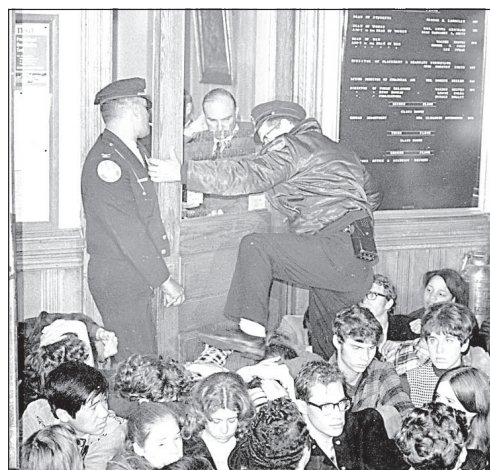


OUR CENTURY

1967

AT A GLANCE



Police climb over protesters at Oberlin College.

Clevelanders join anti-war protests

Eleven busloads of Clevelanders joined thousands of other Vietnam War protesters — between 35,000 and 150,000, depending on who did the estimating — for a march on Washington in October. On one side were pacifists, “flower children,” black nationalists and college students from Maine to Texas. On the other were 6,000 troops, with 20,000 on alert at nearby bases.

Among the first to be arrested was author Norman Mailer. Among the last were 240 “barefoot hippies and mini-skirted teenage girls” who briefly broke through the lines into the Pentagon. “The purpose was to confront the warmakers and we did this,” said Sally Chaney of Cleveland Heights, a member of SANE and Women Strike for Peace.

A week later, students surrounded Navy recruiters at Oberlin College and refused to let them out of their car until police rescued them with tear gas and fire hoses. About 100 students staged a sit-in at Peters Hall.

Former Alabama Gov. George Wallace, a candidate for president in 1968, declared in a November speech in Cleveland that opposition to the war was treason and that war protesters should be jailed.

The war was having another effect, however. The Growth Board reported in May that employment in Northeast Ohio stood at a record 1.1 million. Unemployment was down to 2.7 percent. A total of 71 manufacturers had moved into the area in the previous year, bringing 865 new jobs. Only five had moved out, but those took away 1,300 jobs.

In December the 5-year-old Growth Board, a job-retention organization, and the 119-year-old Cleveland Chamber of Commerce merged into a new organization. Reflecting the optimism of the day, it was called the Greater Cleveland Growth Association.

The University-Euclid Urban Renewal Project, scheduled to take five years, reached its fifth birthday in February with few of its goals attained, largely because the city was lagging in land acquisition and rehabilitation. Older projects such as Gladstone and East Woodland were also well behind schedule.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development froze Cleveland’s urban-renewal funds, halting plans for new projects such as the Near West Side and Fairfax. A. Dean Swartzel, HUD’s regional director, declared: “Cleveland’s plan was essentially good. But plans are merely things on paper. You have to have an organization to carry them out. There is where the failure was, in managerial capacity and ability.”

The Businessmen’s Interracial Committee joined in the criticism. Its chairman, as Mayor Ralph Locher couldn’t help noticing, was Ralph Besse, president of the Illuminating Co., who was steaming at Locher’s refusal to raise Muni Light rates to match CEI’s. “They can say what they want in the national magazines about us,” Locher told a council committee. “Urban renewal is part of a great forward thrust for the city.”

The Indians had a rookie manager, Joe Adcock, with instructions to stress fundamentals. The team was fundamentally bad, finishing last for the first time since 1914. Steve Hargan was the top pitcher at 14-13, and first baseman Tony Horton the top hitter at .281. Attendance fell by 27 percent to 667,000 — lowest in the majors, according to Russell Schneider’s “Cleveland Indians Encyclopedia.” At season’s end, President Gabe Paul fired the befuddled Adcock and hired Alvin Dark.

Two ex-Browns — Paul and Jim — were voted into the Hall of Fame. The 1967 Browns won the Century Division, one of four now in the National Football League, but were crushed by the Green Bay Packers, 52-14, in the first round of the playoffs. Milt Morin and Paul Warfield scored on Frank Ryan passes for the two Browns touchdowns.

Clevelanders got a chance to see the top sport in most of the world in the summer. The Cleveland Stokers — known as the Stoke City 11 back in England during the rest of the year — took the field, er, pitch, at the Stadium. Attendance averaged just over 5,000 for six home soccer games.

As the year began, the government-appointed Commission on the Year 2000 reported on what life was likely to be like at the turn of the millennium. Among the developments: international rocket travel, abundant thermonuclear energy, farming in the oceans, mining on the moon, laboratories in space — and decision-making by computer.

Cleveland would be part of “Chipitt,” a metropolis stretching from Chicago to Pittsburgh, which would be second in population only to “Boswash” on the Atlantic Coast.

By Fred McGunagle

The wild celebration had spilled out into W. 6th St. and Superior Ave. when Ralph Locher arrived. The main floor of the Rockefeller Building was a madhouse, with happy supporters of Carl Stokes jammed together, cheering.

Bands played and flashbulbs popped. Detectives had to lower their shoulders to push through the mass of humanity, with Locher pressing behind. The few who noticed him looked startled, then grinned even more broadly.

“I want to congratulate Carl Stokes for winning as he has,” Locher told the crowd when he finally reached the stage. “Cleveland is a great city which will become greater in the years ahead.”

The crowd — mostly black but with a number of whites — cheered more loudly. Somebody started a chorus of “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow,” overlooking years of hard feelings. Another knot forced its way through the crowd toward the stage. It was Stokes and his wife, Shirley, to shake hands with Locher. As Locher left, Sal Gummings’ Dixieland Band started playing outside, and the crowd danced in the street.

In the largest vote ever for a Cleveland primary, Stokes had won the Democratic mayoral nomination with 110,000 votes to 92,000 for Locher and 8,500 for Frank Celeste, the former Lakewood mayor. Although Locher had piled up big margins in some wards — winning North Broadway 10-1, for example — a sizable number of whites had voted for Stokes. Blacks had voted solidly for Stokes. In Hough, site of the previous year’s riots, the mood was happy and calm. Black militant Fred “Ahmed” Evans was standing at E. 89th St. and Superior Ave. with some of his followers to make sure it stayed that way. As a police car cruised by, Evans raised his arm in a salute. “Peace!” he said.

But the election was far from over. The city charter had changed once more to partisan elections. In six weeks, Stokes would face Seth Taft, a young civic leader who was the grandson of President William Howard Taft. Taft challenged Stokes to a series of four debates and Stokes immediately accepted.

Stokes moved quickly to round up key support from the Democratic Party and the Cleveland Federation of Labor, both of which had backed Locher in the primary. He assured nationality newspaper editors that he would not take orders from Martin Luther King Jr., who had organized voter-registration drives in black neighborhoods.

The debates showed little disagreement, though Stokes favored the sale of Muni Light and Taft opposed it. Taft called for programs to solve the poverty and housing problems that had brought on the riots. Though he was warmly received in usually Democratic nationality neighborhoods, he issued strict orders against race-oriented campaigning and fired campaign workers who violated them.

A Plain Dealer poll a week before the election showed Stokes with 50.14 percent and Taft with 49.86 percent. The outcome would be decided on whose supporters turned out in greater numbers.

On Sunday, a snowstorm struck Northeast Ohio, dumping 24 inches on Ashtabula County. Despite the wintry weather, the turnout two days later was heavy. The candidates sweated out the count at their headquarters. So did reporters from as far away as Sweden.

Taft took an early lead. By midnight, with the vote mostly in, he led by 21,000. At 2 a.m. King and Ralph Abernathy of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference joined Stokes at the Rockefeller Building. At 2:30, they got word that Taft was going to make a victory statement. He didn’t.

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Jan. 12: A Louisville draft board refuses to consider a request to grant a draft exemption to heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali. In April, Ali is stripped of his title for refusing to join the armed forces.

Jan. 27: Astronauts Virgil Grissom, Edward White and Roger Chaffee are killed when their Apollo 1 spacecraft catches fire on the launch pad at Cape Kennedy, Fla.



But the ballots still uncounted were from black precincts. Slowly, Stokes climbed closer. When the unofficial count was complete, it was 129,825 for Stokes, 128,238 for Taft. Stokes walked out in front of his happy but exhausted followers. “I can say to all of you,” he said, “that never before have I ever known the full meaning of the words ‘God bless America.’”

Stokes quickly announced his choices for safety director, Joseph McManamon, a lawyer and former policeman; and police chief, Inspector Michael Blackwell, a colorful veteran of the department. Both were white.

But his inauguration was thrown into doubt when the first day of the recount showed him losing 1,000 of his 2,500-vote margin.

The final tally showed Stokes ahead by 1,679. He took the oath the following Monday, as required by the charter, in front of 1,000 people jammed into the council chamber. “Our cities are the battleground on which American civilization is now engaged in a struggle for survival,” he told them.

The following night, The Plain Dealer reported, “some 6,000 people — suburban matrons, Cleveland laborers, Negroes and whites — celebrated through the early hours of the morning at Public Hall to inaugurate the new mayor with the first such inaugural ball in the city’s 171-year history.” They paid \$5 to \$100, which was used to buy clothes for needy children.

In Paris, Le Monde called Stokes’ election “an important victory for supporters of integration.” Time magazine put him on its cover, noting the election of “Carl Burton Stokes, great-grandson of a slave, over Seth Taft, grandson of a president.” It noted the “double-breasted suits, monogrammed (CBS) shirts and Antonio y Cleopatra cigars” of the “stage-handsome Stokes.”

Taft told Time that Cleveland was “the least bigoted city in America.” Business and civic leaders, who had winced at national coverage of the Hough riots and Cleveland’s urban-renewal failure, basked in its revived “image” as a bastion of brotherhood.



From top: Carl Stokes on the campaign trail, above, and with his wife, Shirley, at the victory celebration, and with the men he defeated — Ralph Locher, left, and Seth Taft.

Ghetto residents, too, saw a new era arriving. They had elected a black mayor. Soon all their problems would be behind them.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

March 9: Svetlana Alliluyeva, daughter of the late Soviet Dictator Josef Stalin, defects to the United States.

June 28: Israel wins the Six-Day War with its Arab enemies.

Aug. 1: Black power advocates H. Rapp Brown and Stokely Carmichael call for a black revolution in the United States.

Aug. 30: Thurgood Marshall becomes the first black justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Oct. 16: Singer Joan Baez is arrested during an anti-war protest in California.

Dec. 21: Louis Washkansky of South Africa, the world’s first heart transplant patient, dies 18 days after receiving the heart of a 25-year-old woman.

Born: Boris Becker, Sandra Bullock, Pamela Anderson.

Died: Poets and authors Carl Sandburg and Langston Hughes; film stars Spencer Tracy, Vivien Leigh, Basil Rathbone, Claude Rains and Jayne Mansfield; American nuclear physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer; Jack Ruby; magazine magnate Henry Luce.