs was said to have been skillfully worded, without mention of WPA.

The Facts concerning Charge No. 19: Sworn testimony by both Mr. Wells and local WPA officials establishes that Mr. Wells has never at any time requested the WPA to offer employment to any person employed by the State Highway Department. As a Barkley campaign manager Mr. Wells has a perfect right to address letters to anyone he pleases and the WPA is not concerned with the letter, also mentioned by Mr. Stokes, which Mr. Wells admits writing in an attempt to get more money from the State Highway Department for one of its employes. Mr. Wells has never been and is not now connected with the WPA in any way and has no authority to offer WPA employment to anyone.

Charge No. 20. On June 10, Mr. Stokes' article from McKee, Ky., was headlined in the New York World-Telegram, "County Manager for Barkley 'Lives' at WPA Office." After describing the little WPA office, he wrote:

A sign nailed beside the entrance reads:—
"No loafing."
This applies apparently to everyone except Caspar Ratts, the Barkley campaign manager for Jackson County, of which McKee is the county seat. He spends a lot of time in the office—though he has no connection with WPA. According to local citizens he also spends a lot of time working for Sen. Barkley among WPA employes on projects in this area.

The facts concerning Charge No. 20: Careful investigation of Mr. Stokes' implications was made, and sworn testimony of Mr. Ratts and local WPA officials establishes clearly that Mr. Ratts not only does not attempt to dictate WPA policy in that county, but seldom visits the local WPA office.

Charge No. 21. On June 7, Mr. Stokes wrote:

At Madisonville, in western Kentucky, I went to see J. B. Boddie, director of District No. 4, regarding a report he had sought to interest members of the city school board in Sen. Barkley's cause at a time when additional Federal funds were needed to complete a school. Mr. Boddie was frank.
"What happened," he explained, "was that they came to ask if they should go to Sen. Barkley to help them get the money. I told them that I thought if they went..."
to a politician for a favor it was only fair that
they should support him. Isn't that fair and logical?"
A majority of the school board is for Gov. Chandler.
"I hope they get the money," Mr. Boddie continued,
"because they want to finish the school and I want to
see it finished. This is my home, I've lived here 18
years. But there's been no politics here and there'll
be none in connection with any projects, nor has anybody
been fired nor will anybody be fired on account of
politics."

The facts concerning Charge No. 21: A signed statement by every member of the
school board at Madisonville asserts that Mr. Boddie has never
at any time mentioned politics in his dealings with them on
matters pertaining to the Works Progress Administration and that he
has never suggested that they support Sen. Barkley. An affidavit
signed and sworn to by Mr. Boddie asserts that he has not used
or attempted to use at any time his influence as District Director
upon any member of any school board in behalf of Sen. Barkley and
that he has not at any time threatened to withhold Federal funds
from any project unless the sponsors or other persons agreed to
support Sen. Barkley. Mr. Boddie further swears that at no time
has he permitted the political status of the sponsors of any
project to influence him in the discharge of his duties nor
has he in any way sought to influence such sponsors for or
against any candidate for public office.

The facts are that Mr. Stokes interviewed only one member
of the Board of Education in Madisonville. This man, Mr. J. C.
Riddle, an insurance man and a Republican, according to his own
voluntary testimony, states that he assured Mr. Stokes that never
had an instance of political favoritism or practice come to his
attention in connection with the operation of the WPA program in
Madisonville.

The signed statement of the members of the School Board
compliments Mr. Boddie on the excellent and non-political ad-
ministration of his office.

Had Mr. Stokes lived up to his reputation as an impartial
correspondent, he would have at least reported the true facts
concerning his conversation with the only member of the School
Board whom he saw during his hasty visit to Madisonville.
Charge No. 22. On June 13, Mr. Stokes wrote, from Likeville, Ky.:

An open blow-up over WPA foremen for shirking their regular duties occurred recently in a session of the fiscal court at Monticello in Wayne County. The fiscal court is the local county governing body, comparable to county commissions in other states.

Two squires - the fiscal court officials - got up in the meeting, in the presence of Russell Marshall, WPA area engineer, and demanded a reorganization of WPA in the three counties of Wayne, McCreary and Clinton in southern Kentucky. One of them said two foremen in his district were paying no attention to their jobs, and another said that there was a shirking foreman in his district.

The facts concerning Charge No. 22: S. R. Marshall, the WPA area engineer who attended the court session at which the "blow-up" was supposed to have occurred, states in an affidavit that no such criticism of WPA was expressed by anyone at this meeting. S. E. Anderson, clerk of the fiscal court, certifies that the facts as given by Mr. Marshall are correct. The fiscal court squires did suggest "that the foremen's jobs should be equally divided between Democrats and Republicans," according to the report, attested by both Mr. Marshall and the court clerk, but that Mr. Marshall "answered this by advising that we could not release any man unless someone could prefer charges that he was not doing his duty and that political affiliation did not enter in consideration.

The fiscal court was of the opinion that all of our present foremen were good men." Unsolicited statements, most of them too long to quote in full, were submitted by the county superintendent of schools, the mayor of Monticello and county judges, and all assert that the "cooperation given by the engineers and all of the supervisory force of the WPA is very satisfactory in every respect and if it were placed in our power to make any changes in engineers or foremen, we would not desire to do so."

"There you have the record on every specific charge made in this series of articles," Mr. Hopkins said. "Against the unsupported statements of the reporter and the affidavits of disgruntled workers and party workers, stands the documented evidence and the sworn testimony disproving every important accusation."
"General charges of political favoritism by WPA officials have been based upon these specific cases. They have no more validity than the specific cases upon which they depend for support, and a thorough investigation, as fully set forth above, has swept away their foundation in fact.

"I recognize that in a far-flung organization covering the 3,300 counties in America, with 64,000 projects and 2,700,000 workers, there will occur indiscretions by over-zealous partisans in the midst of heated campaigns, but that is a vastly different thing from a planned and organized political campaign on the part of the responsible heads of any government agency.

"I am mindful of the fact that in political campaigns newspapers and others have a tendency to make loose and unsupported charges involving the integrity of the political party they oppose. In the heat of a campaign partisans on occasion give out misleading and inaccurate information. This seems to be inherent in our political system. While I know that this series of articles was based on inaccurate information, I am quite aware of the fact nevertheless that other similar misleading and inaccurate statements may be made before the coming elections are over. I do not intend to permit charges against WPA officials, and employees, in whose integrity I have confidence, to go unanswered and I intend to use every instrument at my command to acquaint the American people with the truth or falsity of such charges.

"The American people have a right to know whether these charges are true or not. I am convinced that people will not tolerate the prostitution of public funds appropriated to aid the unemployed. By the same token they will not tolerate attempts to smear public officials who are trying honestly to do their duty. I have on all occasions, where the facts warranted, discharged employees for coercive or other improper activities, and I am quite prepared to do it again wherever any real evidence is available."