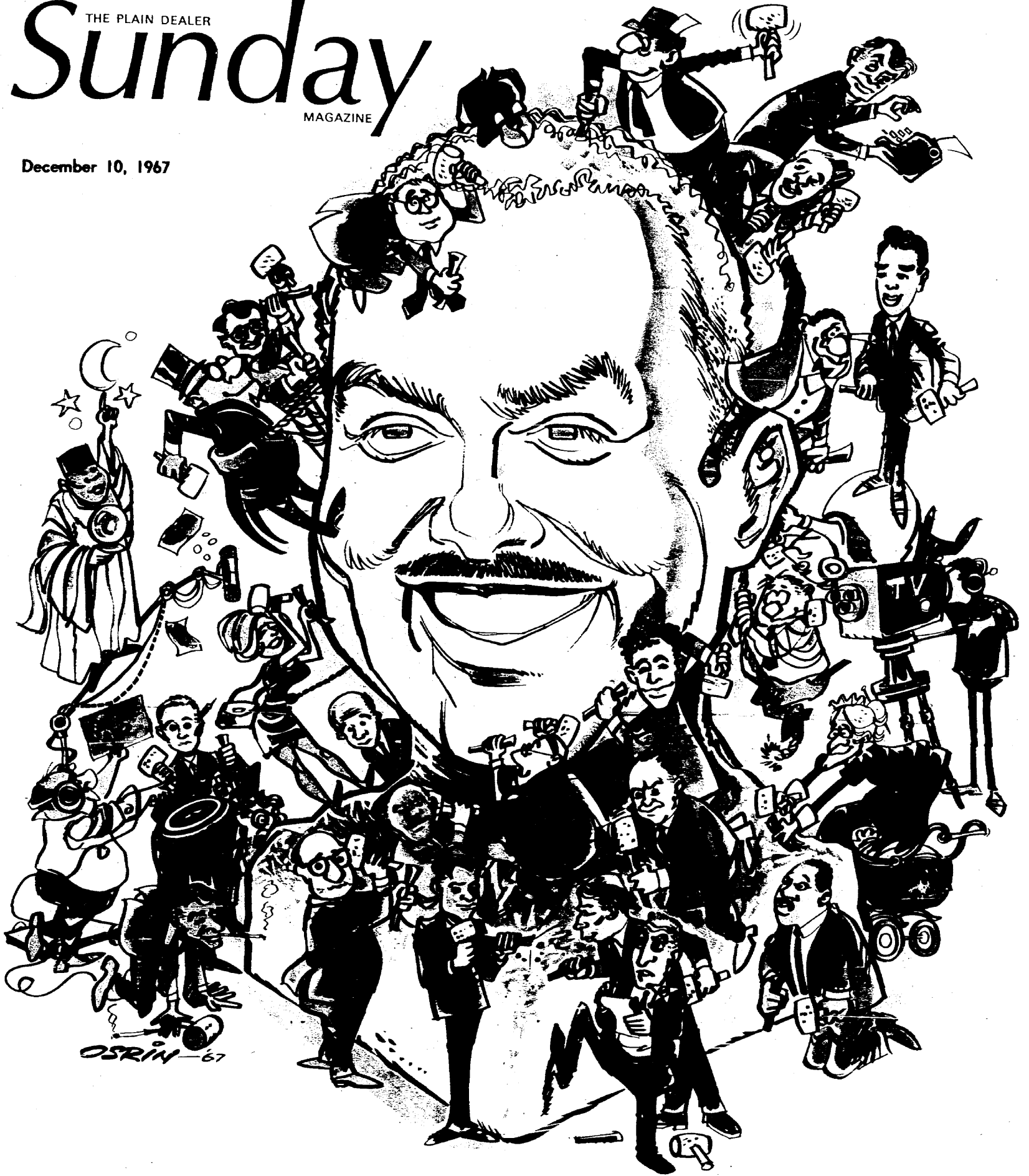


THE PLAIN DEALER
Sunday
MAGAZINE

December 10, 1967



The Making of a Mayor

OLSON

DOWNTOWN DAILY 11 AM - 7 PM SAT 10 AM - 6 PM
SOUTHLAND SHOPPING CENTER DAILY 10 AM - 6 PM SAT 10 AM - 5 PM
MAYFIELD HEIGHTS DAILY 10 AM - 6 PM SAT 10 AM - 5 PM
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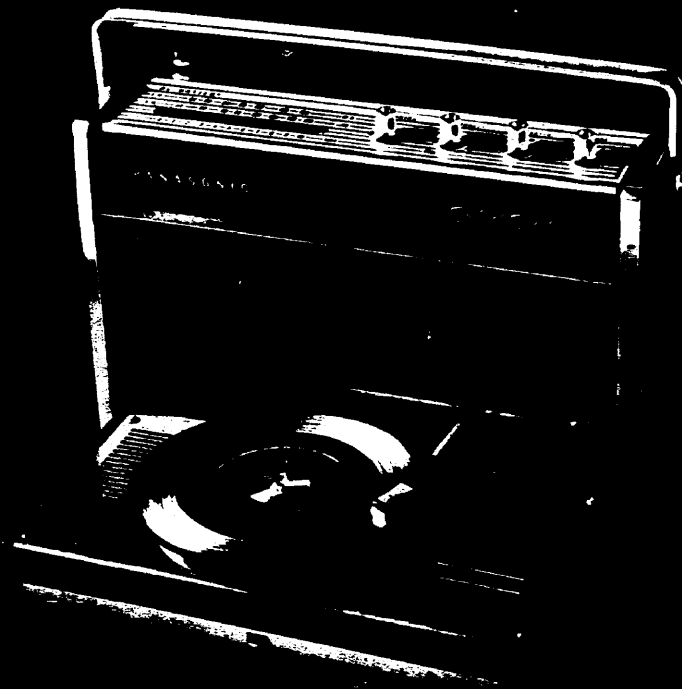
It has a 4" Dynamic speaker along with built-in FM-AM antennas and continuous tone control, and that tells you it will sound great outdoors where a lot of other portables can't compete with birds and bees and surf sounds.

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Sunday

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ON THE COVER



CLEVELAND has a new marble bust on its municipal mantel and the carving of it is the subject of the political narrative to which most of this issue is devoted. Around Ray Osrin's lighthearted cover version of Mayor Carl B. Stokes in imperishable stone are a few of the many who had a hand in shaping it. Some of their contributed efforts with symbolic mallet and chisel were backhanded at best but the result is there for all to see—with emotions ranging all through the spectrum from jubilation to consternation.

Three of the Lilliputian sculptors drawn by Osrin, who is The Plain Dealer's editorial cartoonist, rate particular mention. They are Michael Roberts, James M. Naughton and William C. Barnard, reporters for this newspaper. They collaborated on the behind-the-scenes history of the campaign starting on Page 4. They had been immersed in it for months, thus their credentials are top-drawer. Here's the key to all the characters on the cover:

- 1—Ahmed Evans, star gazer and militant civil rights leader
- 2—Roberts.
- 3—Al Ostrow, Stokes public relations man.
- 4—Joe Saunders, Plain Dealer columnist
- 5—Louis Stokes, the mayor's brother
- 6—James V. Stanton, City Council president.
- 7—Seth Taft, the Republican candidate for mayor.
- 8—Albert S. Porter, Democratic county chairman.
- 9—Martin Luther King, civil rights leader.
- 10—Richard R. Wagner, former police chief.
- 11—Barnard.
- 12—Thomas Vail, publisher and editor of The Plain Dealer.
- 13—Dr. Kenneth Clement, campaign manager for Carl B. Stokes.
- 14—Frank P. Celeste, candidate for the Democratic nomination for mayor.
- 15—Louis B. Seltzer, former editor of the Cleveland Press.
- 16—Ralph S. Locher.
- 17—Bronis J. Klementowicz, Locher campaign manager and former law director.
- 18—Naughton, who is The Plain Dealer's politics writer.
- 19—Rebecca Bell, WKYC television reporter.

The Making of a Mayor

Photo by MICHAEL EVANS



Stokes and Taft headquarters a week

THE WIDE-SPLAYED teeth fortified a smile that came in defiance of the cold, an unreasonable element for such a day. He could not have been more than 10 or 11, but the boy seemed to grasp the invisible significance of the hour.

"Stokes is for the folks," he said to those adults who passed him in the early morning, their heads bowed away from the thick, wet snow that grazed across their coats leaving a broken molecular trail of white.

"Vote for Stokes, he believes," the boy said again, bending over to pack a missile from the virgin snow. "Stokes is for the folks."

They passed the boy whose smooth Negro face had yet to be creased by ghetto life or that pariah of humanity—prejudice. They passed him, ignoring his innocence and the shrill of his thin, pre-adolescent voice that parroted his elders.

They passed him and crossed E. 147th

Street to the New Sardis Primitive Baptist Church where they would vote their hearts in an election that had been only a dream five years ago, a bitter disappointment two years ago and now there was another chance.

There were several voting precincts in the basement of the church which fell within the political boundary known as Ward 10, on the city's southeast side.

A woman who had hired a baby-sitter to watch her four small children looked out at the snow and shook her head in skeptical chagrin. "Folks done better come out, snow or no snow. If they don't we is dead." She had already voted. She had entered the booth and had not stumbled over indecision for a single instant. Her mark had gone next to the name of Carl B. Stokes.

Her precinct was 10-II and 10-II would have a double distinction this day. It would give Stokes 338 votes to his opponent's 11. It would also be the last of 903 precincts in the entire city to report its results. But all that would come 18 hours later and at the moment this was an eternity away.

... a political narrative by
JAMES M. NAUGHTON
MICHAEL D. ROBERTS
WILLIAM C. BARNARD



before the decision. The camera tells the story of the drudgery behind the glamour.

Another precinct at the New Sardis Primitive Baptist Church was 10-G. At 9:30 a.m., long after the boy had gone to school and the woman had returned home, a man and his wife, a handsome, well-dressed couple, appeared at 10-G, causing a ripple of excitement to course through the voting place.

"Hey, here's our man," somebody yelled.

"Oh, yeah, here's the new mayor now, ain't it mayor?" A woman booth worker happily chimed.

"Hey, Carl, baby, we're with you man, we're with you."

The subject of this exulted animation gave an easy smile that lifted his carefully tailored mustache, horizontally. There was a warm, ingratiating, but yet purposeful way about him. He shook hands as did his wife, a pretty, retiring woman with snow in her hair.

"We'd like you just as you're getting out of the booth," a photographer instructed the couple as they were being given their ballots.

CARL B. STOKES, candidate for the

mayor of Cleveland, entered the booth to mark his ballot, a process which by law is secret. At that moment there were a number of things that Stokes might have recalled. Something from the two bitter political campaigns, something from his youth, maybe, something about his mother, something about his city, or about victory.

But if he chose he could have remembered defeat. It would have been easy to remember for it could occur again today, Nov. 7, 1967. If it did occur he would have to begin again the way he did on Nov. 2, 1965, another day of decision.

For Stokes, that night in 1965, the pain of defeat was temporarily anesthetized by a new tension and the older, absolute fatigue that comes to the human body at 2 a.m. on an election night filled with eye-stinging cigarette smoke and a court that first goes their way, then yours and finally theirs.

Downstairs in the Hotel Sheraton-Cleveland's Gold Room, away from the dour placidity of the suite, the supporters grew more frustrated with the hour. Their emotions

gave way to combustibility and their enthusiasm was tempering into anger.

He had known that this was more than an ordinary campaign, one that grew on passion and reproduced its fervor until, from the point of his loyalists, each had a bit of his own soul on the ballot. Stokes knew that their votes and support meant much more than electing him mayor.

But now, in the early morning with the campaign over and defeat upon them, true, the margin was slim, but nevertheless against them, the supporters reacted with unabashed emotion.

"We had better get down there before they tear this hotel apart," Stokes said to his wife, Shirley, a graceful, quiet woman who was never brought up to stand before crowds of fervid people.

"Smile as much as you can, Shirley," the candidate said. "We all want to talk about recounting those votes, talk a lot about re-

CONTINUED

*Carl B. Stokes,
the winner . . .*



THE MAKING OF A MAYOR CONTINUED

count. We don't want any trouble here tonight, not after this."

Stokes had seen the schism and anger earlier in the night when a group of Negro youths insisted upon starting his automobile to make sure it had not been rigged with an explosive.

"Some whitey might try to get you," the leader of the group had told him. He was embarrassed by all of this because he understood the importance of racial unity in this election better than anyone else. He was the first Negro ever to get a clean shot at the mayor's job in this city.

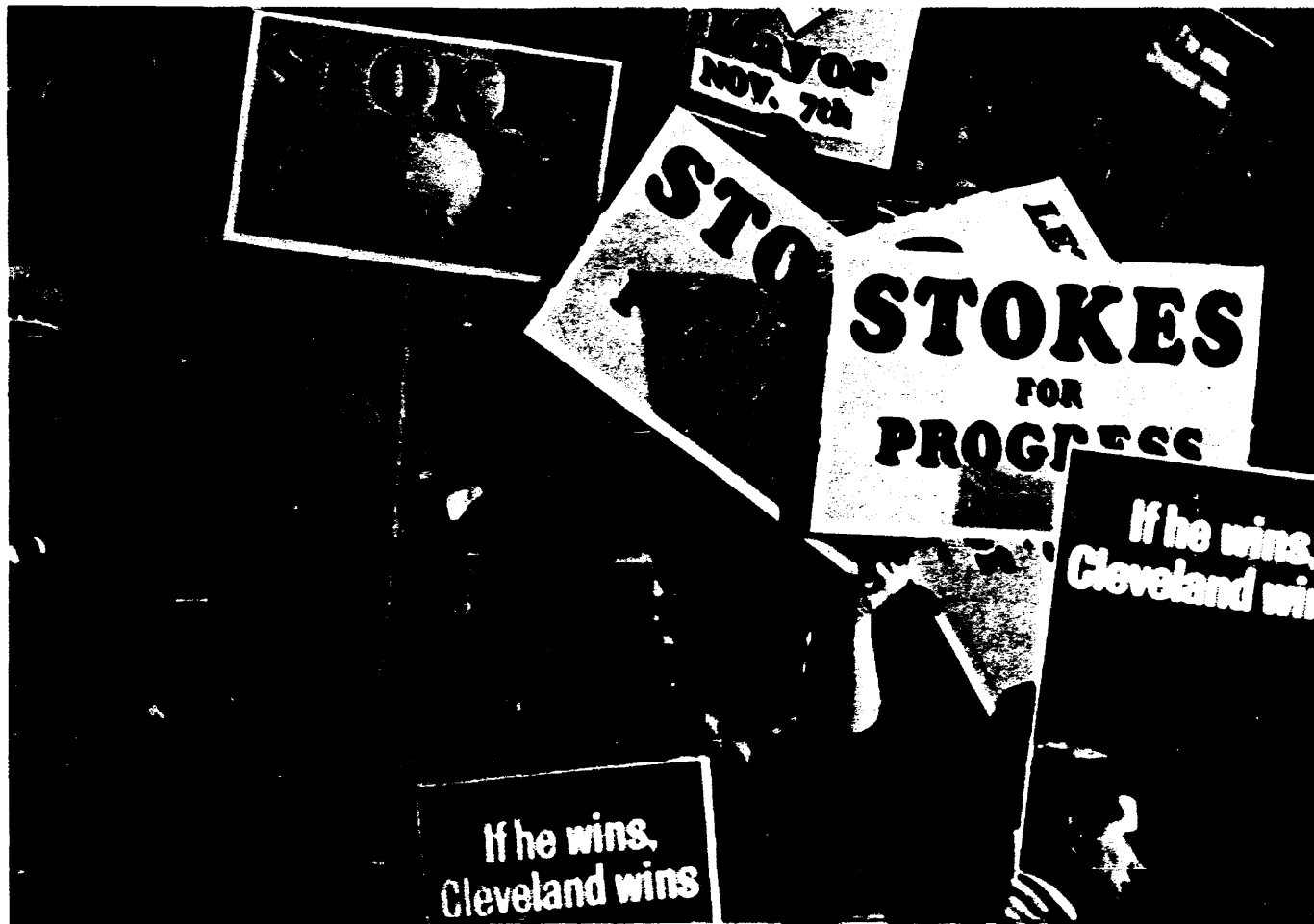
When he entered the Gold Room the assemblage cheered him. Earlier he had come in to quell emotions with a brief statement that indicated victory was near, but he returned to assure a recount, smile and attack the Democratic party and its county chairman, Albert S. Porter.

At the Hotel Carter there was a celebration. Mayor Ralph S. Locher had won the election, but not by the 20,000 votes, the Cleveland Press had predicted. The margin would be only 2,143 votes when a recount was completed and this sliver of support came out of an electorate of 237,000 that had dutifully gone to the polls on a sunny November

CONTINUED



*... and Seth
Taft, the loser ...*



*... and some campaign
scenes recorded by the
camera of Michael Evans
of The Plain Dealer*

THE MAKING OF A MAYOR

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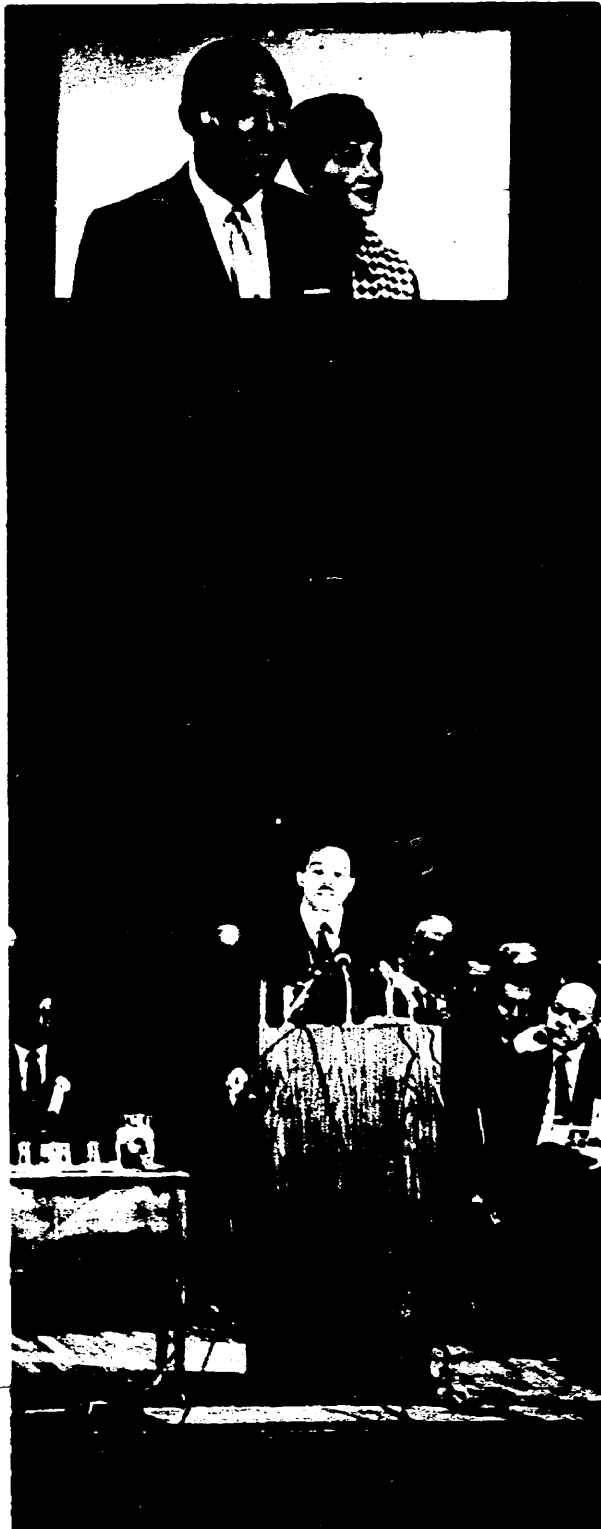


Photo by Richard T. Conway

Stokes at the Oct. 12 kickoff.

Tuesday that had reached a high of 60 degrees at noon.

The victor, Locher, had been favored. He was the incumbent and was backed by both newspapers, the party, labor and an endless list of civic groups. True, he had had some trouble earlier in the year with civil rights groups, but, had not all large cities been plagued with this problem? Beyond that, there was no real reason he should not have been elected. He offered the same type of government that had been in existence since 1941, and it seemed to be what the people of Cleveland wanted, didn't it?

Now Locher took office facing more problems than any mayor before him. Not only was he being challenged by Stokes, the upstart Negro candidate, who was raising money for a recount and demanding that the Board of Elections not certify him as elected. He had the municipal bewilderment known as Cleveland before him, a civil rights problem growing worse each day and a spawning animosity in Washington was pinching, too.

Plus there was always the nickel-thin vote to remember for the future, a vote that gave him the closest margin of victory ever recorded in a Cleveland mayoral election. And even that record would not stand long.

The recount was the first political observers here could remember having taken place in a mayoralty race in Cleveland. It cost backers of Stokes \$11,760 and showed a net gain of 219 votes for Locher.

The defeated candidate immediately wired his congratulations to Locher and urged him to consider the close race as a "learning experience." That day, on Nov. 20, Locher said, "I will continue to serve all the people."

While winter cast its icy paralysis, an uneasy atmosphere prevailed in the Negro community, an atmosphere that had its roots in years of unrealistic urban planning, weak and spiritless opportunities and the thinly disguised discrimination that prevented most from doing anything but existing from day to day.

There had been demonstrations against the school board by civil rights groups who charged de facto segregation, but early in 1965, there was still a semblance of assuring rapport between the Locher administration and the Negro community. Then on a Friday morning in May a voice, normally cautious and dramatic, changed the political situation in Cleveland forever.

* * *

IT IS NOT OFTEN that cause and effect can be clearly linked, but when Police Chief Richard R. Wagner, a stiff and unyielding proponent of human discipline, testified before an Ohio House committee in Columbus in defense of the state's death penalty, he broke the tenuous political peace in Cleveland.

Wagner had said:

"In Cleveland . . . we have people saying they intend to overthrow the government of the United States and incidentally, shoot all the Caucasians. One of those groups is RAM (Revolutionary Action Movement)."

On June 7, the United Freedom movement asked for an explanation of the police chief's remarks. They wanted the explanation from the chief and the mayor. They received no answer from Locher even though they had called, written and telegraphed. The mayor indicated that they should meet with Safety Director John N. McCormick instead.

A "wait-in" began in the mayor's office with representatives asking Andrew R. Sarisky, the mayor's secretary, for an appointment daily and each time being refused. Five persons were arrested on the fourth day of the demonstration when they refused to leave City Hall as it was being closed for the day.

"No useful purpose would be served if we met," Locher said, and the "wait-in" continued, until on the seventh day, the Congress of Racial Equality picketed Locher's home.

A seemingly insignificant incident would change things so they would never be the same for Locher or Cleveland again.

But now, after the 1965 election Locher was being pressured by civic leaders and the newspapers to reorganize his cabinet and inject some vitality into the mundane atmosphere that was creeping over the city. Some of the men who were involved in the proposed changes would be those early loyalists who had put Locher into office.

There were some changes in the cabinet, changes that helped bring younger, more intelligent leadership to the city, but Ralph Locher was late and the other disappointments that were to follow would overshadow any kind of gains that would be made with a new guard.

Spring turned to summer and the city settled back, its people (those who could afford it) strik-

'The Darkest Period In Locher's Term'

ing out on vacation and turning on the air conditioning.

On the East Side's Hough area there would be neither air conditioning nor vacations . . . only heat, filth and stink that would provide the spontaneous combustion on the night of July 18, 1966, leaving four persons dead and causing \$1-million in damages and expenses. By the time the National Guard quelled the racial riot six days later, a heavy pall hung over the city. The riots ended on Locher's 51st birthday.

A newspaper story that day said:

"For Locher, the race rioting, looting, arson, vandalism and murder was the darkest period in his term of office." * * *

THE ACRID SMELL of smoke still hung over the smoldering ruins of Hough when Locher faced another unique problem. A group of Stokes supporters, still enthused over the near victory the year before, began a recall movement against the mayor on August 18, 1966, a move-

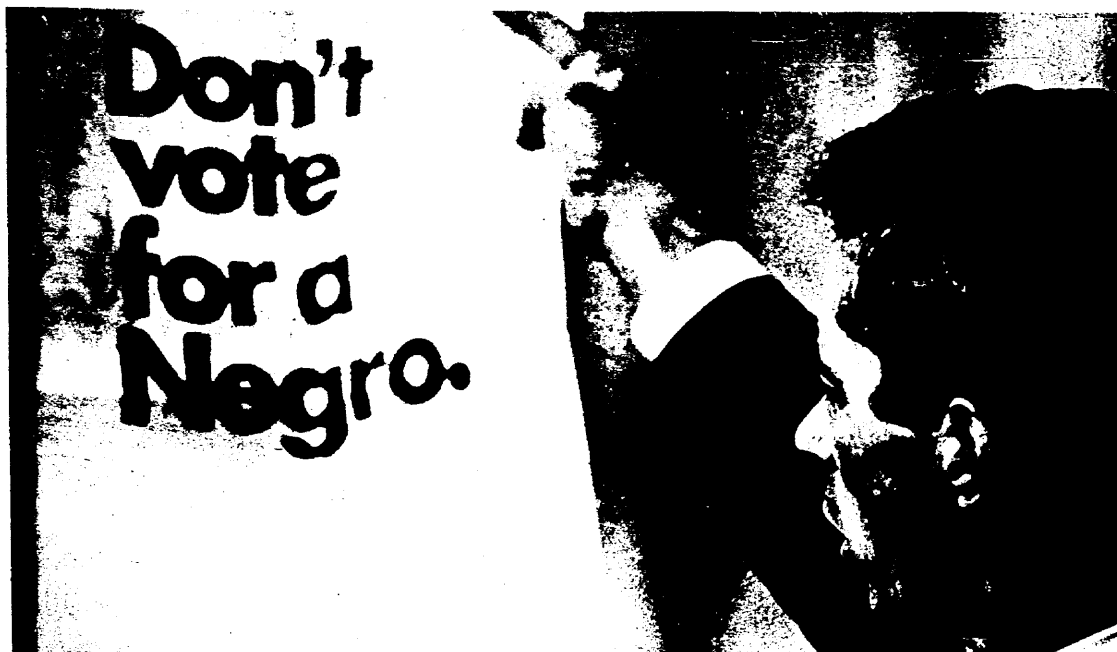
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ment that if successful would make Locher run against his record in another election.

Publicly, Stokes would disclaim the movement, but he obviously knew of its beginnings and by the time he showed his disapproval, 32,487 of the 47,454 needed signatures had been collected at the trouble and expense of his supporters. With his frown the project was abandoned.

But shortly after council enacted the tax, a repeal by initiative petition put the income tax question back before the voters. Locher hung his political life on the tax. He placed the full weight of his known integrity behind the tax and told voters it was an absolute necessity. The repeal was defeated overwhelmingly, better than two-to-one.

Professional politicians proclaimed the repeal a major victory for Locher, proof that the public was still strongly behind him. What the professionals overlooked was that the strongest vote against repeal came from Negroes, the same persons that would vote for Stokes. The smallest vote against repeal came from the ethnic neighborhoods, Locher's stronghold in past campaigns.



At the second debate held at John Marshall High, Taft rose to answer Stokes' reference to race and its place in the campaign by showing the crowd a copy of an ad his opponent ran.

IN THE MEANTIME, a series of 18 reports from a Little Hoover Commission, a group of businessmen organized at the mayor's request to examine the city's operation, bombarded the administration with constant and consistent criticism, particularly in the areas of the service, police and urban renewal departments. These periodic barrages (the reports were made public upon the mayor's insistence) were further reminders of a creaking and chartless government.

Then in the middle of January any hope of a revitalized administration took a severe blow when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development withdrew \$10.4 million for the faltering Erieview II project and also denied an application for \$24 million to expand a project in the University-Euclid area which included a large part of Hough.

But if the news events were damaging to Locher, the editorials in the city's newspapers were devastating. In December of 1966, The Plain Dealer launched an entire editorial page that punched at the administration as it had never been publicly boxed. It struck at every trouble area and put the mayor on notice once and for all.

"I'm not running for editor of a newspaper," Locher said the morning after the editorial. "I will not criticize the newspapers."

The Press attacked with an antagonizing and prolonged group of editorials entitled "Promises, Promises" that slowly twisted the knife. Then the national press got into the act, hovering above the city like some carnivorous bird, picking and clawing at the Locher administration.

Newsweek Magazine, perhaps the least vitriolic of the lot, described Mayor Locher as:

"... the archetype of the amiable City Hall time-server in over his head."

Then the Saturday Evening Post carried an article that caused local journalists to blush (The Plain Dealer later attacked the article's facts

in an editorial) and complain of needless exaggeration. Everyone that wrote wanted to take a crack at the city. It became a fad. Reality vanished.

However fictitious the articles were in specifics they certainly spoke truth in substance. And there was not much that Locher, reeling like a cornered middleweight with glassy eyes, could do to refute it.

The Saturday Evening Post had said:

"Both newspapers, the Press and The Plain Dealer, now cover the mayor as if he were a civic disaster."

Beginning with the Newsweek article in February, the mayor refused to talk with out-of-town reporters, and displayed a dimmed congeniality toward local reporters, especially those from television and radio who taunted him with barbed questions during the press conferences.

Then, for the first time, a sign was posted by James J. Gorman, the mayor's press secretary. "NO PRESS CONFERENCES TODAY." In retrospect, it was hard to imagine how any political campaign could have been organized by the embattled and embittered Locher.

This was the atmosphere that prevailed as the political camps began to polarize about their prospective candidates and a great deal of silence and mystery fell around those who were cautiously feeling their way for support and making secrets of their intentions.

Eventually, issues and programs would come into play once the campaigns jelled. Generally, each candidate's program and review of these issues would be the same. All those things that troubled the Locher administration had to be corrected. There were no complexities when it came to the issues. They were there for everyone

to see and they generally revolved around the split in community relations.

The embryonic stages of what was to become the great mayor's race of 1967 emerged in a confused montage of familiar faces.

To be sure there was Locher, who had turned down a graceful exit through the promise of federal appointment, made by County Chairman Porter, and Stokes, but just what would Stokes do? File again as an independent? Or as a Democrat and run in the primary? Frank P. Celeste, the former mayor of Lakewood, was making noises and shuffling about behind the scenes was always the name of Charles A. Vanik, the congressman from the 21st District.

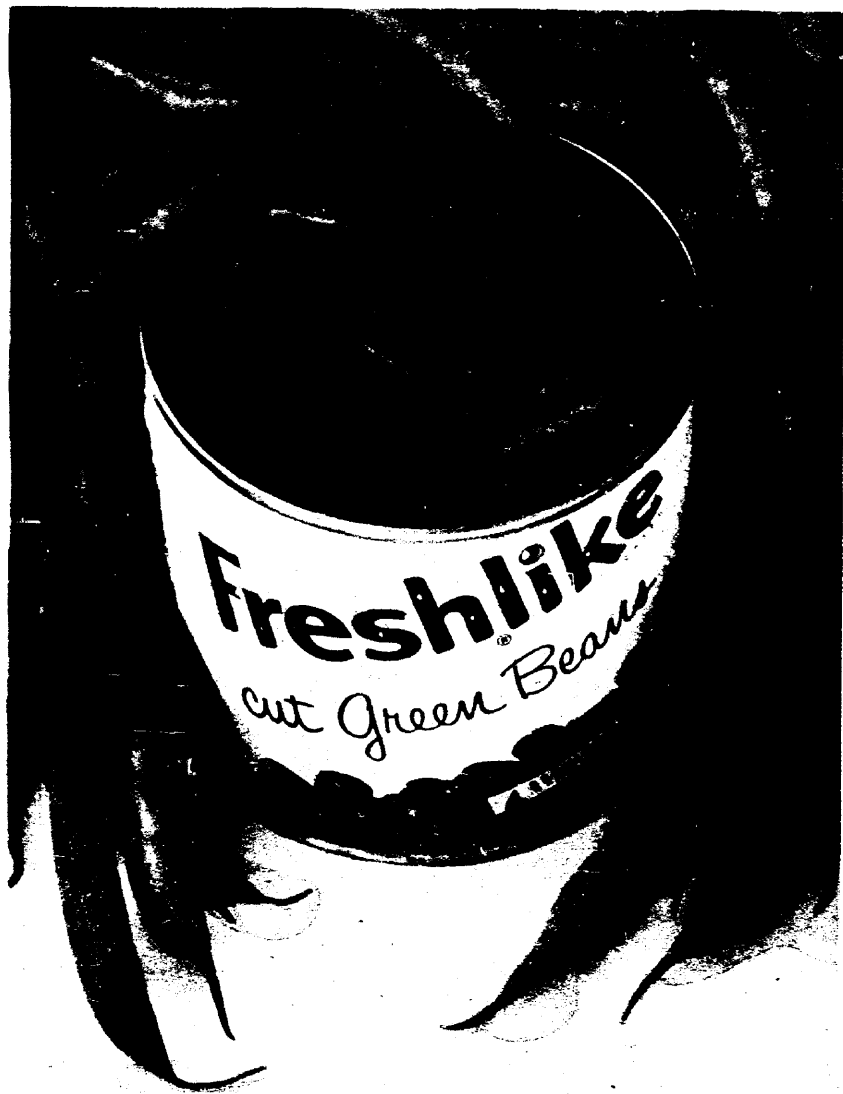
The Republicans were talking about Seth Taft, a familiar name that few could quite place ("Taft who?"). With only a measured amount of seriousness Robert S. Malaga, the wondrous tennis promoter, had been suggested for the GOP ticket and, at the last moment, there was a move to draft Allen J. Lowe, the hotelkeeper, a farcical attempt on the part of the stumbling Republicans.

Common Pleas Judge Frank D. Celebrezze, his eyes bright with anticipation, too, would test the political waters but with only a toe.

In the midst of this, an hour of rumor and political uncertainty that doused the city like an April rain, one man was anxiously watching, waiting to cast his name into the Democratic primary, hoping that Carl Stokes again would run as an independent. In this eventuality, James V. Stanton would have a direct shot at the mayor's chair.

For the past five years the political analysts

CONTINUED



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had figured Jim Stanton, the 35-year-old president of City Council, as the most promising star on the political horizon. He had youth, charm, ability, vigor, loyalty and his successful defeat of Jack Russell, the cigar-extending model of a political boss, as president of the council had certainly made him a recognized power.

This is where Jim Stanton found himself in 1965 and again in 1967. There had been a spark of opportunity in 1965, but he had chosen not to run, a decision that retrospect ridicules in that McElroy's flaccid campaign had nearly upended Locher in the primary that year. But in 1965, Stanton had counted upon the party's support and when he found Bert Porter souring and turning to Locher he reconsidered and finally dropped out. He is a party man.

A curious mystery and apprehension developed as the July 5 deadline for filing drew nearer, caused, mainly, by the anticipation of what Stokes would do. Although he had once said he would run in the primary, he had recently tempered that statement to adjust to political expediency.

Stokes would later remark about his false indecision:

"I knew where I was going. It was up to the

CONTINUED



Photo by MICHAEL EVANS

A dejected Stokes worker in mid-evening as the votes were being counted—and Taft was leading.

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Photo by Richard T. Cooney



Senator Stephen M. Young speaking . . . Democrats listening.



CONTINUED

other guy to find out where he was going to go, but I was not going to help him find his way."

In reality, as we shall see later, Stokes had no choice.

"See that guy" (Stanton), Jack Russell was to say a few weeks before the filing deadline. "He's going to end up the same as me. I waited too long to make my move and you see what happened. He's doing the same thing."

"If he would have run in '65, he'd be the mayor right now. Now they've got him boxed. You only get one chance, when all the political things are right. He missed his chance."

As Stanton campaigned for Locher in 1965, he would tell a reporter:

"I've got to tell you. I've been working harder for Locher's election than I ever have for my own. What burns me up is that I should have been working this hard to get myself elected."

As it was, Stanton endured almost unbearable pressure from his friends who wanted him to run in 1967. At one point he nearly came to blows with a friend over it. Then the personal grief of his father's death (the wake was held

CONTINUED

THE MAKING OF A MAYOR

CONTINUED



on the day of the filing deadline), and the death of his close friend and political adviser, Herman Bonchek on July 2, were as much sorrow as any man had the right to bear going into a brutal political fight.

Bonchek, the director of information for the city, was an astute political observer who undoubtedly would be felt in Ralph Locher's campaign, one which would flounder without the aid of a public relations consultant.

American Telephone & Telegraph got some bad news on July 5 when the government ordered it to cut long distance telephone rates. Others receiving bad news on this summer day were Ralph S. Locher, Frank P. Celeste, James V. Stanton and Frank D. Celebrezze.

The bearer of these sad tidings was Carl B. Stokes. He filed in the Democratic primary. This possibility had not been overlooked by the rest of the Democrats but neither had it been expected. The shock could be measured as being somewhere between fair and fatal.

Frank Celebrezze showed up late in the afternoon at the Board of Elections, took one look at the lineup and never bothered to file, his face revealing pained disappointment.

Earlier that day, before he went to the board Stokes explained to his young son, Carl Jr., what he was about to do—run for the mayorship again.

"What do you want to do that for?" the 9-year-old asked.

Were it not for an accident that afternoon at the Board of Elections, Stokes might not, indeed, have run. He had planned to file his petitions just before the 4 p.m. deadline, delaying until the final moment to let the rest of the field ponder.

At 1:30 p.m., Councilman George W. White, of Ward 13, and James Patton, brother of Common Pleas Judge John T. Patton, appeared to file nominating petitions for Stanton who was going to run in the primary. Joseph P. Mull, then deputy director of elections, asked where the master petition was that had to be filed with the rest of the petitions.

White was shaken, he did not know a master petition was required, let alone where it was at this critical moment. He quickly called Paul J. DeGrandis Jr., a former councilman and labor leader, who had been handling the master petition.

White and Patton returned to City Hall where, in the meantime, Mercedes Cotner, the city clerk, who shares office space with Stanton, found the master petition in the bottom of the wastebasket, under coffee cups, shreds of papers and discarded notes. The petition was quickly delivered and Stanton was securely filed as a candidate.

Apparently, the Stokes camp also was unaware a master petition had to be filed. Until they heard of Stanton's difficulties on newscasts, they had not concerned themselves with a master petition. When news of Stanton's trouble



Carl and Shirley Stokes at the Oct. 12 kickoff.

broke, they hurriedly filled out a master petition. Whoever was handy, friends and workers, and even the candidate's wife, Shirley, signed it.

If Stokes would have gone to the board at 4 p.m. without a master petition he would have lost before he had a chance to start. The winds of circumstance blew warmly for him that day.

Before the campaign could ignite, Stanton withdrew, two days after filing, and made a terse but politically prophetic comment to *The Plain Dealer*:

"I simply have to agree with Mr. Stokes that he and Mr. Locher are the two major candidates and I cannot win the race."

The moment it became clear that Carl Stokes was going to file in the primary, Seth Taft filed as a Republican candidate for the office of mayor, an event that was pushed aside in the excitement of the day.

BY THE TIME the filing deadline had rolled around, Celeste had been actively campaigning for nearly two-and-a-half months. The beginnings of his campaign were characterized by enthusiasm and a euphoric sense of adventure. Along with this atmosphere there engendered the relaxing attitude of cocktails before dinner. It was an election campaign that turned out to be a marathon social event.

At 60 years of age, Celeste could look back upon his life with a reasonable amount of satisfaction. He had spent eight years as mayor of

Lakewood, the first Democrat to do so, and his investments and holdings put him at a comfortable station in that life. A religious man with firm principles and genuine compassion, he enlisted in a multitude of civic projects after he stepped down from his mayor's post in 1963.

So in the spring of 1967, Celeste could look out at his friends and supporters knowing and feeling that he had a tremendous allegiance. This he projected into the splintered political situation that existed in the Democratic party, a thought that encouraged him to begin the arduous task of seeking election as mayor of Cleveland. In those beginning days things were much brighter than they would be later. Celeste could and would have considerable support from the business community. He had been a Democrat for 39 years and the way the party was urging Locher not to run again made Celeste feel he was a very legitimate candidate. All he had to do was move into the city of Cleveland, which he did in early spring, finding an apartment one block east of Lakewood.

Celeste had been good friends with Louis B. Seltzer, the retired editor of the *Cleveland Press*, and this friendship had some bearing on his decision to run. Louie encouraged him and Celeste, listening to this once powerful man, began to take heart in the possibility of an endorsement from the *Press*, a newspaper that had made more than one mayor in this city.

Later, on primary night, a desolate evening for Celeste, he would tell Louie Seltzer:

"If you had been editor of the Cleveland Press the results would have been more positive."

The Cleveland Press and its refusal to become ardently involved in the primary election would leave a bewildering gap in the race and many referred to it as a fallen giant after its indifferent endorsement of Stokes and Celeste. Even the Press reporters would be at a loss to rationalize the indecision of their newspaper.

"Tom Boardman (the Press editor) does not want to be a kingmaker like Louie," Richard L. Maher, the Press politics writer, remarked at a luncheon for a public relations group.

Later, the Celeste people would say that Seltzer had promised to line up both papers and the White House for their candidate, promises that were never to materialize.

But to those who know, the ones who spend hours talking politics over ashtrays filled with cigarette remains and cups of cold coffee gone sour, those who know by heart the voting habits of every ward in the city back to Tom L. Johnson, knew things looked quite the opposite where Celeste was concerned. They would, with the benefit of time, be correct.

First and foremost, Celeste had no semblance of an organization. He had a research committee that did not research. He had to have explicit instructions on how to get to neighborhood meetings, he insisted sometimes on having a worker drive the route and time it, he did not know the names of all the councilmen and, as one of his workers said later, he did not even read the newspapers.

His original headquarters was on the 12th floor of the Hotel Sheraton-Cleveland. Only one of four elevators lifted that high from the busy lobby. Celeste told an adviser that all the previous successful mayoral candidates in Cleveland had used a hotel for their headquarters.

A Close Call for the Stokes Cause

"The real reason, though," a worker said later, "was that the hotel had 24-hour room service and eating became a big part of this campaign. Frank loved to eat. Eating and telephoning seemed to be a passion with him. He felt best doing both at the same time."

But there were other things. The Celeste people had to pay three city councilmen to have their organizations collect the necessary names on Celeste's filing petitions. This came after initial attempts to solicit signatures failed dismally.

In the field, Celeste was mercurial. He darted from place to place, stopping at gas stations, fruit stands, delicatessens ("This is the best place to buy olives," he would say), church dinners, ice cream stores, candy stores, any place he could find people, but predominantly where he could find them eating.

"Hi, I'm Frank Celeste," he would say. "I'm running for mayor and I'd like your support."

Then he would be gone, leaving some poor

soul standing there, his hand outstretched and his mouth frozen in mid-question. "He was like Batman," a worker said. "He was here, then there, everywhere." All this earned him the title of Fast Frank.

IN THE BEGINNING, the press and the public were unified when it came to Seth C. Taft. His mayoral aspirations were next to preposterous. He appeared in the early spring, as those Republicans who bravely went before him, as a candidate driven by some deep and mysterious death wish.

A poll taken by Taft in May showed that if he were to run against Stokes in an election that took place at that time he could expect 16.4% of the vote compared to 49.2% for Stokes. There were 14.3% of the people contacted uncommitted and another 20.1% said they would not vote at all.

Of course, those close to the 44-year-old attorney knew he was not jumping impulsively into a political race. Taft reconnoitered carefully, announcing he was interested in running for mayor and then watching to see what the rest of the political community would do.

During the political campaign Taft was variously described as a patrician and an aristocrat. If he was either, he certainly did not look the part. He has a seemingly inflexible face that rarely breaks with humor ("there is no time for jokes in a political campaign"). There is a certain gauntness to his face that projects him as being grim when it was not necessarily so and compared to the debonair Carl Stokes his clothes seemed to have a drip-dry hang on his slim frame.

On those early platforms he appeared humorless, his stainless-steel speaking manner racing along with few pauses, his speeches dry with cold facts. His voice inflection caused him to end speeches like a ninth inning rally that died one run short of victory.

Although his background was one of civic

involvement, it would radiate little interest when compared to any of the three candidates running in the internecine scuffle known as the Democratic primary.

The fact he had to move into the city from Pepper Pike would not help. "Carpetbagging" had a disdainful record at the polls in Cleveland. Then there was labor and here he could thank his late uncle, Robert, for an additional ready-made problem, although on the first day of the St. Luke's Hospital strike he would visit the picket line.

Taft would enter the campaign with few allies. There were probably more hippies in town than Republicans and it was foolish to consider the GOP as being able to provide any kind of ready-made voting bloc big enough to win.

This all would change with time, but for now Seth Taft looked hopelessly outclassed.

AT 40, a product of a dank and dreary neighborhood, growing up in the added gloom of the depression, Stokes could talk about hunger pangs without imagining them, he could refer with intimate knowledge to the bite of a winter wind nipping around his thin and frayed garments and he knew first hand the mundane existence of the high school dropout and the pinched hopes of the slum dweller.

Perhaps the most important thing about Stokes, though, was his fortune. Often, during the campaign, he would tell how his mother encouraged him and his brother, Louis, a respected and amiable attorney, to seek an education and read as much as possible. Gifts in the family in those years at Christmas time were invariably cardboard-bound books.

He knew about other things, too. He boxed as a youth, learning from such people as Whiz Bang Carter and Jimmy Bivins, and later, in

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Mrs. Seth Taft (hand showing) at the second debate.



THE MAKING OF A MAYOR

CONTINUED

college, fought club fights in West Virginia under assumed names for \$75 a night.

"I won more than I lost," he said describing his fighting career which left him with a small scar near his right eye and a nick in his forehead from a butt.



Photo by Richard T. Conway

The last fight he had was as a liquor enforcement agent in Canton on Cherry Street.

"Sooo, after that he had to make an extra stop on the way to the jail, it was at the hospital."

As a liquor agent, a probation officer and a

police prosecutor, Stokes acquired street savvy, a quality that cannot be taught in the Ivy League. Sandwiched in between those jobs was a degree from the University of Minnesota in 1954 and another from Cleveland-Marshall Law School in 1956.

Jack Oliver, a portly, good-natured man with an infinite feel for politics and the irresistible inclination to organize and help aspiring politicians, was a Negro who gave Stokes his first openings.

It is conceded by many that Oliver delivered the Negro vote for such persons as Charley Vanik, the Democratic congressman, Helen J. Lyons, the clerk of Municipal Court, and Municipal Court Judge Paul O. White.

Oliver had formed a social club in the early 1950s that met at E. 95th Street and Cedar Avenue and it was here that Carl Stokes, fresh out of the Army and needing a job, met the man who would get him on the first rung of the political ladder.

Stokes worked first at the state liquor store at E. 55th Street and Woodland Avenue. Later he

Heublein Cocktails: Mostly liquor. And a great big ball.

Open the bottle and comes the party. That's what Heublein Cocktails are all about. What goes into Heublein Cocktails. Mostly liquor - the best imported and domestic brands. And plenty of spirit, for these are the cocktails that are always full strength. Just pour over ice. You've got it made.



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would join the State Liquor Department as an enforcement agent, a job that would see him both shoot and get shot at.

In 1958, while Oliver was strenuously working on a judge's campaign, Stokes approached him and asked if he might speak at a rally Oliver was organizing. Stokes, running for the State Legislature, was told that he was welcome.

After the meeting, Stokes was upset with Oliver. He complained that he had not been accorded enough laudatory comments at the rally and that he had been overlooked by Oliver who was busy with his candidate for the bench. It was a breach that would never be spanned between the two.

Later, in 1967, Oliver would say of Stokes: "A lot of Negroes don't like Stokes but they'll vote for him anyway, he's the symbol of the Negro making that first class citizenship."

Another man who helped Stokes in his formative political years was DeGrandis, then a councilman, who had a reputation as an outspoken liberal.

By 1962, the Democrats from Cuyahoga County had never sent a Negro into battle for a state office with serious support. The most support a Negro could expect to receive was for an office only as high as City Council.

DeGrandis took Stokes and Tony Cotton, a



Photo by Michael Evans

Negro lawyer, by the hand into the office of Ray T. Miller, the late Democratic county chairman, and asked for the party's support for the two men who were seeking election to the State Legislature.

The group was summarily put out of Miller's office, but DeGrandis, an ingenious fellow where politics are concerned, had another card to play. He took Stokes to a meeting of the Young Democrats, signed him up, had him nominated for vice president of the organization and saw to it he was elected that same night. Then he went back to Miller and in that way forced the endorsement for Stokes.

In 1967, Stokes would oppose quietly the naming of DeGrandis to a job as deputy director of elections, but it backfired. Stokes called Dan W. Duffy, election board chairman, before he made up with the Democratic organization that he had attacked in the primary. When Porter,

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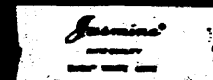
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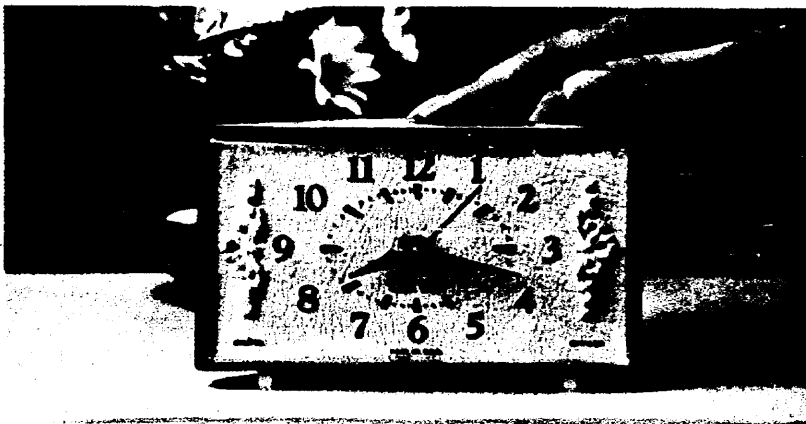
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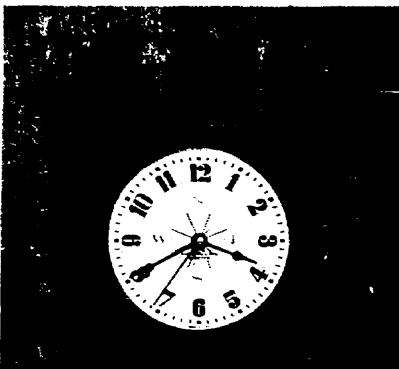


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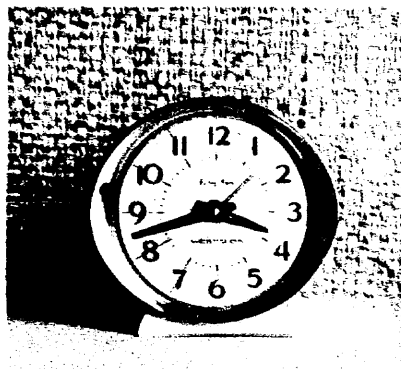
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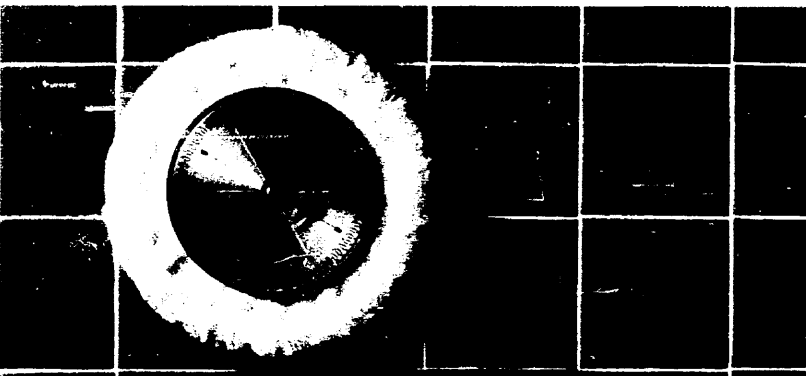
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**THE MAKING
OF A MAYOR**

the party boss, heard that Stokes was against DeGrandis getting the job, he told Duffy:

"Give DeGrandis the job today."

Stokes not only got help from DeGrandis in 1962. A young councilman from the 4th Ward, Jim Stanton, helped Stokes campaign on the solid white West Side.

In the Irish-dominated Ward 4, Stokes finished close behind such names as James P. (Shamus) Kilbane and Michael A. Sweeney and on his third try, succeeded in becoming the first Negro Democrat to hold a seat in the Ohio Legislature.

The currents of politics are strange and treacherous. They fluctuate and gravitate around magnetic poles of power and if you are a layman it may be difficult for you to understand that political enemies may become political allies overnight or vice versa. Politics is a strange and tangled jungle.

So, in 1967, when Carl Stokes thought Jim

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Photo by RALPH J. MEYERS

Carl B. Stokes and his wife, Shirley,
with Carl B. Jr., 8, and Cordi, 6.

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Stanton would run against him, he began to assail the council president with such comments as:

"(Jim Stanton) . . . is a brash young man, too immature for high public office."

The war had begun. There was no time for reminiscence as the Stokes effort began taking shape behind the scenes. Dr. Kenneth W. Clement, a quiet, knowledgeable Negro physician who had headed up the previous Stokes mayoral campaign, would again be made the chairman and joining him was a public relations consultant, Alexander L. Ostrow.

Stokes, advised chiefly by Ostrow and Clement, would make almost all major decisions connected with the campaign while as many as 5,000 persons would work under them on various aspects of it.

The first objective was Ralph Locher. The initial strategy was to make the pitch that Stokes was the best qualified candidate and that he had specific programs to compare with Locher's poor record. The race issue, hopefully, would be disposed of quickly or so they said, the idea being to ignore it after Sept. 1.

* * *

WHENEVER Locher was introduced at a dinner or political rally there were two words that would invariably be used, "honesty and integrity." These words became synonymous with his name.

For it was true, this tall, stiff-backed, bespectacled man who had descended from Swiss and Romanian lineage, the son of an American engineer born in Romania, had more of these two attributes than one human being is entitled. Personally, a man would be hard-pressed to dislike Locher. He had a particularly catching smile and gentle manner about him. All of this was part of his problem. When he made an attempt to project his personality he could be forceful. Unfortunately for him the only time he could achieve this was when he was angry.

In 1962, Locher had run in a special election against Mark McElroy to win the mayor's chair after Anthony J. Celebrezze had abdicated for the President's cabinet. Locher had asked Utilities Director Bronis J. Klementowicz to handle the campaign, a standard that was to be continued for three more elections.

Klementowicz, known variously as the Tiger or Poor Little Altar Boy (his favorite) or often called the Silver Falcon by friends and newspapermen, is a man of intrigue. He had worked in the agricultural division of the U.S. Census Department before the war and had a lot to learn since he went to Washington from Polish Broadway, an area largely devoid of any farm activity. He learned quickly and well and before long he occupied a key position in his area of responsibility.

Klem served a hitch in the Navy during the war and then returned to Cleveland. He eventually won the council seat in Ward 14. Later, under Mayor Celebrezze, he was appointed utilities director.

The Locher campaign had a formidable and immediate problem. Martin Luther King had spearheaded a drive on the part of several civil rights groups to register voters. A Ford Foundation grant of \$175,000 to the Congress of Racial Equality bolstered that drive.

The Democrats were faced with conducting their own drive, an expensive and time-consuming project that was essential to combat the increasing registration in Negro wards.

"We worked hard, our people hit the ward clubs hard on registration," Klementowicz later said. "We put on the big push and had a good response."

Signs were placed in grocery stores, delicatessens and supermarkets which said:

"Only through participation do you have Good Locher Government. You must be a registered voter to participate."

This initial campaign was unusual for the

CONTINUED

The PR (Public Relations to You) Men . . .



Photo by Richard T. Conway



Photo by Michael Evans

William O. Silverman Jr., second from left, for Taft. Others at this strategy session in the Erieview Plaza office of Edward Howard & Co. are James Howard, left; the candidate, and, at right, his brother, Peter Taft.

A! Ostrow for Stokes . . .