

Scene 2: The Oscar W. Hemmingway Post of the American Legion

(Simultaneously in the scuffle.)

Quiet! Get seated everybody! MARSHALL

We'll fight that Sheriff. PETER

We'll knock him for a loop. GUS

I'll say. GIRL

Let 'em try to take us. DOLORES

No, sir! IRVING

MARSHALL
Now, we have to have some sort of order, and naturally as our chairman I know all of us want Val LaMar.
(Cheers)
What about it, Val?

Well – er – I don't think I should be chairman. VAL

Why not? GUS

Yes, why not? MARSHALL

Well, Marshall knows more about parliamentary law – I think I'll be more valuable in an advisory capacity – but on the other hand... VAL

Hurray! ALL

We must put ourselves on a sound economic basis. Of course you mustn't forget that I'm coming in at a very critical time. VAL

O.K., Mr. Roosevelt, what are you going to do about it? Close the banks? GUS

No! We're going to organize. VAL

Organize? Who says we want to organize? Come on, Beauregarde, we're going.
(LEE takes BEAUREGARDE by the arm and pulls him out of his seat.) LEE

BEAUREGARDE
(Breaking loose.)
I'm staying. Just send the car back for me.

Where do you think you're going? GUS

My brother and I don't belong here. Why did you all drag us here in the first place? LEE

Our parents are off in vaudeville. VAL

Our parents are off in the South of France. LEE

Won't you – er – sit down?
(He pushes LEE down onto the bench.) GUS

VAL
Now none of us wants to go to the Work Farm and our problem is: how are we going to keep off it. On our side we have youth, truth and the love of liberty. What's the other side got?

The sheriff!
LEE

I - 2 - 15

(Menacing LEE.)
GUS
Mr. Chairman, do I give him the works?

BEAUREGARDE
Don't ask! Sock him!

VAL
Order! He's right. What about the Sheriff? His daughter is right here on our side. Maybe she can tell us something about him. Tell us something, Dolores.

DOLORES
Well, Mr. Chair. Daddy told me that all the children of the vaudeville actors would all become bums - I mean vagrants - if they weren't taken care of.

GUS
Aw, he's a half-wit. - Oh, excuse me, Miss Reynolds. I forgot he was your father.

VAL
Go on, Dolores.

DOLORES
So Daddy decided that he'd have the town council send all of you to the Work Farm. Now, I don't want all you boys to become farmers. So I told Daddy not to send the boys and he said would I take care of them and I said "I'd love to!" and he said, "No go."

VAL
As all of us are opposed to going to the Work Farm...

LEE
You're all nuts!

VAL
Kindly address the chair. Mr. Lee Calhoun.
(They all boo him.)

LEE
Mr. Chairman, in the terms of your parliamentary procedure, ladies and gentlemen, let me make a motion that you all have nothing, you all can do nothing, and you all amount to nothing.

IRVING
Who you saying will amount to nothing?

LEE
I am and none of you in your present circumstances will make it!
(GUS starts for LEE.)

DOLORES
No! Daddy said he wanted to send you to the Work Farm because if you stayed here you'd fight like cats and dogs.

GUS
(To himself.)
Peaceful. Peaceful.

LEE
Listen to me. I should be in charge. I'm not one of you theatrical people. My father owns this town! He made quite a fortune in Wall Street by selling short during the crash. The man who makes more deserves more because he's superior. You've got to have superior men just as you have superior races.

VAL
Do you really believe one race is superior to another?

IRVING
Well, one of them's got superior rhythm.
(They all laugh.)

LEE
You can't do anything without money!

VAL
The Irish Sweepstakes is coming up! Suppose we chip in and buy a raffle ticket?.

PETER
Never! We should abolish money!

LEE
Communist!

PETER
Thank you for the compliment. Nobody should own anything. Property is theft. We should place everything we have in a communal fund.

LEE
What have you got?

PETER
Nothing.

VAL
That sums us up. The question is: what form of government should we have?

GUS
There's only one kind of government. F-O-R-C-E. Force! The big shots around here got to run the little shots. And the biggest shot of all dictates to everybody.

VAL
I think Gus has got something there. Julius Caesar was a great believer in force.

MARSHALL
And he got stabbed! Let us examine the Magna Carta!

GUS
Is she that strip tease artist?

VAL
It may appear on the surface that all our ideas are a little different, but when we put them all together I think we ought to get something very interesting.

BILLIE
Yes, a new bunch of farmers. I move the meeting be adjourned.

But we've just started. VAL

Billie is right. Let's stop talking and do something. MARSHALL

All in favor? VAL

Aye! ALL

The meeting is adjourned. VAL