

OUR CENTURY

1988

AT A GLANCE

Demjanjuk gets death sentence

"What penalty can be imposed on Ivan the Terrible, a person who killed so many human beings?" Judge Zvi Tal asked. "A thousand deaths will not exonerate him for his crimes."

With that he sentenced John Demjanjuk, retired autoworker from Seven Hills, to be hanged.

"Some spectators in the packed auditorium cheered, clapped and shouted 'Die!' after the sentence was delivered," The Plain Dealer's Michele Lesie reported. "Others rose from their seats and stood silently while those around them began to sing 'The People of Israel Live.'"

The three judges believed death camp survivors who had identified Demjanjuk as the brutal guard who terrorized them. They rejected Demjanjuk's contention that a German ID card bearing his name and picture was a forgery.

Demjanjuk's appeal was delayed when one of his Israeli lawyers committed suicide. A second lawyer was attacked by a death camp survivor who threw acid in his face.

John Gill of Cleveland, one of the lawyers defending Demjanjuk, said he was convinced evidence eventually would emerge to clear his client. "But if the judges impose the 'final solution' on John, they won't be able to bring him back when it becomes clear it was all a mistake," he said.

"I don't like George Forbes," said the West Side woman at her kitchen table. It was a television commercial about the C-FORCE (Coalition for Reforming Council's Efficiency) amendment to limit the term of the City Council president. But, she went on, she'd vote against the amendment because it was bad government — and wouldn't force Forbes out until 1992. The commercial was paid for by opponents of the amendment.

White wards voted for the amendment, but the turnout was light. A heavy black "no" vote sent it to defeat.

Mayor George Voinovich was riding low, at least in the polls. They showed that Howard Metzenbaum was likely to win another U.S. Senate term. In September, Voinovich marked his 3,233rd day as mayor, breaking the 35-year-old record of Thomas Burke. In November, Metzenbaum easily defeated Voinovich.

Dennis Kucinich suddenly re-emerged. The one-time "boy mayor," now 41, had failed to attract support for governor in 1986. In January, he announced he would challenge U.S. Rep. Mary Rose O'Keefe, who was under fire over payments to her congressional aides.

But as the polls came in, he became uncharacteristically quiet. At a City Club debate, he refused to attack her. "I didn't want to win by tearing my opponent up," Kucinich said afterward. He didn't win by being nice, either.

The Cavaliers had a bumper crop of second-year players, most notably point guard Mark Price. They added Larry Nance in a trade with Phoenix and went on to their first winning season in 10 years.

In the first playoff round, they led the Chicago Bulls by 17 points in the deciding game. Then — in a performance that would be repeated over the years — the Bulls' Michael Jordan took charge. He scored 21 second-half points and ended the Cavs' season.

Southpaw Greg Swindell won 18 games for the 1988 Indians and slow-throwing Doug Jones recorded a team-record 37 saves. But the Indians had lost leadoff hitter Brett Butler to free agency and their team batting average slipped to .261. They finished sixth.

The Browns lost Bernie Kosar to an injury to his right elbow in their first game and his backup, Gary Danielson, to a broken ankle in the second. Danielson's backup, Mike Pagel, suffered a broken ankle in the sixth game and ancient Don Strock was called in.

But Kosar returned and led the team to victories in its last five games. They lost the wild-card playoff game, 28-23, when the Houston Oilers rallied in the fourth quarter.

There was less than a minute to go in the big-school state high school football championship game at Ohio Stadium. St. Ignatius had a 10-7 lead, but Cincinnati Princeton had a first down a foot from the Ignatius goal line. Princeton ran three running plays. Ignatius stopped them all for a perfect 14-0 record and the first state football title ever for a Cleveland school.

Tax abatement had been considered political poison since 1977. That's when Mayor Ralph Perk and eight council members who backed the National City Center abatement were defeated.

Gradually, abatement began creeping back. By the beginning of 1988, three-quarters of the city was in "urban enterprise zones." New and expanding industries were given sweeping abatements of property and state franchise taxes. But when City Council voted \$120 million in abatements to Richard and David Jacobs for their Society and Ameritrust proposals, the United Auto Workers and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign circulated referendum petitions.

A half-hour before the July 8 deadline, they showed up on the City Hall steps with enough signatures, but said they wouldn't file them. They said they were satisfied with a council vote promising 75 percent of new jobs to Cleveland residents. Voinovich also promised to appoint a commission to review abatements.

The commission members turned out to be mainly city employees or officers of groups receiving city money. Nobody ever counted how many of the Society Center or Marriott Hotel workers lived in the city. The abatement floodgates were wide open.

A revival downtown and on waterfront



PLAIN DEALER FILE PHOTOS

The North Coast Harbor, ready for opening festivities.

By Fred McGunagle

Cleveland's "dead" downtown was coming back to life.

The decade had begun with the opening of the 35-story National City Center in 1980. The 16-story Ohio Bell (Ameritech) Building, 28-story Eaton Center and 31-story One Cleveland Center followed in 1983 and the 45-story Sohio (BP America) Building in 1985.

Tower City was planning the 12-story Chemical Financial-Ritz Carlton Hotel, another office building and a three-story shopping mall atop the Union Terminal to be called The Avenue. It would join the \$43 million Galleria, downtown's first new retail site since the 1920s, which opened in the fall of 1987.

Although commercial buildings had risen in the '70s, Clevelanders complained that downtown was dead. But the late 1980s brought reasons to stay downtown after 5 p.m.

On April 30, the Palace Theater reopened, restored at a cost of \$8.3 million to its 1922 glory as "the world's most beautiful theater." In the lobby, "jewels gleamed, eyes shone, music played, hearts swelled, guests feasted and feet tripped the light fantastic," The Plain Dealer reported.

A black-tie crowd of 2,200 paid up to \$10,000 a table to celebrate the progress and keep the work of the Playhouse Square Foundation going. Since Ray Shephardson rallied Clevelanders to save the theaters in 1971, the foundation had raised \$37.7 million. It had reopened the Ohio Theater in 1982 and the State in 1984.

The toughest challenge remained: the 1921 Allen Theatre. But the Euclid Ave. block from E. 14th to E. 17th Sts., long run down and trashy, glowed as it did when it rivaled New York's "Great White Way."

If Playhouse Square had been trashy, the Flats had been trashier. Only a last-minute purchase by the Higbee Co.'s Herbert Strawbridge prevented the opening of a junkyard in 1972. After all, the Flats were the banks of the scummy Cuyahoga River — the scene, as the New Cleveland Campaign revealed in pointing out, of a legendary 1969 fire.

Now Clevelanders saw the river in a different light. On the night of July 29, 200,000 people lined its banks. Lights danced on its waters, reflecting bridges that were glowing necklaces of color. In a Parade of Lights, 60 pleasure boats cruised down the river past the Nautica Stage, where earlier in the day the Cleveland Orchestra had performed.

Thousands more came to the Flats the next day for a volleyball tournament, water ski show, rock concert, lobsterfest, Krazy Kraft boat race and fireworks. They took walking tours of streets that once only longshoremen dared tread, marveling at the bars and shops along both banks and the cabin cruisers where only tugs and ore boats had once moved.



The Palace Theater showed off its restored splendor, as the revival of Playhouse Square continued.

On the west bank, they could see work going on in the vandalized, long-vacant Powerhouse. Jeff Jacobs, developer of Nautica and Shooter's Restaurant, was turning it into four floors of restaurants and shops.

When the decade began, the lake-front, too, had changed little, since it was the city dump. But Helen Horan and the Waterfront Coalition had rallied support and Mayor George Voinovich set out to emulate Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

On Sept. 9, with Voinovich and Gov. Richard Celeste riding the prow, a Coast Guard boat broke through a streamer into the \$11.3-million North Coast Harbor Park. Thousands cheered as the boat glided into a 7.6-acre man-made lake.

The ceremony opened the three-day Harbor Expo '88. Bands, an animated dinosaur and evening fireworks filled the eight-acre park around the lake. Another procession of lighted boats sailed in.

Plans called for a science museum, an aquarium, a Hyatt Hotel and lake-front apartments. The festivities closed with the World's Loudest Pep Rally for the Browns, about to play their home opener in the Stadium next door.

Elsewhere downtown, plans were moving ahead for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. In January, architect I.M. Pei unveiled plans

for a \$25 million, 18-story "glittering glass tent." It would overlook the river on W. Huron Rd. in the Tower City project. In July, local backers announced they had met a deadline set by the New York board of music magnates that controlled the hall.

As the project grew, the board had second thoughts about putting it in Cleveland instead of New York. It threatened Cleveland with loss of the hall unless leaders raised \$13 million in local funds. They did.

One key downtown project was still struggling: Developer Edward DeBartolo, the new co-owner of the Higbee Co., declared in January that what Cleveland needed most was a downtown domed stadium that would be "the heart of future development and excitement."

Instead, Art Modell wanted the city to modernize the 78,000-seat Stadium for his Browns. Richard and David Jacobs wanted a smaller facility for the Indians. Meanwhile, the Domed Stadium Corp. had borrowed \$22 million from the state and local banks to buy and clear the Central Market stadium site. The loans were due in 1989.

Cleveland Tomorrow, a group of the city's top corporate executives, stepped in. Maybe, leaders said, the stadium didn't need a dome.

Then North Coast Harbor hit a snag. Hyatt pulled out of the hotel

deal. At the same time, the Rock Hall plans were outgrowing Tower City. The two boards looked at their separate problems and sensed a common solution.

The private building boom continued. The Jacobs brothers announced plans to build a 60-story Ameritrust Corp. headquarters on Public Square. It would be near the 54-story Society National Corp. headquarters and 484-room Hyatt Regency Hotel they were about to start.

Work started on the 15-story, fittingly named Renaissance Center office building on Playhouse Square. The Bernstein Group planned a hotel nearby.

At year-end, a study reported that since 1980, Cleveland had added \$630 million in downtown development. The Urban Land Institute said Cleveland had seen as much downtown development in five years as Indianapolis, Detroit and Milwaukee combined. Downtown was alive.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.

E-mail: fmcgoo@prodigy.com

Photo researcher:
David G. Jardy
Plain Dealer Library

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Feb. 5: Panamanian Gen. Manuel Noriega is indicted by a federal grand jury in Miami for allegedly receiving more than \$4.6 million from the sale of illegal drugs.

April 8: Television evangelist Jimmy Swaggart is defrocked amid reports that he had engaged in lewd sexual acts with a prostitute.

April 23: Smoking is banned on all

commercial plane flights under two hours' duration.

Sept. 8: A. Bartlett Giamatti becomes commissioner of baseball.

Oct. 31: Former Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife, Imelda, are indicted by a federal grand jury on charges that they embezzled more than \$100 million in Philippine government money to buy

office buildings in New York.

Nov. 8: George Bush is elected president, carrying 40 states against Democrat Michael Dukakis.

Dec. 21: Pan American Airlines Flight 103 explodes in midair over Scotland, killing all 259 people aboard and 11 on the ground. The explosion was caused by a bomb

planted by Islamic terrorists in the luggage compartment.

Deaths: British double-agent Kim Philby, actor Trevor Howard, Pakistani dictator Mohammad Zia Ul-Haq, boxer Henry Armstrong, World War II fighter pilot Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, British dancer Frederick Ashton.