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CLEVELAND

Confused City on a Seesaw

by
Plain Dealer
Executive Editor
Philip W. Porter

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Phillip W. Porter

CLEVELAND

Confused City on a Seesaw

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

To my wife DOROTHY,
whose constant encouragement,
steadfast patience and wise counsel
made this book possible.

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Fred Kohler

Newton D. Baker

William R. Hopkins

Hopkins Airport, 1926

Erie C. Hopwood

Paul Bellamy

W. Burr Gongwer

Maurice Maschke

M. J. Van Sweringen

O. P. Van Sweringen

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Daniel Morgan

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Foreword

After a journalist has covered all the drama of a great metropolitan center day by day for nearly half a century, frequently inspiring the cast of millions by stepping onto the stage from time to time to play a principal role himself, there is logically only one thing left for him to do: Collect all his observations and all his experience in a book about the city that he knows so well.

Philip W. Porter, retired executive editor of the *Plain Dealer*, has done what was expected of him. And this is the result.

A formal historian never could have written this book.

It is no detached, scholarly, objective examination of the past in the academic tradition, pieced together from the testimony of others, borrowed from obscure documents, or deduced from puzzling artifacts and other such fragmentary evidence.

This, instead, is a book based on first-hand knowledge. It is an eyewitness account of the things, large and small, that occurred in Cleveland during Phil Porter's fifty-year career as a working newspaperman in the city, and it is told in the blunt, subjective, often controversial style that set the author apart from the crowd early in the game.

Phil Porter is one of the last of the newsmen who came out of that incredibly romantic, exciting, and colorful time in American journalism

that inspired Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur to write the stage classic, *Front Page*. He bears the mark of that era in his irreverence and iconoclasm in dealing with the people and the institutions that claimed the headlines.

His own career was highly unlikely. Its beginning has to be traced back as far as 1917, when, although only a junior at Lakewood High School, the brash young Porter faced the fiercest city editor in Cleveland journalistic history, A. E. M. Bergener of the *Leader*, and braced him for a job as reporter.

Bergener hired him instead as an office boy, at the prevailing wage rate of eight dollars a week, but immediately dispatched him to the Central Police Station to begin work as a police reporter. He found himself working eleven hours a day under the direction and tutelage of another Cleveland journalistic great, Robert (Bob) Larkin.

It was an unprecedented bit of luck. Sixteen-year-old boys simply were not employed by big-city dailies as reporters then, any more than they are now. The reason for the extraordinary exception was neither young Porter's glinty promise of future performance nor his bright-eyed eagerness and aggressiveness. It was simply an effect of the pinch felt by The *Leader* in a period of acute manpower shortage caused by the World War. It was, nevertheless, a fortuitous circumstance that provided Porter with an important beginning.

Following the conventional path, he should have settled down to his chosen career, but young Porter elected instead to seek a degree in journalism at Ohio State University. It appeared to be a strange detour. College-trained journalists were few in those days, and they generally were scorned by the hard-bitten newspaper pros, but Porter turned his OSU days to his advantage.

The old *Leader* had been swallowed by the *Plain Dealer*, but Porter persuaded the P.D.'s editor, Erie Hopwood, to hire him as the paper's OSU campus correspondent. In time, he convinced Hopwood also that his newspaper ought to publish more news about Ohio State football,

even though the games of Western Reserve University and Case School of Applied Science, local institutions, enjoyed a natural priority in the *Plain Dealer*.

Porter's timing was terrific. Ohio State was just moving into the football bigtime, led by a halfback named Chic Harley, whose name is still to be found in the football pantheon with such as George Gipp and Red Grange. Porter's story of the OSU-Michigan game in Harley's last season, 1919, was given an eight-column banner headline in the *Plain Dealer* sports section!

Porter played the dual role of campus correspondent during the school months and staff police reporter in Cleveland for the *Plain Dealer* during the summer months. Upon graduation, in 1922, he began his full-time career at the *Plain Dealer* in earnest. It was to last forty-four years. During that time he moved steadily through the reportorial and executive ranks (with three and one half years out for military service in World War II) until, in 1963, he became the newspaper's executive editor. During the last thirty-two years of his career he contributed two to three columns a week of commentary on the Cleveland scene. Since his retirement at the end of 1966, he has continued to write a column for the weekly Sun newspaper chain whose publications circulate in the Greater Cleveland suburban area.

It could be said that Phil Porter spent his lifetime preparing to write this book about Cleveland. The result is a valuable addition to the city's literature and some high entertainment in the kind of recollections that only a longtime newspaperman could fetch to the fore.

George E. Condon

Acknowledgements

My gratitude to Howard Allen, H. Jack Lang, Lillian Zevin, C. H. Cramer, and Grace Goulder Izant for their enthusiastic encouragement; to Howard B. Klein, for his pertinent counsel on how to revise and condense; to Sandra Clark, for her efficient retyping of a messy manuscript; and to Jacob Rosenheim of the *Plain Dealer*, Kate Prettyman of the Cleveland Public Library, and Virginia Hawley of the Western Reserve Historical Society for their help in locating old photographs.

CLEVELAND

Confused City on a Seesaw

CHAPTER ONE

Laugh-In

In the early 1970s, Cleveland, Ohio, became nationally famous for the wrong reasons. Popular TV comedians poked fun at the community, and millions all over the country laughed. Cleveland was the town whose crooked river was so polluted that it once caught fire and destroyed a railroad bridge over it. Cleveland was the city on Lake Erie that had so contaminated the lake that fish could no longer live in it. Algae had grown in such quantity that oxygen in the water was hopelessly depleted. Cleveland was the Mistake-on-the-Lake. It had replaced Philadelphia as the standing butt of jokes by theatrical funny men.

There was another reason. Cleveland was the first big city in the country that had elected a black mayor. It had had two devastating race riots, one before the black mayor was elected, the other afterward. The neighborhoods where the riots had raged had been the choicest residential sections fifty years ago.

All this was a far cry from the era of only twenty years before, when Cleveland businessmen went after (and often got) new industries to move into the community that had the slogan "The Best Location in the Nation," and when the city had undisputed leadership in its support of culture and its method of raising money for charity, hospitals, and a variety of welfare projects.

The Cleveland Art Museum rivaled the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Cleveland Orchestra was among the best, the Playhouse

was the greatest of its kind, and the main downtown artery, Euclid Avenue, was thriving with business and entertainment.

Yet in twenty years the downtown area so deteriorated that Euclid Avenue would have been unrecognizable by a local Rip Van Winkle. It had the unmistakable air of decay, which everyone recognized but hated to mention. The national derision on TV was exaggerated, but there was ground for concern and sneering at a community that had once prided itself on being great but had somehow seemed to fall apart. The same civic rot had eaten away at other big cities of considerable size -- St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Boston, Baltimore, Buffalo, in particular. Cleveland was set up as a special target for wisecrackers, perhaps because it once had the wealth, the industrial diversity, the civic leadership, the gung-ho willingness to take a chance, which is the principal ingredient that makes a city grow and yet remain a desirable place in which to live.

Yet the seeds for Cleveland's upward move in the 1920s, its setback in the big depression of the 1930s, its renewal of hope in the breath-catching period of the 1940s, its slow slide into deterioration in the 1950s, and its downhill slide in the 1960s, were all sown a half century ago. How so? Because Cleveland has for generations possessed two qualities that made it different from other big cities of slightly less than one million population.

These qualities are (1) political volatility and (2) fragmentation. Cleveland since the beginning of this century has been known for its mavericks and pop-off guys, its refusal to stay hitched long to one political party or novelty in government, its continuous battles over public transportation and the best way to develop downtown and the suburbs. Volatility, independence, and fragmentation seemed to be bred into Clevelanders year after year. They were present a half-century ago; they are present today. They explain why Cleveland is the way it is today, and how it got that way. It would help us if we understood ourselves.

In the early 1920s Cleveland was coasting along smugly. In the previous fifty years it had become an important lake port, bringing in iron ore and processing it into steel. It was growing in importance in steel, machine tools, paints, auto parts, and even in the making of automobiles, those unbelievably marvelous machines that were soon to revolutionize the entire world. Cleveland had hatched many automobile pioneers -- White, Hupp, Winton, Templar, Peerless, Olds. Unfortunately not many survived, as mass production shifted to Ford, Chevrolet, and Chrysler in Detroit. But the auto-parts business survived in Cleveland, and airplane parts later became big business here.

The city then was presided over by an industrial aristocracy that controlled just about everything in the Establishment of its day. The big names are still present here -- Mather, Sherwin, Severance, Prentiss, Hanna, King, Wise, Joseph, Feiss, Halle, Sullivan, Eells, Payne, Bingham, Bolton, Blossom -- but they now have less impact because so many of the old fortunes were left in trust. They were in the saddle then, and no one denied it. Only a few years before had Millionaires' Row, from East Twenty-second to East Fortieth Street, where the nabobs lived, been opened to streetcars. The traction lines had previously been required to make a detour to Prospect Avenue, so the wealthy families could live in quiet in this enclave. *Time*, the pressure of politics, and the automobile changed all this. (Today the mansions have all gone, the area is built up with motels, bars, parking lots, and small office buildings.)

The nabobs who were not quite big enough to live along the Row lived farther east on Euclid Avenue, or in Hough, Wade Park, and Glenville. Many fine apartment buildings overlooked Wade and Rockefeller parks, and graced the East Seventies, Eighties, and Nineties between Hough and Euclid. The degree of wealth and elegance was high. It helped support many churches in this area.

Downtown Euclid, from East Seventeenth Street to Public Square, had class. Halle's, Higbee's, and May's were not the only department stores then. There were also Taylor's and Bailey's, and interspersed among them were many well-known specialty stores and shops -- Sterling &

Welch (furniture), W. B. Davis (men's wear), Browning & King (men's wear), the Lindner Coy (women's wear), Cowell & Hubbard (jewelry), Webb C. Ball (jewelry), Bowman's (glasswear), Kinney & Levan, Bowler & Burdick, and even some fashionable grocery stores, Chandler & Rudd and Southworth's. (Except for Cowell & Hubbard, everyone of these has either gone out of business today or gone elsewhere.) Euclid Avenue was as well known, and the quality as good, as on Fifth Avenue, New York. The money was here to buy the goods. A new twenty-story office building, the Union Trust, was going up, and enormous new theaters were doing a fine business in first-run movies and some of them had vaudeville. The Allen, Ohio, and State were built in a cluster around East Fourteenth Street and the opening of B. F. Keith's Palace in the late twenties, with its beautifully ornate marble foyer and stairway, was considered a nine-day wonder. Further west on Euclid the old Hippodrome and the Stillman were also doing a good business (the Hipp was big enough for grand opera). Around the corner of East Fourteenth, the Hanna Theater and the Hanna office building added to the attractiveness of the corner and it was nicknamed Playhouse Square by the newspapers (the name has stuck, though only the Hanna remains open).

Then came the Van Sweringen brothers, O. P. and M. J., with their big plans to build the new Union Terminal on the southwest corner of the Public Square, a gigantic railroad station topped by a thirty-seven-story tower. To the east of the Terminal, a new building that would become a department store, was planned, and in back of the Terminal, on a newly constructed Prospect Avenue, would be several office buildings. Their plans touched off a tremendous battle, which involved politics as well as money, or combinations of the two, that changed the entire future of the Cleveland city government, the physical appearance of downtown, the transportation system, and to some extent the development of the eastern suburbs. Most of all, it shifted the retail business axis away from upper Euclid Avenue, westward toward the Square.

Nothing like the Van Sweringens' grandiose plans had hit the city in two generations. They came on like a thunderbolt, and they involved the big banks, the newspapers, the political leaders, the stores, the most powerful lawyers, the industrial captains, and indeed the community's social structure. In the end, hardly any important segment of the Establishment tried to stand in the way of the Van Sweringens' reshaping of the downtown. (This had important repercussions in the depression of the 1930s when the Van Sweringens' empire collapsed.)

Not since John D. Rockefeller several years before had pulled out of Cleveland (the city where he had begun to make his millions in oil and real estate), had anything so cataclysmic shaken the community. In fact, Rockefeller left so quietly that he simply left a void, and there was no extensive tear-up such as the Van Sweringens accomplished. His downtown residence at East Fortieth and Euclid ultimately became a rooming house for artists, and his summer home, Forest Hills, with its private golf course, was abandoned, eventually burned down, and the property on which it used to sit is now a park and a fine residential development.

The political volatility of Cleveland was evident around the 1900s when the local Republicans, then the dominant force, were split between Mayor McKisson and the tycoon Marcus A. Hanna, who later became United States senator. Then came a sudden change when Tom L. Johnson, who had been a millionaire in steel and traction, went into politics, was elected mayor as a Democrat, rose to popularity by attacking the streetcar companies. The Johnson era lasted until 1910, but it hatched a crop of young liberal zealots who left their mark on Cleveland politics and business for decades -- Peter Witt, Newton D. Baker, Burr Gongwer, William A. Stinchcomb, Carl D. Friebolin, Alfred Benesch, Thomas L. Sidlo, and Joseph C. Hostetler. Johnson in 1910 lost the city hall for two years, but his successors came back for four more years with Baker as mayor.

Although the Democrats nationally remained in power during the Woodrow Wilson era (1913-21) and hung on to county offices in

Cleveland, they had lost the city hall, and a new force arose, the Republicans under Maurice Maschke as boss and Harry L. Davis as mayor.

In 1921, political volatility emerged again, and the citizens did two remarkable things: (1) they voted in favor of a city-manager charter, and (2) they elected as mayor the handsome maverick Fred Kohler, who had been ousted as police chief after trouble over romancing a married woman. Kohler's mayoralty was a spectacular change from the usual political timeservers, whom he tossed out in an economy wave. After two years, he was gone and a city manager, William R. Hopkins, was chosen through an astonishing deal between Maurice Maschke and Burr Gongwer, the Democratic boss, who had a majority between them in the new council.

For the next five years, there was continual turmoil over five attempts to repeal the manager-plan charter, and eventually it was dumped in 1931. Before then, a titanic battle developed, between Hopkins and the man who had chosen him, because of Hopkins' attempt to modify the Van Sweringens' plans for a railroad bridge. The council, dominated by Maschke, fired Hopkins and chose Daniel E. Morgan to replace him.

Enter volatility again. In the early 1930s, Peter Witt and Dan Morgan were defeated for mayor and Ray T. Miller, a Democrat, took over city hall. But only for two years. Then Harry Davis came back, for two years, after his long wait. Then Harold H. Burton, a Republican with independent support, was elected and served almost four years, being replaced by his law director, Edward Blythin, when he resigned to become senator. Then Frank Lausche, a Democratic judge, became mayor in 1941, and served two terms before being elected governor.

So went the upheavals. It was not until Thomas A. Burke succeeded Lausche as mayor and served four terms, and, then, Anthony J. Celebrezze served five terms, that a period of restfulness set in. Some critics said it was almost like a coma.

The second characteristic of the Cleveland syndrome, fragmentation, was also present all this time. From long before the 1920s, it was obvious that the community needed to grow as a whole and not as a congeries of individual squabbling municipalities. The suburbs by that time were already large. Lakewood was heading toward one hundred thousand population, Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland were growing fast, Shaker Heights was about to lure the nabobs out from Euclid Avenue. Parma, Euclid, University Heights, Lyndhurst, Garfield Heights, Rocky River, and Bay Village were about to attract thousands of young families. Square miles of vacant land had already been supplied with sewer and water lines.

It was obvious, even to the dumbest student of political science, that some form of regional government would be needed to accomplish this growth and cooperation. It was not possible to do it through annexation -- Cleveland did not insist on annexation before it would extend water and sewer service to the suburbs. The suburbs didn't trust the Cleveland governments of that era, and the city did not refuse the service. (Columbus did, thirty years later, and as a result has slowly passed Cleveland as Ohio's largest metropolitan center).

The Citizens League, that eternal source of political right-thinking, tried several times to get a regional government approved. It was offered in different forms -- county home rule, city-county government, or a county executive backed up by an expanded board of commissioners -- but it failed regularly. Three charters were drawn over twenty-five years, and any one of them would have worked, but parochialism and fragmentation won out. First, it was the desire of two-bit suburban mayors to maintain their little baronies. Then, when the suburbs began to change their minds, the voters of the central city refused to go along, feeling the suburbs were trying to take them over (this was particularly true among the blacks).

The same fragmentation was going on in public transportation. The Cleveland Railway Company had been put together years ago from several small companies. It was still privately owned, but the city

council controlled the fare structure and the purchasing of equipment. As the auto began to displace the trolley car, the city was forced to buy the system, and issued bonds to expand it and build a rapid transit line to augment the busses (the busses had previously displaced trackless trolleys, which still got power from the same old electric wires strung from poles). Shaker Heights had its own rapid transit system. Several suburbs ran bus lines into the center of Cleveland (Garfield Heights, North Olmstead, Bedford, etc.) As automobiles proliferated at an alarming rate, ridership on the public transit system declined.

So, fragmentation is still with us. Whenever the city of Cleveland wanted to extend a service, a suburb was sure to try to block it and vice versa. Often there are three-way arguments about such needed matters as grade-crossing elimination, involving city, county, and state.

Disputation, as well as fragmentation, is endemic in Cleveland. The reverence for free speech goes back to the Tom L. Johnson days, and is kept alive and booming by the presence of the City Club Forum, which has existed for sixty- five years and is the only one of its kind in the country. It is traditional that every candidate for office must appear at the forum and be quizzed publicly, on radio and often TV, after his set speech. The newspapers give these forums big play, and during a year, practically every variety of opinion is heard there, officeholders, eggheads, reformers, capitalists, kooks, even Communists.

Also greatly responsible for the political volatility are the two Cleveland newspapers, which have for decades been independent, not wedded to any political faction, ever ready to hack at the men in office. In recent years, the TV and radio stations, too, have become more aggressive in their attention to government. Fifty years ago, there were two afternoon papers, two Sundays, and one morning paper. The afternoon *Cleveland News* folded in 1960; its Sunday edition had already folded in 1928. Only the morning and Sunday *Plain Dealer* and afternoon *Press* are now left, and both are now chain-owned. Today, their editors are extremely unhappy about Cleveland being the butt of

jokes by TV comics, and have done their utmost to bring the stagnant downtown back to life.

Fifty years ago, the large ethnic groups were heavy buyers of foreign language papers. Cleveland in the twenties had more successful foreign language dailies than any city in the country. The cosmopolitan immigrants had come here by the thousands to work in the steel mills, and many never learned English. This slowly died out, as the second generation moved to the suburbs. Only a few such papers now survive, as weeklies. The most influential weekly, the *Call Post*, is not a foreign language paper; it is a special publication aimed at the thousands of blacks who have come here in several waves, during two world wars, the Korean war, and in the 1960s, when the cotton fields of the south became mechanized. They now form 35 percent to 40 percent of the population of Cleveland, and 65 percent of East Cleveland, and have also moved heavily into sections of Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, and University Heights. They have become a strong political force, especially since one of them, Carl B. Stokes, was twice elected mayor of Cleveland.

Before the twenties, people traveled within Cleveland by street car and within Ohio by railroad. Few owned automobiles and there were no huge parking lots or multi-storied garages. The few bold enough to drive downtown were able to park at the curb as long as they pleased, without worry about parking tickets or coin-operated meters. Today everyone (even many on relief) has a car, some people have two or three, and it is almost impossible to find a place to park on the street. The streetcars have long gone, busses have taken their place. Almost all railroad passenger trains have disappeared here. The Cleveland-Hopkins Airport, first opened in 1925, is today one of the busiest in the country, always jammed, constantly expanding.

In the early twenties, train passengers went downhill to an ancient wooden station on the lakefront at the foot of West Ninth Street; a few continued to use it after the 1930s, when the new Union Terminal on the Public Square opened for the New York Central and Nickel Plate (but

not the Pennsylvania). Today the Terminal concourse is a hodgepodge of little shops and smelly snack bars, and no trains run through the station. Most tracks have been paved over into a big parking lot.

Before the twenties, the Model T Ford was the most popular auto. Self-starters, electric horns and lamps, closed bodies with glass windows, and heaters were just coming in on later models. A journey of 150 miles took all day, even on main roads, and secondary roads were seldom paved. Today a 150-mile trip on a freeway takes two-and-one-half hours, the side roads are all paved, and wide concrete ribbons of interstate highway, with large cloverleaf entrances and exits, have not only cut through the farm lands but have bulldozed away hundreds of homes within the cities, and generated bitter controversy as to where the freeways should be built, if at all. A driver can now go all the way from Cleveland to Boston or New York without seeing a red stoplight.

Everyone in 1920 had to come downtown to shop. Today Clevelanders go mostly to gigantic shopping centers in the suburbs, surrounded by vast parking lots, and including even movie theaters and doctors' offices. The stores still doing business downtown have had to provide hard-to-find nearby parking.

In the twenties movie palaces on Euclid Avenue offered the latest first-run pictures, four or five theaters were open for plays and musicals, and the young and carefree dined and danced at supper clubs, such as the Mayfair, Carlton Terrace and Club Madrid, or Chinese restaurants with dance floors, the Golden Pheasant and Bamboo Gardens. Today there are no supper clubs here. The big hotels do not offer dancing with dinner; only a few restaurants provide bands and singers. The first-run movies now open in fancy new theaters in the suburbs, and only the Hanna remains as a "legit" theater, open parttime. Inveterate playgoers now must seek the Play House, which had its birth fifty years ago as a partly amateur group but now is so big that it operates three theaters on the east side.

Before the twenties, the Superior Viaduct used to carry streetcars over a drawbridge across the Cuyahoga River; often the cars (and the

few motorists who drove downtown) had to wait twenty minutes while the draw swung open to let ships pass. When the High Level Bridge was opened in 1917, with streetcars running on the lower deck, it was considered an engineering marvel. Today the High Level is merely one of three cross-valley bridges; it had to be widened in the sixties to accommodate six lanes of traffic, and nothing now runs on the lower deck. Only the river below remains the same, crooked, oily, stinky, polluted. It has changed little in fifty years, except for the worse, and big freighters still toil upstream to steel mills, helped around the beds by tugs.

East 105th and Euclid, once our second best shopping neighborhood, is now merely the principal intersection of a widening slum. The fashionable shops and restaurants are gone, and in their place are pornography shops and X-rated movies, soul-food markets and emporiums for gimmicks, with iron and steel protective screens over windows to prevent breakage and theft by hoodlums and dope addicts.

A block farther east, the Elysium used to be a skating palace, where teenagers from all over the county skated to music in the afternoons and semipro hockey was played at night. Out beyond were Western Reserve University and Case Institute of Technology, both relatively small. Today the Elysium is torn down, the area immediately around it has been cleared for traffic flow, and Western Reserve and Case have merged into Case Western Reserve University. An enormous hospital complex operates next door in connection with the medical school, and a private police force patrols twenty-four hours a day to keep crime from the surrounding slums from flowing in. The beautiful Severance Hall, home of the Cleveland Orchestra, is out of place in this deteriorating location. So is the Cleveland Museum of Art.

In 1919, there was no Public Hall, no Public Library, no School Headquarters downtown, flanking the Mall. All of them were built in the twenties.

In 1919, the southwest corner of Public Square was bordered by bars and cheap shops, and the streets behind them, little more than

alleys, led down a hill toward the Central Police Station, a stinky old block-long structure. In the early twenties all this was torn down and the 730-foot Terminal Tower built thirty-seven stories high above the railroad station, flanked by a new Higbee store and three new office buildings along a newly located Prospect Avenue. Afterward came a new main post office building. The police headquarters was moved to a new building, then described as the world's finest, at East Twenty-first Street and Payne Avenue; today it is old, malodorous, and so crowded that the officers and visitors are practically tripping over each other.

On the northwest quadrant of the Square, before and during the twenties, were the Old Court House and County Jail. They were fortunately torn down, and a new courthouse and jail built on East Twenty-first Street next to the police headquarters and municipal court building. Today a twenty-story office building, housing the Illuminating Company and lawyers' offices, stands where the old jail used to be. The new jail is now totally inadequate, and so is the "new" courthouse. Both are being replaced by a new Justice Center downtown, as is the police headquarters.

Fifty years ago there were no motels, but there were famous roadhouses east, west, and south, for rendezvous and l'amour. They got a heavy play during prohibition. Today slews of motels, all over the county, serve the same purpose.

Before the twenties, Edgewater Park on the west and Gordon Park on the east, offered popular beaches, with new municipal bathhouses; people swam in Lake Erie in those days, before wholesale pollution. Today only fools go swimming there and there are no bathhouses. Myriads of motor and sail boat docks jut out from filled land on both sides of commercial piers. All this used to be a dump.

Fifty years ago, old League Park, at Lexington Avenue and East Sixty-sixth Street would seat a top capacity of twenty thousand fans, closely packed; the World Series of 1920, which the Cleveland Indians won from the Brooklyn Dodgers, was played there. Today League Park is torn down, the land is a neighborhood playground, and Brooklyn no

longer has a baseball team (it moved to Los Angeles). The Indians play in a giant stadium on the lakefront. Now most people go on Sundays to see the Browns play professional football, a sport that had hardly started in 1920. Crowds of eighty-three thousand are common there, and traffic problems are prodigious.

In Lakewood a large forest spread north of Lake Avenue and between 1912 and 1919 the Peter Kundtz Company operated a big sawmill and lumberyard next to it. Huge estates occupied the lakefront west for miles; notable among the big palaces were those of the Paisleys, Stechers, and Pattersons. Today the whole area from the Cleveland city limits west for a mile is tall apartment buildings and family hotels, known as the Gold Coast. Lakewood was then a small suburb with many vacant lots where kids (including me) could play baseball. Shaker Heights was mostly a splendid plan on a map, and Cleveland Heights thinly populated.

Mentor, Willoughby, and Painesville to the east and Lorain and Elyria to the west are now big cities, hooked to the parent metropolis by freeways. The population of the Greater Cleveland area is well over two million, and the total voters in the sixty suburbs of Cuyahoga County now outnumber those in Cleveland. The city used to boast of being the sixth city, then the fifth city, as it grew above nine hundred thousand, but you don't hear that any more (the central city, now about seven hundred thousand, is fifteenth in the United States). What you hear is a question: How long can it exist as a self-supporting city, with inhabitants steadily fleeing to the suburbs and taking business with them?

Fifty years ago there was neither TV nor radio. Today everyone has both, and many families have several TV sets, mostly in color. Fifty years ago there were late-afternoon pink or green sports extras, colored on the outside pages, delivered by horse-drawn carts open at the back, and hawked raucously by newsboys.

Fifty years ago there were no suburban weeklies. Today there are a dozen of them, the Sunpaper chain, and in Willoughby, Mentor,

Painesville, Lorain, and Elyria, daily papers thrive and offer competition to the Cleveland dailies.

So Cleveland, in 1976, the Bicentennial Year, is still the Yo-Yo City, the big small town on a seesaw, the community on a roller coaster - - volatile, emotional, gung-ho for winners, merciless toward losers, torn by the two-bit viewpoint and a suicidal yen toward disunity. Always going up or going down, seldom leveling off. Unhappy about the status quo, but sensitive to criticism, and uncertain and quarrelsome about how to change. A comfortable place to live and work, but a great place to complain about, which is what most citizens do in great abundance. Complaint and dissension are still the second most popular indoor sport. That's our Cleveland, folks.

CHAPTER TWO

The Blahs Turn to Euphoria: 1920-1925

The 1920s began in Cleveland with a severe case of the postwar blahs. Part of it came from national disillusionment that World War I had not "made the world safe for democracy" as President Woodrow Wilson had hoped; the Senate had rejected his League of Nations; and Wilson himself had suffered a stroke, and became permanently disabled trying to turn public opinion against the Senate. The wave of disillusionment in 1920 elected a Republican, a senator from Ohio, Warren G. Harding, in a landslide.

Locally the feeling of disenchantment was focused on all politicians and political machines, Republican as well as Democrat. The Cleveland Democrats had not been able to produce a leader since Peter Witt had been beaten for mayor in 1915 and Newton D. Baker had gone to Washington to become Wilson's secretary of war. Witt had forsaken politics and become a nationally sought-after expert on traction systems; he had invented a new type of pay-leave street car and an articulated two-car tandem. The county officeholders were typical old-style pols. But the Republicans at city hall, under Mayor Harry L. Davis, were worse.

Davis had seen a chance to shift and broaden his operations by running for governor in the landslide year, and won in the 1920 sweep. He turned over city hall to his handsome but in-

efficient law director, William S. FitzGerald, and the FitzGerald administration was so inept that it set the stage for the advent of the city-

manager charter and the election of Fred Kohler as mayor. The voters were really fed up in 1921, and when they took out their revenge on the pols of both parties they began the greatest period of volatility and instability in Cleveland political history. It lasted twenty-five years, swinging back and forth between hope and disappointment, ideals and cynicism. It produced strange alliances and unexpected results. It also created a climate of business optimism that made it possible for the Van Sweringen brothers to change the face of the downtown and absorb the whole business and professional community into their orbit. At least it did until the depression of the 1930s sank the whole country.

Contributing to the blahs were several sensational local murders and governmental miscues that filled the newspapers for months and further created the feeling that there ought to be a clean sweep of incumbent officials. Two well-known businessmen, W. W. Sly and G. K. Fanner, had been cold-bloodedly murdered during a payroll robbery at their factory; the subsequent manhunt for their killers sent three men to the electric chair and another to prison for life. Dan Kaber, another businessman, had been stabbed to death in his Lakewood home, and his socially prominent widow was convicted of having him poisoned as well; the "poison lady" was also convicted. The crime that most shook public confidence was the conviction of William J. McGannon, chief justice of the municipal court, for perjury. This grew out of his testimony in a previous trial, in which McGannon was acquitted of murder. A judge sent to jail, yet! The Cleveland Foundation, under Raymond Moley, financed a survey of crime here that was undertaken by Roscoe Pound and Felix Frankfurter.

On top of this, disenchantment was beginning to set in with national prohibition of intoxicating liquor, which became effective in 1920. A local scandal soon afterward resulted in the firing of almost the entire Lakewood police force for accepting cases of whisky from bootleggers.

Then came a recession in 1921. The community was ripe for a big change, and the reformers, always present in volatile Cleveland, came up

with one -- a proposal to dump the elective mayor-ward council system, and replace it with a nonpartisan (theoretically) policy-making council elected under proportional representation, which would then choose a city manager. It sounded great, and the newspapers, fed up with machine politics and ever eager to trumpet a new day, supported it. The new charter carried, and was to go into effect with the election of 1923.

But there was still to be a mayor in 1923-24, and the mayor was Fred Kohler. Nothing like his mayoralty had been seen before, or since.

Kohler was one of the most colorful men ever to hold high office here. He began as a beat policeman and rose swiftly to chief under Mayor Tom Johnson. Blond, handsome, tall, he was physically attractive to women, and his affair with one of them, who happened to be married to someone else, stymied his career; he was fired as chief. He brazened it out, and every day afterward for months showed up in the Hollenden Hotel lobby to visit with friends. Men stuck by him, as well as women, and it was obvious that he would return to the public eye at some more favorable time. This he did, in 1918, when he ran for county commissioner without Republican party backing and defeated a Democratic incumbent. Then, as a minority member of a board of three, he continuously landed on page one by heckling the majority.

He ran for mayor in 1921 without making a speech, simply by punching doorbells, asking for support. Meanwhile, Mayor FitzGerald's campaign was a disaster. Republican Boss Maschke had to support him, though he feared the worst, for Fitz would often end an evening of speech-making practically in the bag. A private poll showed that Kohler would beat FitzGerald, and the shrewd Maschke bet a bundle on Kohler and cleaned up handsomely.

Kohler had the perfect formula for getting favorable attention from the newspapers. He ignored editorials and did exact-

ly as he pleased. He seldom answered reporters' questions, and was often absent from city hall, but he knew his image as the rugged independent

and the "cop-who-had-been-unfairly-dealt-with" was intact. He exuded an air of mystery, which increased his news value. He had an uncanny sense of good timing, and he knew the voters wanted a change, so he gave it to them, spectacularly. At once, he fired 850 of the political loafers and announced the city was going to live within its income, after two years of \$1,000,000 deficits. He appointed a law director, Paul Lamb, and a finance director, Gerhard A. Gesell, who were respected by the newspapers.

Then he ordered every fireplug in the city painted orange, had park benches painted orange and black, and repainted all city property that needed touching up (except the city hall itself) in the same garish colors, orange and black, which were visible night and day. Kohler said he wanted everyone to know which buildings belonged to the taxpayers.

That wasn't all. Kohler erected gaudy signboards (also in orange and black) proclaiming that he was keeping the city within its income, and others reading, "I Alone Am Your Mayor."

He was mayor, all right, from the first day, when he rode a horse at the head of a police parade down Euclid Avenue -- something he had promised to do some day, after he had been fired. The man he appointed as police chief, inspector Jacob Gaul, was an ascetic who neither smoked, drank nor swore, and could have been mistaken for a Sunday School superintendent. Gaul stayed on after Kohler left office; his reputation for uprightness was incomparable.

Kohler made good his promise to live within the city's income, by a simple method. He refused to spend any money having streets paved or park repair done, leaving all this to incoming administration. He claimed a surplus \$1,000,000 existed when his term expired and the city manager plan came in.

Kohler did not remain in private life long. Next year, was elected sheriff and soon got rich legally, at public expense, by spending less than half what the law allowed him daily to feed prisoners. A great uproar in the newspapers caused the common pleas judges to devise a menu that

would require him to spend all the forty-five cents a day he was allowed. In 1926, he was defeated by a Democrat, Ed Hanratty, now that his public image had been altered to that of a profiteer. He dropped out of public life, traveled extensively, and died in 1934. Then \$250,000 in cash was found in his safety deposit box.

The Cleveland newspapers were a powerful political force in the twenties. Though they could not influence Mayor Kohler, they were primarily responsible for the adoption of the manager-plan charter, and fought down to the end to keep it. The editor most responsible was Erie C. Hopwood of the *Plain Dealer*, who was a tremendous mover and shaker for the right things during his too- short tenure as editor. Unfortunately, for both the community and the paper, he died suddenly in 1928 of a heart attack at age fifty-one.

The Press had had a succession of editors -- Earle Martin, Victor Morgan, Harry Rickey, Eugene McLean and George B.(Deac) Parker -- over the years, but the one who was on the job in 1924, H. B. R. Briggs, stirred things up the most. (He did such a good job of campaigning for Senator Robert M. LaFollette for president in 1924 that LaFollette carried the city of Cleveland, where the Press circulation was concentrated, by five thousand votes. Then he was fired, after pressure from advertisers.) Earle Martin was brought back for another short period, then quit to become editor of a new morning paper, the *Cleveland Times*. Ted Thackrey followed Martin, and finally Louis B. Seltzer was appointed and this ended the short-termers. Seltzer stayed as editor for thirty-five years.

The News didn't cut as much ice politically. Its top men remained knee-deep in Republican politics, for Dan R. Hanna, Jr. still owned control. A. E. M. Bergener, the hard-nosed city editor, was famous for his investigative reporting (he scooped the town with the Lakewood police liquor scandal) and his handling of police news generally, but the days of big police stories were beginning to fade.

The News was steadily losing ground to the Press, despite the revolving-door editors at the Press. Editorially, it was partisan and not

very excited about governmental reform, lukewarm toward the manager plan.

The *Plain Dealer*, under Hopwood, was exactly the opposite, totally independent editorially, rigidly fair in reporting controversy and covering politics. It tended to be Democratic nationally, but locally was nonpartisan. It was a grandma kind of paper, with the same conservative first-page makeup day after day, and when it took editorial stands, it was always careful to finish the article by stating "on the other hand" and giving reasons why some might disagree. It fitted completely the upright character and stern puritan views of Editor Hopwood and his chief editorial writer, Archer H. Shaw, and the chairman of the board, Elbert H. Baker, all of whom had New England backgrounds. It was strong for civic uplift of every kind.

When Baker had taken over the paper around 1900, it was a poor second to the morning *Leader* of the Hannas, and had been a Democratic Party organ. Baker's policy of nonpartisanship, strictly fair news coverage, and editorial backing of the good civic things paid off in advertising so well that by 1917, the *Plain Dealer* was able to buy out the daily *Leader*. Hopwood became editor-in- chief in 1920.

In his eight years as editor, Hopwood achieved national recognition, as well as local preeminence. He was a co-founder of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, was its secretary for the first three years, then president from 1926 till he died in 1928. He was one of the early pushers for a journalistic code of ethics, which has endured till today with little revision. He was a firm believer that newspapering was a profession, rather than a craft.

Broad-shouldered, muscular, he had a stern, formidable appearance, but showed great compassion and understanding and was beloved by his staff, for they knew he would defend them against politicians and tycoons. He firmly believed that

an editor should strongly support civic reform movements. He was way ahead of his time in insisting that county government and the numerous suburban villages should consolidate somehow to eliminate the characteristic Cleveland fragmentation. He gave big play to the recommendations of the Association for Criminal Justice, which led to court reforms after the McGannon scandal. He was the first to publish in full the Citizens League election recommendations. He was one of the first presidents and a founder of the City Club.

It was only natural that a man of these instincts would go strongly for the manager plan, especially since he was a good friend of Professor A. R. Hatton of Western Reserve University, the political scientist who wrote the charter. So the *Plain Dealer* strongly supported the new charter, and opposed all attempts to modify or repeal it. He had misgivings after the two local bosses got together to choose Hopkins as city manager, but he thought anything was an improvement over the old system of elective mayors, patronage, and boodle. So he battled to keep Hopkins on the job. The *Plain Dealer's* strong editorial stand and fair political coverage had a lot to do with keeping both the man and the system.

In 1924, national politics burst in upon Cleveland and took the spotlight away from the city hall for a while. The Republican national convention came here in June and nominated President Calvin Coolidge, who had succeeded to the White House after Harding's death. Newton D. Baker made a gallant but unsuccessful try to get the Democratic national convention in New York to pledge itself to the League of Nations. After a bruising fratricidal battle between William G. McAdoo and Alfred E. Smith, the Democrats finally chose a nonentity, John W. Davis, and the result was foregone, a landslide for Coolidge.

The one-sidedness of the campaign produced in Cleveland one of those oddities of politics, a third-party movement that completely absorbed the regular Democrats. Senator Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin was running for president as an independent, financed by the railroad unions, which were then

big and powerful. It brought about the sudden rocketlike ascendancy of Peter Witt, as the LaFollette leader here.

Witt had returned to politics just before that by trying almost singlehandedly to defeat the Van Sweringens' Terminal-on-the-Square in a local referendum and in hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission. He lost both battles, but he vowed to go on fighting the Vans, and ran for the Cleveland council in 1923 and was easily elected, leading the ticket in the west side district. He was back in the headlines regularly, and when LaFollette began to emerge as a big vote-getter on a populist platform, Witt became the local spearhead.

With the nonentity Davis at the head of the ticket, the Cleveland Democrats threw in the sponge; all during the campaign, Boss W. Burr Gongwer and his secretary were practically the only ones left in his headquarters. The congressional county and legislative candidates spent all their time at the LaFollette meetings, which were run mostly by maverick Democrats and Witt- worshipers.

Hopwood's *Plain Dealer* covered this campaign strictly according to the Hopwood bible of fairness. The local political reporter (who was I) gave equal attention to the LaFollettes and the Coolidge Republicans. The *Plain Dealer* supported Democrat Davis editorially. On the final Saturday night of the campaign, a hysterical LaFollette meeting of twenty thousand people at the Public Hall was given a two-column headline on page one, and a news story that ran three columns long. The national, county, and legislative tickets went Republican and the LaFollette fireworks fizzled out soon, except that the show of strength encouraged Witt to continue his annual autumn meeting, where for three hours all by himself he would "skin a few skunks." The skunks included practically every public figure in both parties whom Witt disliked. And he could really skin them.

Meanwhile, the physical tear-up of the downtown area southwest of the Square was proceeding at full speed. All the ratty old buildings around Champlain Avenue, West Third, West Sixth, and West Ninth streets were bulldozed down, in-

cluding the malodorous old Central Police Station. The tear-up was gigantic, extending to the Cuyahoga River, and included a rerouting of the New York Central main line by the river (it had previously run east and west on the lakefront). A big railroad bridge was planned to take the passenger trains across the river and out through the west side, to connect again with the lakefront route at Berea.

It seemed that all the structural steel workers, cement workers, plumbers, electricians and carpenters in northern Ohio had come on the job after the excavators had hauled away the ancient rubble. Huge concrete piers supported new streets (Prospect Avenue and West Ninth Street). The new Terminal Tower rose majestically, and before long, to the east of it, a new eleven-story building that was to be the home of a department store (the Van Sweringens had bought the Higbee Company that had been for years uptown at East Thirteenth Street and Euclid, and were moving it to the Square) was being erected, to balance the Hotel Cleveland on the other side.

Not only was all this construction going on, but the courts were full of appropriation suits to condemn the land for the titanic project, and it looked as if every big law firm in town had a finger in the pie. The suits were filed by the dozen, and they required big money, but the Van Sweringens had all the money they seemed to need, once the ICC and the Cleveland voters had given them the green light. They were big borrowers and they had persuaded the New York Central to advance 80 percent of the money needed for the big engineering tearup. They were looked on favorably by New York banks, and particularly J. P. Morgan & Company, and they also were big borrowers from the Cleveland banks.

All this construction, replacing obsolete buildings with shiny new ones, unquestionably gave the community a psychological boost --seeing the new stuff going on, and being told by the newspapers that Cleveland was again on the move, with a new form of city government, and new developers willing to risk millions to make over the downtown. Though the city was still in a daze from seeing the gaudy orange and black

signboards of the brief Kohler mayoralty on buildings and benches, a new euphoria took hold in 1924-25. It was to be the New Day. Though the Van Sweringens were quiet men who preferred to operate backstage, so many yes-men and self-promoters began to surround them that a wholly new social uppercrust came into being, based on money (much of it borrowed) rather than position. Even a new exclusive country club, the Pepper Pike Club, limited to fifty members carefully screened by the Vans' inner circle, was organized. Women were not permitted on the links.

The newspapers tried to report this new engineering, financial, and social whirl, but it was almost impossible to do it fully. They were given from time to time broad blueprints from the Vans' front office, but as the operation became bigger and bigger, the news became less and less available. Hopwood was more gung-ho about the city-manager government than about the Vans' projects, which were of course private ventures (except that the railroad was permitted by law to appropriate what property it needed). In fact, the Vans thought the *Plain Dealer* was not enthusiastic enough about the whole deal, and put some money into a new morning paper (called first the *Cleveland Commercial* and later the *Times Commercial*), which they believed would give them more plugs. (It failed.)

Nevertheless, this combination of new commerce and new government had banished the blahs after five years. The city seemed to be finding its way again; the Vans had triumphed and were building a new town, and the reformers had triumphed and were launching a new government.

This euphoria began to infect others, and any number of new real estate companies sprang up, and began to sell vacant lots in the suburbs. They were financed largely by private mortgage companies, and the mortgage companies sold stock in themselves. The promoters could see millions in profits ahead, for the population of Greater Cleveland was sure to grow. It was the sixth city in 1920 and by 1930 would be the fifth

city. Volatility had brought the community to a new high and it was almost manic. The depressive part came later.

The Van Sweringens' story is worthy of Horatio Alger Jr. It has never been fully told and perhaps never will be, because all of the principals are now dead, but the Van Sweringens were the biggest thing that ever hit Cleveland. Their plans not only changed the future of Euclid Avenue but also threw the hooks into the Mall Plan that had been begun by Mayor Tom L. Johnson, and was almost completed when the 1920s began, except for a big ornate railroad station on the lakefront. All the public buildings around the Mall of a solid classic stone design, five stories high, were either built or under construction by this time -- the city hall, courthouse, Public Hall, school headquarters, Public Library. Only the railroad terminal remained unbuilt. The Vans needed a terminal to tie in with their rapid transit line from Shaker Heights. To get that meant junking the lakefront station. And that brought Peter Witt into conflict with the Vans. He was outraged, for he felt himself the principal disciple and political heir of Tom L. Johnson.

The Shaker rapid line unfortunately did not run directly into the Square. It emerged from the Kingsbury Run gully about East Thirty-fourth Street, and wormed its way slowly toward East Ninth Street. To make it accessible to the wealthy business and professional men to whom the Vans wanted to sell Shaker Heights lots, they had to bring it to the Square and lower Euclid. They also needed additional tracks.

The tracks were right there, waiting for them, owned by the Nickel Plate railroad, which paralleled the Shaker line in the Kingsbury gully.

The Nickel Plate, at the time of World War I, was considered no great shakes as a railroad. It primarily carried freight on a line almost parallel to the New York Central through Ohio, and was not a great money-maker. Its tracks curved back of Public Square and cut through the heart of heavily settled Lakewood. So to get the Shaker rapid transit access to the Square the Vans bought the Nickel Plate -- for not much money, as those things go. Then they came up with their big dream of a

downtown commercial development, much like Grand Central Terminal in New York. The Shaker

rapid would turn around underneath, instead of wandering on the surface downtown amidst heavy auto traffic. The success of this Terminal would naturally depend on the way the railroad and rapid transit passengers spent their money in the stores, shops, hotel and restaurants, and rented offices in the Tower and the other office buildings. It seemed possible of attainment, for railroads were the only means of inter-city passenger travel in that day, both long-distance and short-haul. It was long before the automobile changed everything.

The brothers Van Sweringen were practical dreamers, who showed brilliant imagination. They were also superlative salesmen, for they persuaded New York financiers to lend them most of the colossal sums needed to tear up the downtown and build the Terminal. When it was finally built, the New York Central owned the station and tracks, but the Vans owned the commercially valuable air rights and the income-producing properties.

A battle over the Terminal was inevitable. The Vans' aim was to make money. The Mall backers had no thought of making money -- only of beautifying the city with dignified, majestic public buildings, all of them devoted to public service. Witt took the lead in fighting the Vans. He opposed the council ordinance that granted the railroads the right to appropriate city property (such as the old Police Station). He led the fight during a referendum to persuade the voters to reverse the council. He tried to persuade the ICC to refuse permission to the NYC and NKP to rearrange their tracks in Cleveland and finance the Vans' project. But Witt carried on the fight practically alone. With his keen instinct for the theatrical, he made quite a show of it, acting as his own lawyer, asking himself questions as a witness and supplying the answers. Witt's one-man battle, though it made page one news, did not convince either the Cleveland voters in the referendum, or the ICC. He lost on both fronts and the Vans' legal hurdles were cleared.

One important reason why Witt did not prevail was that another Johnson disciple, who also had a right to consider

himself the heir of Tom L. Johnson, turned up as a lawyer for the Vans. He was former Mayor Baker, under whom the Mall plan was begun. Baker had returned to Cleveland after World War I and gone into private law practice. His presence took a lot of the steam out of Witt's emotional pleas and this confrontation produced enmity between the two former allies that lasted the rest of their lives.

The Vans meanwhile were starting to get control of many other railroads -- the Erie, Chesapeake & Ohio, Hocking Valley, Pere Marquette and Missouri Pacific. They did this through the novel (at that time) device of the holding company. Best known of the Vans' holding companies were the Allegheny Corporation and Blue Ridge Corporation. They sold stock in these to the public, but always kept voting control themselves. The new money was used to buy control of additional railroads. They put little of their own money in, but borrowed like crazy, both from banks and by issuing new stock. The success of the pyramided, complicated structure depended, of course, on continued good business and expansion.

The Vans had even bought control of the much-fought-over Cleveland Railway Company, hoping to work out some inner-city rapid transit to tie into Shaker, and change schedules so that more and more people would come through the Square.

Although the Vans, through expansion of their railroad empire, had now become national news, they were practically unknown to the Cleveland public. They shunned personal publicity and went to great pains to avoid it. The principal assignment of their skillful public-relations man, Joe Doherty, was to keep their personal doings out of the papers, and confine newspaper mention strictly to business. They came and went by private railroad car, and spent about half their time in New York. They were almost never seen at public meetings anywhere.

The big Cleveland event in the summer of 1930 was the opening of the new Terminal Tower and the railroad concourse beneath it. The trains were now running through it. The Higbee store was open. The Shaker rapid transit was turning

around underneath. The whole face of downtown Cleveland had been lifted, the center of mercantile gravity shifted westward from Euclid Avenue. But there was a sour note. The Terminal Tower, with its new offices for lawyers, doctors, and corporation headquarters, was practically empty. The big opening had come at the wrong time in economic history, and the Vans could not cash in on their air rights. The stock market had crashed nine months before, and another collapse was about to happen in the fall of 1930.

Nevertheless, the civic boosters and politicians had a field day at the luncheon, 28 June 1930. They praised the Vans to the skies and orated mightily about the bright future of Cleveland. The orchestration should have been in minor chords, for the Vans did not attend the luncheon, and the city's immediate future was dismal.

The two bachelors were really shy men, who preferred to operate quietly backstage, far from the spotlight. They could have walked down Euclid Avenue at noon any day without being recognized. They mingled with only a few close friends. They resisted attempts to publicize and glamorize them. The Cleveland papers respected the Vans' wishes and did not pester them, any more than they pestered the patrician Mathers, Wades, and Sherwins.

Unfortunately for themselves and their financial backers -- the whole community of Cleveland, as it turned out -- the Vans peaked twenty years too soon. Their railroad and real estate empire collapsed completely in the big depression, and took many otherwise conservative investors down with them. Cleveland never quite recovered from the shock -- even today, more than forty years later. Had the Vans been able to weather the depression, they would have been recognized and lauded for what they really were, practical dreamers who made their dreams come true. Shaker Heights today has become one of the country's

suburban showplaces. The Terminal Tower today is jammed with tenants. The Higbee Company is prosperous. The office buildings along the new Prospect Avenue are full. The Nickel Plate (which later merged with the Norfolk & Western) and the C & O (now part of the Chessie System) prosper from hauling coal.

Unfortunately the magnificent Terminal concourse no longer accommodates great crowds of railroad passengers. It is alive with rapid transit commuters who use both the Shaker rapid and Cleveland Transit lines, but there is no more railroad passenger service there. The expensively built underground tracks have been made into a big parking lot. The great marble concourse itself is now a hippie hangout, a mess of quick-repair shops, hotdog, sandwich, orange juice and bakery stands. A big indoor tennis court for a private club was put up, surrounded by backstops and canvas coverings in the area where the passengers used to wait for their trains.

When the Vans were in Cleveland, they spent their off hours in castle-like homes in Shaker Heights and Hunting Valley. The big home on South Park Boulevard where their sisters lived, has been sold and resold many times. Daisy Hill Farm in Hunting Valley, named for Mrs. Ben F. (Daisy) Jenks, an intimate friend of the brothers, has been cut up into large attractive homesites. Orris P., the older brother, was soft-spoken, sensitive, a true dreamer, who preferred to be alone with his big thoughts much of the time. Mantis J. was more outgoing and did not shun female companionship. Neither of the brothers ever married, nor did their two sisters. There was also another brother, Henry.

The strain of trying to stave off the inevitable disaster in the depression was too much for the quiet brothers. Minority stockholders who saw their investments shriveling plagued them with suits. Receiverships were inevitable when they couldn't meet current debts. The holding companies had no assets of their own, only the stock certificates signifying ownership of railroad companies. When their assets were eventually examined by probate court, they had debts of

more than \$80 million, and only \$500,000 in assets. They were stone broke.

Both of the Vans died in their fifties of heart attacks. M. J was the first to go. After he died, O. P. seemed to lose interest in life, and he, too, died a year or so later, in November 1936. It was an appropriate time to go, for this was the month that Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had campaigned against "princes of privilege," won his second presidential election by a landslide, carrying forty-six of the forty- eight states.

CHAPTER THREE

Wars of the Roses: 1926-1931

The euphoria of the early 1920s, the feeling that everything was going to be all right and move forward forever, did not last long. It began to fade when the first manager-plan council, first in the country, was elected from four districts, rather than thirty-three wards. It was instantly obvious that the new council was not going to be the answer to prayer that the political scientists and reformers had hoped. Pretty much the same old gang of regular Republicans and Democrats had been elected. The principal difference was that four nonmachine independents were elected -- Peter Witt, Dr. A. R. Hatton (author of the charter), Miss Marie R. Wing, and Mrs. Helen H. Green. They were a tiny minority and had nothing to say about choosing the new city manager. They could complain, and did complain and thus make news, but that was all.

The proportional representative system of voting asked citizens to mark first, second, and third choices, and so forth for council. The total vote in each district mathematically produced a quota required for election. If a candidate achieved this quota on first choices, his surplus was redistributed to second choices. This would continue until all candidates at the bottom of the totem pole were eliminated, and the number of councilmen specified by the charter for that district-

achieved the quota or were left. Sometimes the ultimate winners got in on third and fourth choice votes.

The counting was done in the open in the Public Hall basement. The surplus ballots and those of the defeated were moved physically from one box to another, and a second count taken then a third. It was confusing and tiresome, and lasted three or four days. It soon became obvious that the preferential voting had merely divided people into racial, religious, and ethnic blocs. In theory they were supposed to vote for "like-minded" candidates (liberal, conservative, radical, etc.) because of their views on economic and social problems. Actually they voted for candidates because they were black or white, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, and so forth. After the first shifts, the political writers and election officials could predict accurately who would win or lose on the next ballot, and what the ultimate lineups of winners would be.

There were enough like-minded voters to elect one independent from each district, but the rest were mostly incumbent councilmen, old-style pols.

Maschke and Gongwer had frankly confessed before election that they could not forecast what might happen under this new system, but the election board clerk, A. J. (Gus) Hirstius, had figured that the age-old habit of voting by race and religion would continue and a combination of machine-supported Republicans and Democrats would dominate the new council. The two bosses, concluding Hirstius was right, had privately agreed before election that they would have enough council votes to choose a city manager, and that when they did, the city

jobholders could be apportioned by a percentage formula, which of course the new manager would be expected to follow. As it turned out, it was 67 percent Republicans and 33 percent Democrats. The independents would get nothing, except a chance to complain.

This was not what Editor Hopwood and Professor Hatton had envisioned. They were still foolishly hopeful that the council would choose a professional, nonpolitical city manager, strictly an administrator, as many smaller cities had done -- a man who would abide by the policies set by council, and simply keep the machinery running. What they got was something totally different.

The council had absolutely nothing to do with the choice of the new city manager. They didn't even know his name until it was handed to them by Maschke and Gongwer. His name was William Rowland Hopkins, but they didn't know him from a bale of hay. Most of them hadn't even heard of him, though he had been a Cleveland businessman, real estate investor, and promoter all his life.

The way he was selected was typical of the old-style political process. For several weeks after election, Maschke and Gongwer hadn't a clue whom to choose and were actually waiting for suggestions. One day before Christmas, Gongwer, then the customs collector, was walking outside the federal building with William J. Murphy, former postmaster, when they met Hopkins, whom both knew slightly. "There could be the new city manager," said Murphy. "You may be right," said Gongwer. Then Gongwer phoned George Moran, business manager of the News, an old friend who was a Republican, and asked him to sound out Maschke about Hopkins. Moran did, and Maschke thought Hopkins could do the job. Then Maschke and Gongwer got together and agreed to recommend Hopkins to their obedient councilmen. Maschke sent his partner, John Orgill, to ask Hopkins if he were interested. He was and, agreed to meet Maschke and Gongwer secretly at the Hollenden Hotel.

They explained to Hopkins the 67/33-percent deal they had made about jobs, which included the cabinet as well as the street sweepers. Hopkins agreed to this. Then Maschke said he had a commitment to "do

everything possible" to expedite the Van Sweringens' plans, and asked Hopkins to go along with it. This, too, he did. (Maschke described the conversations in his diary, published in the *Plain Dealer* in August 1934. "We were in perfect accord on everything," he wrote.) Thus was the new manager chosen in 1924 by a coalition.

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Witt, the new councilman, immediately declared war on Hopkins as well as the Van Sweringens. Dr. Hatton, now also in the council and naive politically, wanted to wait and see. Hopwood, also hoping for the best, praised Hopkins editorially, for he had a good reputation as a businessman, but privately had his doubts. The script for reform and a civic Utopia was not coming out according to Hoyle.

The two bosses had shrewdly foreseen that the newspapers would accept Hopkins as a businessman, and go along with his plans. Almost at once he announced some big ones -- developing a new Cleveland airport, building jetties along the lakefront, which would produce landfill that could be used for baseball diamonds, parks, marinas. He wanted wider boulevards, more playgrounds, air pollution control, and so forth. He soon won the editors, as well as the councilmen, with his platform manner and charm, and began to act in every way as an elective mayor would have. The euphoria returned, and Hopkins became the fair-haired boy of the papers. The big cheeses now were Hopkins and the Vans, and the city was moving again. Even the Press, traditionally opposed to anything the bosses were for, swallowed hard, and went along. The News kept quiet, since their number one business executive had helped get Hopkins chosen.

Hopkins was a unique political figure, an excellent speaker, so eloquent and so frequent in his public appearances that Witt, he of the acid tongue and ready criticism, who was Hopkins' chief bedeviler, nicknamed him "Chautauqua Bill." He had vigor, was easy on his feet, and very persuasive. He spoke with a left-handed chop gesture like that

which President Truman later used. He had a deep, resonant voice, excellent diction, and a great command of semantics. In short, a topnotch salesman.

His first cabinet was a good mix of strictly political and pro-bono publico types. As safety director, he appointed Edwin D. Barry, a wealthy real estate operator and former sheriff, who was a close friend of Maschke. For his personal secretary, he chose Billy Murphy, the Democrat who had

first suggested Hopkins to Gongwer. Another Democrat close to Gongwer was Howell Wright, who had the front of a professor but the technique and viewpoint of a politician. A Maschke lieutenant, Alex Bernstein, was service director. As parks and public properties director, he appointed Hugo Varga, a man highly esteemed by the cosmopolitan groups. For welfare director, he chose Dudley S. Blossom, a highly respected wealthy Republican, who once before had been welfare director. These choices carried out the two-to-one deal on a high level; the editors seemed to approve the selections.

Hopkins's first ambitious plan was to fill in the lakefront, behind jetties. When first announced, it seemed too grandiose, but only a few years after Hopkins left office, large acreages of "made land" had been created there and today practically all the eastern shoreway and Burke Airport are on the landfill.

He then proposed to build a large airport ten miles southwest of downtown, and this also seemed fantastic. Air travel was only a dream in those days; even air mail hadn't got far. So when Hopkins urged the immediate purchase of large acreage around Brook Park Road, saying that ultimately huge transatlantic planes would land thousands of people in Cleveland direct from Europe, and that Clevelanders could fly directly to London and Paris, Witt scornfully ridiculed it in council as a pipe dream. Most of the council majority felt the same as Witt, but didn't dare oppose it openly, so some land was purchased. Hopkins's foresight was correct. Today, the Hopkins Airport is one of the busiest in the country and people do leave and return directly from Europe.

Hopkins was not only willing but eager to speak everywhere and anywhere a crowd would gather. Though the council was in theory a policy-determining body, Hopkins soon made it clear that he was setting the course and expected council to ratify it. He assiduously cultivated the numerous and powerful ethnic groups so characteristic of Cleveland, and the foreign-language papers (there were then a half-dozen

with big circulations) backed him to the limit, and kept on supporting him even after his party support wavered. He spoke around town night and day, completely unsparing of his energy. He was married but childless and his invalid wife was in a hospital, so he lived alone in a bachelor suite at the Cleveland Athletic Club. He had plenty of time to make speeches.

The councilmen, always jealous of their prerogatives, took a dim view of Hopkins behaving like a mayor, but the party regulars hid their pique and did not usually tangle with him. Only Witt, Professor Hatton, and Miss Wing challenged his decision and they were such a small minority that the majority just let them rave on, hardly bothering to answer.

Hopkins probably could have been elected mayor had he run during the time he was city manager. He received as much praise from the newspapers as any man who ever held office in Cleveland, and actually he himself was the issue during the antimanager charter campaigns of the late 1920s. For a man whose previous experience in public office had been limited to a term in council twenty years before, and short-term service on the election board and as a federal marshal, Hopkins burst into bloom suddenly after he took office. His forward-looking program attracted prominent citizens who had not previously been connected with organized politics. They stuck with him to the end.

The euphoria over the manager plan began to dissolve early in 1925. With another council election coming up in the fall, a group of young Democrats called the Cuyahoga Club, headed by lawyer Maurice F. Hanning, circulated petitions to repeal proportional representation, but not the manager plan. The two bosses would have been glad to see the

system go, but were otherwise happy just then with Hopkins and didn't get actively into the campaign. Dr. Hatton and William C. Keough, a former municipal judge, did most of the speaking against the proposed amendment; a few councilmen who could have been elected under any system, favored it. The newspapers denounced it; they didn't want the sacred

charter tampered with. The public yawned and a small vote turned out. The proposal lost by six hundred votes.

The real battles over the manager plan were not far off. They began in 1927, and the donnybrook that followed was the bloodiest ever in Cleveland. The next five years tore up the political maps and charts completely, wrecked several careers and launched others, produced coalitions that were unbelievable and absurd, and were as fratricidal as the Wars of the Roses. They split the blacks, churches, labor unions, both party organizations, and the business community. Political corpses were left all over the field, yet some miraculously recovered. The infighting went on without letup all through the stock market collapse, the beginning of the depression with its bank failures and welfare problems, and far into the thirties.

The man who touched off the charter wars was Harry L. Davis, the former mayor and governor. Davis had been in Columbus when the city-manager plan was adopted in 1921, busy with his own concerns. After two years as governor, he sensed that he might not be able to win reelection, because a big, handsome, rural Democrat, State Auditor Vic Donahey, whom he had beaten in 1920, was getting stronger. So he dropped out in 1922 and let Colonel Carmi A. Thompson take the anticipated beating from Donahey. He saw his chance to recoup in 1924, however, with a Coolidge landslide in prospect. Maschke warned him that he might win the primary but Donahey could beat him in November, despite the landslide. Maschke was right. Davis lost and dropped out of state politics. But he still had his eye on Cleveland, which had elected him mayor three times in wartime: 1915, 1917 and 1919.

Davis rightly sensed that wide dissatisfaction with the manager plan had already set in. The reformers and do-gooders were unhappy that a professional administrator had not been chosen; the old politics was going on at the city hall as usual. Even the Van Sweringens' plans had been stymied for a while when Hopkins tried to get council to approve changes

in a bridge design that the Vans said would have cost them a million dollars unnecessarily. Only Maschke's intervention had persuaded the council to defeat Hopkins by one vote. A rift was opening between Hopkins and Maschke, but Davis misjudged the size of the rift.

During a golf game at the Chagrin Valley Club, Davis told Maschke that he intended to circulate petitions to dump the manager plan, which would oust the manager within six days of election, and provide for a special election for mayor. Maschke replied that this sudden ouster in six days would be interpreted as an attack on Hopkins, and since he was committed to Hopkins (naturally, having put him in office), he would have to oppose it.

Davis felt he had enough strength among the regulars in both parties to win anyway, and went ahead with his repeal. So it became a contest for power between Davis and Maschke who, though they had previously been allies, had never really trusted each other. The battle became more than a party power struggle. Before the election was held, it developed into what was represented as a moral Armageddon, a crusade in reverse, with the angels on one side and the devil on the other. Somehow in the confusion, some devils sprouted wings and some angels grew horns.

The thought of Davis possibly returning to power in Cleveland sent the *Plain Dealer* and Press editors into a tizzy. He had been their number one nonfavorite when he was mayor. He was a smooth article, good-looking, energetic, a crowd-pleaser who could dream up plausible campaign slogans, but a poor administrator who had left deficits and

loaded the payroll with loafers. To the do-good, reform-minded editors he was the next thing to Satan.

On the other hand, Maschke and Gongwer, the bosses were regularly chastised and cartooned by the papers as evil influences, not good for the city. Yet Maschke and Gongwer were now actively supporting Hopkins, who at that moment was the newspapers' favorite. The editors had to make a choice, but they didn't wince. They chose Hopkins, which put them in the same bed with Maschke and Gongwer.

Davis had hidden strength, which Maschke had realized. The Cleveland Federation of Labor president, Harry McLaughlin, was openly for Davis. Many of the blacks in the Central-Scovill-Woodland district, the bulwark of Maschke's strength in Cleveland, remembered Davis's glory days as mayor, when everyone had a job at city hall, and secretly hoped Davis would win; Maschke had to really turn on the heat to keep them in line. A strong force of ethnic Democrats from Davis's home neighborhood, Newburgh, were also backing him. It was hard to top Davis's campaign slogan, "Return the Government to the People."

Maschke resorted to an old trick. He got George B. Harris, a Republican lawyer, to also file petitions for another charter amendment. The ballot the voters received on this was identical to Davis's charter except for a different set of numbers in the long legal text near the bottom. Result, confusion, particularly among those who couldn't read, and an encouragement to vote against both of them.

The most effective thing Maschke and Gongwer did was turn the campaign, with the help of the papers, into a moral crusade. They got the clergy into it on Hopkins's side -- Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, Bishop Joseph Schrembs, the Reverend Dan T. Bradley, and the Reverend D. Ormonde Walker, a young Negro with a big following. They contended Hopkins ought to be allowed to complete his fine program, and the attempt to go back to mayors was a cheap political trick. Hopkins, though the principal issue, kept out of the fight, and let others carry on. But he left no doubt his pride was hurt and he wanted to continue in office.

It was a dirty, bitter campaign. Davis's charter lost by only six thousand votes, and he claimed that Maschke's men had stolen enough ballots in the black wards to beat him. The papers did not dig into it; the editors couldn't stand Davis.

Davis still wanted to keep the pot boiling. He had another slightly revised charter amendment ready to go in April 1928, date of the presidential primary, which would normally not bring out much of a vote. This time Maschke said, if Davis would remove the six-day ouster of the manager, he would

stay on the sidelines. (Davis did remove it.) Maschke said also that Hopkins ought to run for mayor, if the new charter should carry, and he recommended to Davis that he flatly disavow any personal intention to run for mayor. (Davis did not flatly disavow it.) Maschke did sit out this campaign, but Hopkins himself got busy, rounded up the same array of preachers and prominent citizens, and with strong help from the newspapers, defeated this charter, too, by three thousand votes. Gongwer did not sit it out; he gave strong help to Hopkins. (Maschke believed that if Davis had made clear his disavowal, the amendment would have carried.)

During 1928 the mayor-manager controversy simmered on the back burner. Plenty of high-octane politics was going on, however, and a backfire from the 1927 campaign finally flared up. Davis's charges of fraud were picked up by the Cleveland Bar Association, which asked Governor Donahey to look into them. Donahey appointed Attorney General Edward C. Turner as a special prosecutor to investigate, through a special grand jury. It happened that the current president of the Bar Association was former Judge Maurice Bernon, one of Gongwer's closest cronies, a man who rivaled Maschke in shrewdness. (Attorney General Turner was also no friend of Maschke's, since Maurice had declined to endorse him for governor in a previous campaign year.) The net of all this was that the grand jury indicted a few minor election officials for fraud, and recommended that almost the entire election board, and the two chief clerks, be fired. Secretary of State Clarence J.

Brown, also no friend of Maschke's, fired them. Mrs. Bernice S. Pyke, women's Democratic chairman and national committeeman, and right-hand gal to Gongwer, was allowed to stay on.

This might indicate that Maschke and Gongwer were now not quite on the same wave length, and it was true. Maschke had cooled on Hopkins, but Gongwer hadn't. Gongwer was also trying to get a bright young Democrat, Ray T. Miller, elected county prosecutor in November 1928. He did, too, with the help of the election scandal, and the refusal of the paper to support Maschke's choice, Arthur H. Day. Maschke was going big in national politics, having been elected national committeeman for Ohio and being one of the first leaders to declare for Herbert Hoover, who was nominated, and elected. But he was beginning to have other big problems locally.

There was more trouble at city hall, and it was not of either Hopkins's or Maschke's making. It came from greed and the euphoria of boom times. Fortunes were being made in the stock market, and in real estate speculation. Candidate Hoover was predicting two cars for every garage for every family. Some city councilmen felt they ought to get rich, too. A few saw an opportunity to turn a personal profit by buying land which the city would need for playgrounds, then selling it to the city. The new county prosecutor, Ray Miller, arrived on the job just in time to make political hay, since early in 1929, an indictment for land fraud was returned against Councilman Liston G. Schooley, and an attempt to bribe a policeman against Councilman Thomas W. Fleming. (Councilman William E. Potter and City Clerk Fred W. Thomas were also indicted, but acquitted.) Schooley and Fleming were sent to prison. Both men were wheelhorses for Maschke and held important council chairmanships. Though Maschke and Hopkins were not involved, the daily hoorah in the newspapers soured even more people on the manager plan.

It wasn't long before more antimanager amendments came off the back burner and boiled over again. This time, a new force did the boiling -- the disciples of Peter Witt, who had wanted him to run for mayor

again. The principal disciples were Saul S. Danaceau, a young, idealistic lawyer, and Edward T. Downer, registrar of Cleveland College, who worshipped Witt daily at the City Club. Danaceau, an excellent legal draftsman, had concocted a charter that removed all the bugs from Davis's previous document but was still similar to it. The Witt group circulated petitions for an election in August 1929, and this time persuaded Davis to join with them but not participate in the campaign. It came to be known in the headlines as the Three-D Amendment. It looked at first like a sure shot to win. This time Hopkins was out in front as the leader. He or-

ganized a civic group that called itself the Progressive Government League and raised \$70,000. Gongwer and Mrs. Pyke joined (they still wanted to keep 33 percent of the jobs), but Maschke, though asked, declined. The same lineup of ecumenical ministers also participated. Hopkins and the league campaigned hard. Although the newspapers screamed as usual (even though Davis was not on the stump), Hopkins was again victorious, by about three thousand votes. However, this victory had in it the seeds of Hopkins's eventual ouster.

Hopkins's ego by this time had swelled to unbelievable proportions. Though Maschke had cooled toward him, the city manager was surrounded by a gaggle of obsequious amateurs and yes-men, particularly from the ethnic groups, and they got him to believe that he could dethrone Maschke by winning a majority in the next council. So the Progressive Government League entered a slate to run against Maschke's old standbys in council. It was a fatal mistake.

This meant war, and Maschke at once accepted the challenge. He went on the stump personally, and won the election hands down. The final count was almost the same as before, fourteen Republicans, nine Democrats and two independents. Maschke regarded it as his greatest triumph. It was obvious now that Hopkins wouldn't be around long.

A new figure in city politics had appeared in the 1929 council campaign, State Senator George H. Bender, who had previously confined himself to state issues. Bender stumped for Maschke's slate in the black wards, saying it was unfortunate that the Republican party had ever tied up with Hopkins. This infuriated Hopkins, who retorted with a celebrated blooper, saying he had been a Republican regular when Bender's ancestors were "roaming the plains of Bohemia or Hungary or somewhere." (Bender's antecedents were Czechs.) Hopkins's crack backfired badly; even his admirers the *Press* and *Plain Dealer*, scolded him for it.

The movement to unseat Hopkins came quickly. It was led by Councilman Alexander L. (Sonny) DeMaioribus, a close friend of Senator Bender. Before the council would bounce

Hopkins, it needed to agree on a successor. Maschke told DeMaioribus he'd better be sure of enough votes, because the regular Democrats would oppose him, and four of the Republicans who were scared of the newspapers would stand by Hopkins. Thirteen votes were needed. The problem produced a Byzantine series of maneuvers.

It soon became clear why Bender had injected himself into the council campaign. His friend DeMaioribus wanted Bender for city manager. But he could only line up twelve votes. John A. Cline, a former county prosecutor, and a man always close to Maschke (something that could not be said about Bender), was a strong possibility, but his backers could line up only ten votes.

Maschke's shrewdness finally broke the deadlock. He would have been satisfied with Cline, but couldn't get him. He did not consider Bender qualified. Yet he had to produce a candidate who would be accepted by the Bender bloc and also appeal to the newspapers. The man he proposed was State Senator Daniel E. Morgan. Morgan was much admired by the editors, since he had almost single-handedly maneuvered an election reform bill through the 1929 legislature. After an all-night caucus, the Benderites finally agreed to support Morgan.

It was still necessary to pick up two more votes to make sure of the ouster. One was certain in Dr. F. W. Walz, an independent who had taken Witt's place in council. The other came from Jimmy McGinty, a regular Democrat who had been practically the Van Sweringens' personal councilman; he represented the downtown wards, which included the new Terminal. The Vans were glad by now to be rid of Hopkins.

Hopkins refused to resign. The newspapers yelled loudly in protest, but the die was cast. Hopkins was suspended 13 January 1930 despite his impassioned appeal to council in defense of his work. An unruly crowd of seventy-five hundred outside the crowded council chamber had to be held back by police. The official ouster took place ten days later and meanwhile Law Director Harold H. Burton was appointed temporary city manager. On January 27, Morgan was chosen city manager. Maschke was right -- the newspapers did speak well of Morgan. But they really poured the vitriol on Maschke for engineering the ouster.

Morgan replaced the Democrats at city hall with Republicans. The two-to-one deal was now ended. He made Bender manager of Public Hall. Burton remained as law director. It was obvious that the city-manager plan could not remain long. The depression began in earnest in 1930 and Morgan at once had trouble finding enough money to take care of poor people on relief. In November 1931, Danaceau and Downer circulated another anti-manager amendment. This time it carried with little real opposition. So, at last, goodbye manager plan.

Morgan, though a regular Republican had a fine record of responsible civic leadership, and progressive tendencies toward social reform. He was the first president of the City Club, a former president of the Citizens League and of the Consumers League, and active in settlement-house work. As a city executive, however, he had one serious drawback: he was a dull speaker. He always knew what he was talking about, but he had no charisma. He made the most of it, however, and

spoke little, devoting himself primarily to the increasing problems of depression.

Morgan's honeymoon with the papers did not last long. They scolded him about the Bender appointment, and they were on him regularly about the welfare mess. The number of families on relief had zoomed from two thousand to seventeen thousand within a year, and the funds available from the Community Fund- supported charitable agencies were completely insufficient. He did what he could to raise money from bond issues and spread the load county-wide, but he was compelled to ask the legislature for emergency assistance. Getting money out of the appleknockers who controlled it was like pulling teeth, despite the valiant efforts of A. V. Cannon, a big corporation lawyer who dedicated himself to this cause, and practically lived in Columbus.

After his short tenure as manager, Morgan ran as a Republican in the special mayoralty election in January 1932. He finished first in the primary (in which Witt was unexpectedly eliminated) but lost in the runoff to Ray T. Miller, the Democrat. He remained active in Republican politics, however, supported Harold Burton's successful bid for mayor in 1935, and was appointed later to the court of appeals by Governor John W. Bricker. He was one of the few Clevelanders who served with distinction, as legislator, city executive, and judge.

Dr. Thomas F. Campbell of Cleveland State University, has written an excellent book on Morgan, *The Good Citizen in Politics*. He was indeed a good citizen, a courageous official. While he was city manager, and long before such an action became the politically "in-thing," he insisted that the medical and nursing staffs of City Hospital include Negroes, though it met much resistance then. While he was still on the appeals court, he took part in a parade to protest lynchings.

Time was soon to run out on the powerful Maschke, too. The Democrats started winning state and county offices in 1930, and in 1932, Roosevelt won the presidency in a landslide and the Republican state ticket was a disaster. There were no jobs for him at city hall, either, after Miller became mayor. So he stepped aside as county chairman when

Davis made his comeback in 1933. But Maschke encouraged Burton to run in 1935, and Burton won.

Maschke was much maligned, and unfairly so, by the *Plain Dealer* and Press editorial writers, but he bore the criticism philosophically. Reporters, on the other hand, learned that he always told them the truth, or nothing at all. He was respected by two generations of political writers. (An interesting paradox was that Maschke, a brilliant bridge player, one of the best in the country, was for years the favorite partner of the late Carl T. Robertson, the number two man among the *PD* editorial writers. Robertson, a determinedly independent man, refused to take part in writing denunciations of Maschke). Maschke was astute, well respected by other lawyers, by

businessmen and even by his Democratic opponents. Tom L. Johnson praised him as a worthy opponent. Witt, though he professed a strong dislike of all bosses after Johnson died, praised Maschke publicly as a man of integrity (in contrast to his frequent aspersions against Hopkins). Gongwer respected and liked him. He was a ripe target for cartoonists and editorial writers. The name Maschke had a harsh, grating sound. He was bald, except for a wisp of hair on the back of his skull. He was not handsome. His large nose increased the prejudice of bigoted anti-Semites. He had a thin, reedy voice and seldom spoke in public until his later years, which was probably wise, for he was a poor public speaker.

Maschke went to Harvard (though he grew up in a poor neighborhood) both to the basic college and law school, and soon afterward gravitated into politics. He realized that the Republicans would have a tough time as long as Tom Johnson was running for mayor, so he concentrated on helping friends get elected to state and county offices. Two he helped were Ed Barry, who was elected sheriff, and Theodore E. Burton, elected to Congress, both despite a Democratic trend. Maschke sensed that Johnson's popularity was beginning to erode and he rightly surmised that a respectable, colorless candidate might beat Johnson next time around. So he got his friend and protege, County Recorder Herman Baehr, to run for mayor in 1909. Maschke's intuition

was right. Baehr was the man nobody knew. He wouldn't debate the brilliant campaigner Johnson. The people didn't vote for Baehr; they voted against Johnson. (It was the old story of the Greeks deposing Aristides the Just, a man who was too good to be believed.) Maschke was now in the saddle as boss, after only twelve years as a practicing politician. He was appointed county recorder, to succeed his friend Baehr.

In 1911, Maschke was appointed customs collector by President William Howard Taft. In 1915, he was replaced by Burr Gongwer and began to practice law with John H. Orgill.

When Harry L. Davis was elected mayor in 1915, Maschke got back quickly into the city hall picture. The hall remained

Republican all through World War 1. It was obvious that 1920 would be a Republican year nationally, too. Maschke sensed it early, and saw a chance to get into the national picture by coming out for Senator Harding. (The always Republican News endorsed General Leonard Wood, but Maschke's delegates stuck with Harding, and won.)

The 1920 election, however, produced a temporary estrangement between Maschke and Governor Davis. Davis got the idea that Maschke had let him down in Cuyahoga County, which he almost lost. Maschke retorted that Davis had lost strength because his pro-labor attitude during the war had alienated businessmen in the suburbs as well as his home area, Newburgh, where the steel mills are located.

Maschke's law practice was now making big money and he was on his way to becoming a wealthy man. His fees came largely from corporations, particularly from utilities, which were always deeply interested in getting legislation passed or killed. This type of law practice was, and is, the standard way for political bosses, and lobbyists, to make politics pay. Political law practice and political insurance business are the most familiar means, and they depend almost entirely on friendship and influence. If everything else is equal, few legislators, state, city, or national, will refuse a request from a party chairman to

vote his way on a routine bill. And often on important bills, too. The boss makes promises, and holds the public officials to theirs. It has been a way of political life for centuries and still is.

The personal bitterness between Maschke and Hopkins continued even after Hopkins was ousted as manager. In the fall of 1931, when Hopkins was running for city council (to which he was later elected), they traded insults before the City Club Forum. Hopkins charged that Maschke had profited from city contracts, that contractors had hired him, that city employees were paying him for promotions, and that he, Hopkins, knew nothing about the 67/33-percent deal for jobs. Maschke retorted that Hopkins was a liar and an ingrate, "false, mendacious, spurious, a phrase-maker with an inherent capacity for deception," and "I put him back on the sidewalk where Gongwer and I had picked him up in 1923." It was a sensation.

Maschke in 1934 wrote his memoirs for the *Plain Dealer*, a remarkable thing for a political boss. In the final chapter, he described what qualities brought success in politics:

"Truthfulness, candor, foresight, courage, patience and a deep understanding of human nature. There is as much scheming in business as in politics, but in business it is mostly kept quiet. Politics is everyone's business and it comes out. Truthfulness is supposed to be a normal quality of man, but somehow, truthfulness in politics distinguishes you."

He was totally realistic about fame and fortune in politics. "When you win you are a great leader," he said. "Lose a couple and people are ready to consign you to the ashheap."

Maschke was way ahead of his time in understanding the value of racial integration in politics. He was the pioneer in backing such outstanding Negro public servants as Harry E. Davis for the legislature, school board, and civil service commission; Perry B. Jackson for the legislature, council, and municipal court; Clayborne George for council and the civil service commission. As long as Maschke was in charge, the

black population of Cleveland remained Republican and stable. Today it is 95 percent Democratic and restless.

Maurice was also wise in his selection of first-rate candidates for the legislature. Not since the Maschke era has Cleveland been represented by legislators of the caliber of Dan Morgan, Harold Burton, John A. Hadden, John B. Dempsey, Herman L. Vail, David S. Ingalls, Ernest J. Bohn, Dudley S. Blossom, Chester C. Bolton, Laurence H. Norton, Mrs. Maude Waitt, and Mrs. Nettie M. Clapp. Choosing rich men like Blossom, Bolton, Norton, and Ingalls did Maschke no harm at campaign times, and it did the Establishment of that day no harm in having them on hand to make laws, but they were all first-rate, intelligent, concerned men, who took the lead in public affairs. Today it is hard to get men of real stature to run for the legislature and even harder to get them elected. In the Democratic era of the thirties, the Cleveland

legislators were largely a bunch of zeros, hardly known beyond their neighborhoods, with little influence in Columbus. Later, the law was changed to elect legislators by districts, and the caliber of the candidates has improved some. It still is nowhere as high as it was in the twenties.

Maschke died of pneumonia in October 1936. His widow, Mrs. Minnie Rice Maschke, died at age ninety-five in March 1972. A son, businessman Maurice (Buddy) Jr., and a daughter, Mrs. Helen Maschke Hanna, still live in Cleveland.

CHAPTER FOUR

Tom L's Heirs

The first few years of the 1930s were the worst in half a century for Cleveland. Everything that could go wrong did. The depression, which was spreading nationally, hit the community harder than most cities; the zip, the desire to succeed, went out of business. The euphoria of the 1920s turned into sagging spirits as banks closed, thousands lost jobs or had wages cut through no fault of their own. The bottom dropped out, and there seemed to be no bottom to the bottom.

Holding companies, based on promises of riches rather than assets, proved to be worth nothing. Farmers were stuck with land, mortgaged to the hilt, which no one wanted to buy. Blowhards and status-seekers who a few years ago thought of themselves as millionaires, were in the hands of receivers. Indictments for crooked manipulation of banks, mortgage companies, and savings and loan companies were numerous, as prosecutors sought goats to appease thousands of small depositors whose savings were gone or frozen. Banker became a dirty word.

The familiar Cleveland syndrome, political volatility, was present in the nth degree, as the city hall changed hands every two years, and new political mahatmas came in with panaceas that didn't work any better than their predecessors' had. The corruption, which had started to ruin police departments during prohibition, got worse; protected gambling joints and bookie shops invited poor people to wager their last few bucks. Threadbare citizens daily trooped into newspaper offices, without a dime to buy a sandwich, looking for handouts. The welfare offices were swamped, and unable to furnish emergency relief.

It is almost impossible for younger people today, who didn't live through this dismal era, to imagine how rough it was, with 25 percent unemployment, soup kitchens, apple sellers on street corners, blue chip stocks selling under \$5 a share, and little sign of eventual improvement. It had to be endured to be believed.

The first to suffer bitter disappointment were the followers of Peter Witt. When the manager plan was voted out in November 1931, and a special election for mayor set for January 1932, it seemed to most political seers that Witt would win it. He had twice won election to council easily. He had led the LaFollette rebels to victory in the city in 1924. He drew big crowds every fall to his town meeting, where he caustically ripped politicians of both parties to shreds. Of his big targets, Hopkins was gone and the Van Sweringens in trouble. He was a rabble-rouser par excellence, but there was nothing phony about him, and the newspapers would not shudder at the possibility of Witt as mayor, as they had at Harry L. Davis.

The political wise guys and the press underestimated the political power of the Catholic church. Witt had not been anti-Catholic, but he made no bones about being an agnostic who never attended any church. One of the three candidates for mayor was a practicing Catholic, high in the Knights of Columbus -- Ray Miller, the county prosecutor, who had sent crooked councilmen to jail in 1929, and won reelection in 1930. He was the candidate of Burr Gongwer and the Democratic regulars. Dan Morgan, recently city manager, was running as a Republican.

The guessers almost unanimously figured Witt would run first in this field of three, then easily win the runoff. But on the Sunday before election, priests in every Catholic parish warned against the possibility of an admitted agnostic becoming mayor, and went as far as they dared for Miller without actually saying "Vote for our boy." It had a devastating effect. Witt's big following, normally Democratic, dropped away, and he finished a poor third. His voters went to Miller in the runoff, and Miller became mayor in February 1932. It was Witt's last hurrah.

Witt was always convinced of the rightness of his principles and willing to take the consequences of stirring up the animals. He was unquestionably a leader, a man of integrity, who never forgot his humble beginnings as an uneducated molder, and who devoted his life to causes he was sure would benefit his fellowman. Though he was a ferocious skinner of skunks in public, in private he was a big-hearted sentimentalist, a lovable lamb among his family and close friends.

His father, a German Catholic, emigrated to America in 1849 with many others who disagreed with the status quo there. Peter was tenth of eleven children. He went to school only through the fifth grade, started to work at thirteen and at seventeen became a molder. Naturally he joined a union and the Knights of Labor. As years went on, he experienced unemployment, hunger, insecurity, blacklisting, and the familiar hopelessness of the blue-collar workman of that day.

Witt had a natural gift for public speaking, and made up for his lack of formal education by intensive reading. He was involved in the Populist movement, and then as a Democrat campaigned for William Jennings Bryan. His most intense involvement was with the single-taxers, to whose tenets he had been introduced by Dr. Louis B. Tuckerman of Ashtabula (whose twin, bearded sons, also doctors, in later years became devoted disciples of Witt). The fact that Tom L. Johnson also was a converted single-taxer bound him to Johnson when the two finally met.

Witt had been speaking on street corners and wherever else he could find an audience. He had become noted as a heckler, and he tackled Johnson when Tom L. first ran for

mayor in 1901. Johnson invited him to the platform to debate, and before Pete knew it, he had become one of Johnson's most ardent admirers.

Pete never did anything by halves. In politics and economics, everything was either black or white to him. He was belligerent on the stump -- Johnson described him as "an angry, earnest man, with flashing

eyes and black locks hanging down one side of his forehead." He was sarcastic and fluent, and pulled no punches. Small wonder that he became Johnson's most effective hatchet man. There is not the slightest doubt that Witt fancied himself as the Saint Paul of the post-Johnson era. He felt it his duty to carry on the evangelism of the Johnson tradition and to help spread the golden years, the "city on a hill" that Johnson began. Johnson's mayoralty was the happiest time of Pete's life, for the mayor's odd combination of idealism and practical politics did actually transform the city for a while. Johnson, a millionaire traction magnate and manufacturer who decided belatedly to devote his great talents to government, turned the city upside down from what it had been in the nineties. He established municipal control of the street railway, built a city-owned light plant and sewage disposal plant, created a workhouse farm with accent on parole rather than punishment, established a TB hospital, municipal bathhouses, and dreamed up the Mall plan.

Johnson's impact on Cleveland is still alive today, though he and his principal disciples are long dead. His spirit of independence, of a government run for the taxpayer rather than campaign contributors, still persists, and is one of the main reasons why Cleveland remains such a maverick community in politics.

Witt became city clerk in 1903 and stayed there until 1909, when Johnson was defeated. In 1912, when the Democrats came back under Baker, Witt was appointed traction commissioner, a key job then, for everyone had to use public transportation. The commissioner had the power to order operating improvements. Witt rerouted and extended the lines, developed crosstown lines, added trailers. He even

patented a center-exit car, which was widely adopted elsewhere, and on which he collected royalties (but he refused to accept them from Cleveland). He developed a system of skip-stops and Sunday-only stops and always took the side of the riders. After he was defeated for mayor in 1915, he was hired as consultant by Philadelphia, Boston, and Seattle

for good-sized fees, and his recommendations were adopted by Detroit and Kansas City.

It was a natural progression for Witt to run for mayor after two terms of Baker. His congenital frankness did him in. He refused to buy political advertising or kowtow to special groups. Just before election he told west-side Germans that he hated all war, hoped the United States would stay out of World War I and it would end in a draw; but if either side had to win, he hoped it would be the Germans. This was disastrous. The Republicans pounced on this and denounced Witt as a pro-German. Even at that, he probably would have won, had he not been trapped by a preferential ballot (which he himself had advocated) on which voters could express second and third choices. Witt led on first choices, thirty-nine thousand to thirty-six thousand, but since he had no clear majority, other choices were added in, and Harry L. Davis finally won, forty-seven thousand to forty-four thousand Witt had said he wanted first choices or none at all. This was a blunder.

He couldn't resist getting back into politics when the Van Sweringens proposed their Terminal project. In his stiff but losing fight before the ICC, acting as his own lawyer, he appeared with a bulging briefcase that, he confessed in amusement later, was stuffed only with newspapers. (He said he did it because all lawyers carried big briefcases.)

Witt was a tremendous crowd pleaser and like most orators, loved to ham it up. Political meetings are usually stylized, dull, predictable affairs, but Witt turned his into a civic circus. In 1925 he started holding annual town meetings in Public Hall, to which he charged \$1 a head admission, to pay for the hall rent, and always packed the house. In 1935, his meeting

drew five thousand people. He was always the sole entertainer at these rodeos, and what a job he did: on the bosses, the railroads, the banks, the Van Sweringens, Hopkins, the newspapers. As he warmed up, he would

peel off his coat and throw it in a corner. His words were so often the truth that few wanted to miss the show.

Pete seldom talked less than two hours at these skinnings, and each year, as his list of SOBs grew and grew, the speech got longer and longer. He had a few regular targets, at whom he aimed special blasts. One was Myron T. Herrick, a Cleveland blueblood who had been a banker, governor, and ambassador to France. Pete always referred to Herrick as the "international ass." His fellow councilmen, Herman Finkle, Jimmy McGinty, Bill Potter, Liston Schooley, et al., were familiar targets, and what a kick Pete got out of it when Schooley and Potter were indicted for graft! Naturally, Maschke, Gongwer, Hopkins, and Baker came in for acid comment. Also all prohibitionists and professional drys.

The newspapers, all of them, got it in the neck at Pete's meetings. Though a lifelong foe of hypocrisy, Pete could not resist the temptation to ham it up at least once in every meeting after making some telling point. Before the applause and laughter had died down, he'd shake his finger in the faces of reporters in the front row, shouting, "Take that back to your editors!" It was annoying and unnecessary, for Pete knew perfectly well that all of them were his friends and admirers and took special pains to quote him accurately.

The presence of a crowd acted as a shot of adrenaline to Pete. He simply could not resist an auditorium full of listeners. He was no delicate ironist; he hit with a meat cleaver. At home, or at his simple cottage on North Bass Island, Pete was as amiable as an old St. Bernard dog. He was completely under the influence of his wife, Sally, a kindly homebody, motherly, sweet and patient, who understood his moods thoroughly. He would do anything for Sally -- except stop his town meetings. She didn't go to them; it was against her nature to get angry. At home, he rarely got into a lather about his pet

hates. But if he did, a warning word from Sally, "Now, Dad!" would stop him, and he'd again become the domestic lamb.

Pete's personal appearance was almost a trademark. He always wore a dark suit, no vest, and a black bow tie. His black hair never really turned gray; only a few strands had turned before he died at seventy-nine. He was tall, thin, and spare. He ate no lunch and very little breakfast, and probably weighed the same at seventy as he had at twenty. Yet he took no special exercise. His recreation was talking. And he was well equipped for that, with a deep, resonant baritone that never seemed to tire.

Pete took his defeat in 1932 philosophically. Things began looking up for him in November when F.D.R. was elected president. The New Deal was right down his alley, and he was delighted when the welfare state became law. From that time on, his only public activity consisted of delivering tributes to Abraham Lincoln each year on Lincoln's birthday. For a brief period, he was even able to set aside his ancient animosity against the Van Sweringens by becoming a consultant to the Cleveland Railway Company, which the Vans controlled before their final collapse. (He was persuaded to do this by George D. McGwinn, one of the City Club's "Soviet Table" aficionados, who had become president of the traction company.)

Witt was far ahead of his time when he advocated so many of the welfare-state measures during the LaFollette campaign in 1924; hence it gave him extra pleasure to see them enacted ten years later under Roosevelt.

The late Dr. Carl Wittke, the distinguished historian who wrote an admirable monograph on Witt in October 1949 (published by the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society) called him the "tribune of the people." I'd go further. Witt had a more profound and dynamic effect on the political life of Cleveland than any man of his generation. He was the Dutch uncle of the most politically volatile, independent big city in the country. He represented the angry taxpayer, the independent voter, the frustrated citizen, the confused little

guy who wanted less bunk, more service, and an honest answer from public officials.

Pete was an uncompromising solo operator, and perhaps it was just as well for him that he did not assume the responsibility of being mayor, for at some time he would have had to compromise. He went on, year after year, like a mahatma, almost out of the world at times, as if he saw a light at the end of the tunnel that ordinary men could not see. In biblical days, Pete, with his golden voice, his flair for salty phrases and expressive labels and his single-minded determination, would have been a major prophet. Although he refused to go to church, he was an honest-to-God Christian, who practiced the doctrine of loving his neighbor and forgiving his enemy.

Pete and Sally had three daughters, who carried on their father's liberal traditions and independence. The oldest, Hazel, who never married, was a social worker for years, then became the first head of the Policewomen's Bureau, where she was known for her spunk and independence. The second daughter, Norma, married Herbert C. Jackson, who became a tax expert for Pickands-Mather, the ancient iron ore and shipping firm, and rose steadily to become senior partner. He and Norma established a scholarship in honor of Witt at Western Reserve University. The third daughter, Helen, married Stuart Cummins, who was born on North Bass Island.

Pete and Sally celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1942. When he died in 1948, he insisted on no formal funeral service, and the only words spoken were a eulogy by his old friend and lawyer, Edgar S. Byers.

Burr Gongwer really came into his own with the election of Ray Miller as mayor. He had actually got the best of the 67/33 deal with Maschke on city hall jobs under Hopkins, for his council minority did not equal 33 percent, and he determinedly tried to hold on to them by keeping Hopkins as manager. With Morgan as manager throughout 1930-31. Gongwer's troops were out in the cold. But he had foreseen that Miller would have a brilliant future in politics. He directed the 1932 mayoralty campaign, and had a cabinet lineup ready

to go. It was heavy with men who had been assistants under Miller as prosecutor.

Gongwer was in solid, too, on the state level. A Democratic governor, George White, had defeated Governor Myers Y. Cooper in 1930, and was reelected in 1932. This was a welcome change to Gongwer. He had never really been cozy with the previous Democratic governor, Vic Donahey, who relied for advice more on personal friends in Cleveland. When Roosevelt became president in 1933, Gongwer really had it made on four governmental levels -- national, state, county, and city.

Walter Burr Gongwer was an astute, brilliant, and charming man, totally unlike the image of him the newspapers conjured up, one who did a great deal for the city through the first-rate candidates he supported for public office. Burr was not depicted by the papers as quite the ogre Maschke was, though he was every bit as clever an operator. One reason he got off more lightly was that he was often on the same political side as the *Press* and *Plain Dealer*, which tended to be Democratic nationally. Another was that the men he supported or associated with were favorites of the papers -- Newton Baker, Bill Hopkins, Carl Friebolin, and Governor James M. Cox. Such a pal of theirs couldn't be all that bad.

Gongwer was a reporter for the *Plain Dealer*, and a good one, before he forsook journalism for politics. He covered city hall when Johnson was mayor, and became so fascinated with Johnson's flair and genius that he quit the paper and became Johnson's secretary. From then on, for forty years, he was never out of politics. He idolized Johnson and named his only child Dorothy Johnson (Mrs. W. Raymond Barney) after the famous mayor.

Burr, though extremely articulate in private conversation, never made public speeches, as Maschke did in his later years. He was more retiring than Maschke, not a bridge player nor a golfer, but fully as much of an intellectual, a great reader of history and philosophy and somewhat

of a loner. One reason Gongwer never made speeches was that Baker was always

available to speak for the party, and Baker was one of the finest extemporaneous orators who ever mounted a rostrum.

Burr was election board clerk at one time, and later customs collector. When he left federal office, he went into the general insurance business with his close friend, Pierce D. Metzger. There he was highly successful in writing surety bonds for public officials and contractors who won public contracts, and fire insurance on public buildings. This, like the political practice of law, is lucrative and Gongwer was well off when he died. There is nothing underhanded or illegal about this kind of insurance business. The law requires that such insurance be provided. It could be bought from any insurance company, but actually always goes to old political friends of the officials (and who is an older friend than the county chairman?). This has gone on for years, and still does.

Gongwer was brilliantly profane in his description of people, particularly those he disliked. He knew where all the bodies were buried, and who was trustworthy. He was a handsome man of middle height, with thick curly brown hair, who wore prince-nez and smoked the best Havana cigars. He stocked his cellar with the best liquors, and made certain before prohibition came in that he had plenty to last through the drought. He was not a heavy drinker; he simply was a connoisseur of good brandy, whisky, and imported liqueurs, as he was of good cigars. And of politicians, too.

Like Maschke, Burr could always be relied on to tell the truth to newsmen, and to keep his word when he pledged it. He was greatly admired and respected by all the reporters who dealt with him; the editorial position of their papers, and occasional sharp criticism, did not bother him. He heartily disliked the Press, which was his most constant critic, and he never referred to it by any name except "The Harlot." (The Press never said anything kind about any political chairman. The word "boss" was always a dirty word.)

Gongwer's number one problem as chief honcho of the Democrats was the Irish. During his tenure as leader, practically all the Cleveland Irish were Democrats (and still are).

Most of the other ethnic groups were habitual, congenital Democrats, too -- the Poles, Czechs, Lithuanians, Slovenians, Italians, Germans, Hungarians, and so forth. They were larger in number but easier to direct than the Irish. Gongwer realized, however, that if his county and legislative ticket was to get anywhere in the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant suburbs, it had to be balanced, not entirely Irish. This was hard to do. Anyone with a familiar Irish name stood a good chance of beating the endorsed slate in the primary, and almost every biennium someone tried it.

Burr's way of coping with the Irish was to produce a slate, which was well balanced among all the ethnic groups -- and with Protestants and Jews, too -- and get the executive committee to approve it long before the primary filings. There was no way he could keep the ambitious, fractious Irish from running, but this way he discouraged a few.

One of the Irish he had the most trouble with was Martin L. Sweeney, who got his start from being a high official in the Fraternal Order of Eagles. Sweeney was easily elected municipal judge, and when Congressman Charles A. Mooney died, won the nomination for congress, which automatically meant election, for it was a safe, one-sided district. Mooney was a regular, but Sweeney wasn't, and he was a constant headache to Gongwer during Roosevelt's first term. He joined with Father Charles Coughlin, the contentious radio priest from Detroit, in continually denouncing President Roosevelt, and warning against getting into war. He was on the same kick when he ran against Mayor Ray Miller in the 1933 primary; and the bad feeling this fight engendered was a big factor in Miller's defeat by Harry L. Davis in November. Sweeney continued as a maverick for several years, until Michael A. Feighan, then an up-and-coming state legislator, beat Sweeney in a primary, with the help of the *Plain Dealer* and Press, who

were actively pro-Roosevelt and anti-Coughlin. Sweeney was never able to make a comeback.

Burr had none of the problems with blacks that the Democrats today are having. There were no black Democrats in the twenties, and their number did not increase substantially in Ohio until after World War II.

Gongwer's far-sightedness was best illustrated by the way he encouraged women to get actively into politics after women's suffrage became the national law. He did this through the brilliant organization of Mrs. Bernice S. Pyke, who had been a suffrage leader. Mrs. Pyke, a dynamic, handsome young woman with prematurely white hair, did so well among the ethnic groups, where women normally took a back seat, that she soon achieved a status in the organization second only to Gongwer.

Mrs. Pyke was one of the few women in politics who thought and acted like a man. She followed the Gongwer-Maschke pattern in leveling with reporters at all times, and her judgment on people was excellent. No Ohio woman before or since has developed such stature. When the movement to unhorse Gongwer developed later, it was directed as much against Mrs. Pyke as against Gongwer. Too many men were jealous of her power.

Gongwer was extremely wise in his choices of assistants for Miller and later Frank T. Cullitan when they were county prosecutors. Among the men who served as assistants in that office were Thomas A. Burke (later mayor), Frank J. Merrick (later safety director, common pleas and probate judge), Frank D. Celebrezze (later safety director and municipal judge), Neil T. McGill (later appellate judge), P. L. A. Leighley (later appellate judge), David Ralph Hertz (later traction commissioner), and Henry S. Brainard (later law director). All were exceptionally able public servants. His choices for other county offices were also excellent, and the performance of his men, with no public blemish, greatly assisted in keeping the Democrats continuously in office -- men like County

Commissioners John F. Curry, James A. Reynolds, and Joseph F. Gorman, Auditor John A. Zangerle, County Engineer John O. McWilliams, Coroner Samuel T. Gerber.

Gongwer differed from Maschke in one important respect -- he was a great hater, all his life. He was not one to forgive and

forget. He heartily disliked Witt, with whom he served under Tom Johnson; this was aggravated by Witt's continual drumfire against Baker, whom Gongwer worshiped. He disliked Martin Sweeney and never forgave him. He disliked Cyrus Locher, whom Governor Donahey appointed senator. He disliked Donahey himself, whom he regarded as an ignoramus and a phony. Eventually he came to dislike Miller, whom he had supported warmly for prosecutor and mayor, and considered him an ingrate for accepting the county chairmanship in the control fight that finally unhorsed Gongwer.

Gongwer was not a gregarious man. He lunched, usually alone, at a private table on an upper floor of Fischer-Rohr's restaurant every day for many years, and did not return to his office after lunch. In the evenings he enjoyed the solitude of his country place in Lyndhurst (now the site of part of the Acacia Country Club), where he could read and meditate on the cantankerousness of the human race, of which he had abundant evidence.

Cleveland was fortunate in the first third of this century to have had as bosses two such strong, honorable characters as Gongwer and Maschke. But it was fashionable then for newspapers to denounce all bosses on general principles.

The man whom Gongwer had brought along as prosecutor and helped elect as mayor, Ray T. Miller, served less than two years as mayor, and later became a long-time boss himself. Despite his excellent cabinet and eagerness to do a good job at city hall, Miller was in deep trouble from the start, largely because of the horrendous, insoluble welfare problem. It got worse by the day. Evictions were frequent, and Communist agitators regularly paraded and picketed around furniture of

evictees piled on the sidewalks. The federal government had not yet stepped in with its WPA make-work program and the whole burden of feeding the poor fell on the city administration. Miller, like Morgan before him, tried hard to cope with it and had the able assistance of lawyer Marc J. Grossman, (who took over the thankless job of trying to get the legislature to provide money after A. V. Cannon, who had knocked him-

self out trying, died). The efforts of these two wealthy lawyers on behalf of the destitute, were an unparalleled piece of unpaid, unselfish public service. The combination of the welfare trouble and Martin Sweeney trouble, doomed Miller to be a one-term mayor, right from the start.

Miller came here from Defiance, Ohio and soon after, the whole family of Miller brothers emigrated to Cleveland. All of them had played football for Knute Rockne at Notre Dame. Although Ray had not made the varsity, his younger brother Don was a star, one of the famous "Four Horsemen" and his older brother Harry had been a regular. Gongwer sensed early that Ray had the makings of a great candidate. He was young, handsome, broad-shouldered, aggressive, spoke vigorously and eloquently, and was eager to get into politics. Burr persuaded him to run for county prosecutor in 1926. That was a bad year for Democrats, and Miller lost to Edward C. Stanton, the steady Republican who had held office six years. Miller's time came two years later when he again ran for prosecutor and defeated Maschke's candidate, Arthur H. Day. He was reelected in 1930 and ripe to run for mayor in January 1932. Gongwer needed someone of the stature of Miller to ward off Peter Witt; it is doubtful if any other Democrat could have done it.

Miller was not a great administrator as mayor. The slambang, offensive style, which was so good in public and in court as a prosecutor, was not as well suited to his posture as mayor. His public relations were not apt. He couldn't give jobs to all who asked for them in the depression. So Sweeney gathered up all the rejected job-seekers and polled a big vote in the primary, not big enough, however, to place in the

runoff. His disgruntled followers still had the harpoon out for Mayor Miller and went over to Davis in November, so Davis won, at last.

In 1935, Miller ran again for mayor and lost in the runoff to Burton. Yet he was far from finished. He stayed in the political picture for more than thirty-five years, until he died in 1966. His law practice grew larger and larger, and ultimately he was in a position similar to that of Maschke, a lawyer with a primarily political practice, which expanded because he had become a boss.

Gongwer had launched Miller on his career, but as time went on, the party unfaithful, who could not get everything they wanted from Gongwer and Mrs. Pyke, began to urge Miller to unhorse Gongwer. In 1938, the troops elected Miller county chairman over Gongwer, and Burr and Mrs. Pyke retired bitterly to the sidelines, feeling they had been double-crossed by an ingrate. The death of Newton Baker about this time helped erode Gongwer's support. Exit Burr as boss.

Miller had a phenomenally long reign as boss. In the end, the same thing happened to him as had happened to Gongwer -- a protege he had supported took the job away from him. County Engineer Bert Porter, whom Miller had been very enthusiastic about and had backed for mayor unsuccessfully in 1953, was elected chairman with Miller's blessing in the early 1960s. He refused to let Miller act as regent, calling the shots behind the scenes. When Bert insisted on being his own boss, the party regulars went with Porter, and Miller was finished.

During Miller's long chairmanship, the Democrats controlled the White House, except for eight years of President Eisenhower. The city hall and statehouse most of that time were technically Democratic, too, but Miller was usually at odds with Governor Lausche. Ray was still not able to call all the shots at city hall, either, after Tom Burke succeeded Lausche as mayor, and even less so when Anthony J. Celebrezze succeeded Burke. Celebrezze felt he owed nothing to Miller, since Miller had tried to beat him. When Ralph S. Locher succeeded Celebrezze, he too was largely independent of Miller, and Miller tried vainly to beat him in 1963.

Miller had many business connections with political overtones. He represented several big unions, which had become increasingly powerful under Roosevelt and Truman. He had a big interest in radio station WERE, which was then broadcasting the Browns football and the Indians baseball games.

His law partner, Don Hornbeck, a Republican, was secretary of the baseball club. His wealthy corporate clients were numerous.

As Miller's practice grew, so did his family. Six children were born, and as they matured, Ray nudged them into politics. His oldest son, Ray T. Jr. became a state senator. Ray's younger brother, Creighton, was one of the prime movers in Telerama, cable-TV company. His brother, Don, was appointed federal referee in bankruptcy.

Ray was a hospitable, convivial man, who loved to entertain large parties at his big house on South Park Boulevard, Shaker Heights. He was at his most magnanimous while presiding over the mixing of a Caesar salad, pouring in each ingredient with much ceremony. He got along famously with all the political writers and like Maschke and Gongwer, told them the truth. He was blunt and undiplomatic in dealing with the troops, but they always knew where he stood.

Newton D. Baker, who was the official head of the Cleveland Democrats during the twenties and well into the thirties, was one of the few Cleveland political figures to become a nationally known statesman. He was called by President Wilson to become secretary of war before the United States got into World War I, and bore the entire responsibility for mobilizing an army from scratch, setting up the draft, and sending an expeditionary force of one million men to fight in France. After the war, drained emotionally and physically, he returned to Cleveland, but he remained active after Wilson's death.

He was the unquestioned leader of Ohio Democrats at national conventions and kept such close contact with the national scene that in 1932, he had strong backing in both north and south for the presidential

nomination. Had Roosevelt not been nominated on an early ballot, Baker stood a good chance of being chosen as a compromise candidate.

By any standard, Baker was one of the great men of his time. After he returned to Cleveland, he was always in demand to hold unpaid, nonpolitical civic jobs, and he continued to take a strong hand in Democratic party affairs, for he be-

lieved that good citizens ought to involve themselves in organized politics and government. He was revered by all newspaper men who came in contact with him, because he was simple, unpretentious, sincere and always approachable, a perfect example of the fact that the biggest men in government, industry, and the professions are the easiest to deal with. It isn't always easy to get through their cordon of secretaries and assistants, but when you meet the big man face to face, he goes direct to the point and gives a straight answer. He will expect you to treat all confidential matters confidentially, but he puts on no airs, doesn't give out the old double-talk. This was Newton D. Baker.

Baker's unblemished principles made him the ideal teammate for the pragmatic Gongwer. Baker was always available to pronounce the principles, and take the high road, while Gongwer took the low road and attended to the patronage, the endorsements, the nuts and bolts of party management, without having to make speeches. Gongwer idolized Baker, but he also appreciated how useful Baker was to him as a party boss. Baker held the official position of chairman of the central committee, but Gongwer was chairman of the executive committee. Baker made statements and speeches. Gongwer made decisions and backed candidates. Baker approved completely of Gongwer's decisions; he had no illusions about the necessity for a party boss. The Democrats were lucky to have them both; the Republicans had no such elder statesman as Baker. They left all the problems to Maschke, who made no pretense to being a statesman.

Baker came to Cleveland from Martinsburg, West Virginia, where he grew up as a Democrat; his ancestors had been Confederates. He joined Tom L. Johnson early, and was city solicitor, then law director.

When Johnson died, Baker was the natural heir to run for mayor. When Wilson chose him for secretary of war, Baker was known as a pacifist. Wilson was not concerned about that; he needed a man of integrity.

When he returned to Cleveland, Baker was tired, middle-aged, disillusioned, and nearly broke. He had spent so many

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years in government that he had had no opportunity to accumulate money. So he organized a new law firm with two old Democratic friends -- Joseph C. Hostetler, who had originally come from a farm in Tuscarawas County, and Thomas L. Sidlo, a bright young man who had been in Baker's cabinet as service director. The firm soon attracted affluent corporate clients, and today is still one of the most influential and largest in Cleveland (although no one named Baker, Hostetler or Sidlo is still with the firm). *PD* editor Erie Hopwood was a close friend and client of Newton Baker; so was Elbert H. Baker (no relation), chairman of the *Plain Dealer* board.

Baker had a small, slight body, but a big mind. He was only a few inches more than five feet tall, was slender and lightweight. In addition to an amazing intellectual capacity, he had a deep, melodious voice and an uncanny ability to speak in complete, convincing sentences without a note in front of him. He simply knew exactly what he wanted to say, and how to say it; and he said it in the most mellow tones, which came out without the least bit of phoniness, unlike most orators.

Baker was a most approachable man, completely without deviousness or stuffiness. It was always easy to get to see him; all that was needed was to get his secretary to make a date. The secretary was usually a young law student or a newly graduated lawyer. (One of his most competent and popular secretaries was Henry S. Brainard, who later became city law director and after that, counsel for the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company.)

Baker was so short that he literally could, and would, curl up in a big office chair, and tuck one foot under him. He regularly smoked a

big-bowled pipe. He was calm and even-tempered and went out of his way to be kind to young people. He was never without a book near at hand, usually some tome on history or philosophy. He was continually learning, and never wanted to waste a moment. He was often seen in a hotel corridor, waiting his turn to speak, quietly reading a book. He had plenty of books -- not just law books, but reading-type books -- in his office.

Everyone who heard Baker speak marveled at how he could extemporaneously come forth with the most cogent, well-reasoned, well-phrased arguments, without notes. He had such mental discipline that he arrayed his thoughts beforehand and knew how to express them for the most telling effect. He never prepared a text.

He was a tremendously effective courtroom lawyer. Although he did not appear often in court, when he did it was worth paying admission to hear. One such time was when he defended Editor Louis B. Seltzer and Chief Editorial Writer Carlton K. Matson of the Press against a charge of contempt of court laid on them by Common Pleas Judge Fred P. Walther. The Press had severely rebuked Judge Walther for giving a light slap on the wrist to a defendant in a gambling case that involved Sheriff John M. Sulzmann (sheriffs were always in the grease with Cleveland newspapers). Walther took offense and cited the two editors for contempt. Baker, who was the Press's lawyer as well as the *Plain Dealer's*, appeared personally to defend them.

Baker's cross-examination was superb, and his demolition of the judge's reasons for citing the editors was icy, logical, and devastating. He went about as far as a lawyer could without saying in so many words that the judge was incompetent, ill-advised, or both. He made Walther seem like a pretentious fool. Finally, the irritated judge said, "Mr. Baker, are you expressing contempt for this court?" Baker, poker-faced, said firmly, "No, your honor, I am trying to conceal it." (Walther found the editors guilty, but the court of appeals, after hearing Baker, freed the two.)

Baker used to enjoy telling of the sage advice he got from an old-timer, a brilliant courtroom lawyer, Matt Excell, when he was just a kid breaking in. Excell told him what emphasis to use in addressing a jury. "If the facts are on your side, argue the law," advised Excell. "If the law is on your side, argue the facts. If neither the law nor the facts are on your side, confuse them, Newtie, confuse them." Such smart tactics are still being used.

Baker was a man of broad culture. He was a music lover and supporter of the Cleveland Orchestra. (Mrs. Baker was an accomplished concert pianist.) He was deeply interested in education, and was offered the presidency of both Ohio State University and Western Reserve, but he preferred to stay with his law practice. He did serve as chairman of the board of trustees at Reserve, and was also on the board at Ohio State. The Newton D. Baker Hall now contains the dean's and other administrative offices at Reserve, and there is a Baker Hall, a men's dormitory, at Ohio State.

Cleveland lost its number one citizen when his heart gave out in 1937.

(His son, Newton D. (Jack) Baker II, has been administrator of the Lakeview Cemetery Association for several years, and his wife Phyllis, is active in Cleveland Orchestra and charitable efforts.)

CHAPTER FIVE

The Terrible Thirties: 1930-1935

The terrible thirties were a time of real misery for everyone. The euphoria of the twenties had been so high that people had lost their sense of balance. Speculative frenzy and get-rich-quick ambition distorted their vision, and they forgot the old adage that what goes up must come down. They should have been warned when the Florida land boom of the early twenties collapsed with a crash after overnight fortunes had been made in the sale of options on vacant lots, often sight unseen. The speculation in Cleveland continued long after that, and when the bubble burst in the thirties, the downward spin was sickening. The community went into a depressive spell that took it as far below normal as its manic spell had taken it above normal.

The first inkling of bigger troubles to come was the collapse of the Standard Bank in 1931. It had originally been organized as the Engineers National Bank by the principal railroad union. Around the time when Senator LaFollette was organizing his Progressive party, the railroad brotherhoods were flying high, and had so much available in surplus funds that they decided to challenge the Establishment on its own ground. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers was considered a conservative union, but it, too, was pixilated by the Florida boom, and bought a large tract of land at Venice,

Florida, which it developed into well-planned lots with paved streets and sewers, and prepared for Utopia, when the engineers would retire there and live in a model community. The bank had put up money for this.

The other Cleveland bank executives naturally took a dim view of this rebel, but it continued to attract depositors. Yet its operators believed it would thrive even more if it dissociated its name and management from the union connection, so it was reorganized as the

Standard Bank, this time with a state charter. Its loan policy became more free-wheeling. When the terrible thirties arrived, and borrowers could not pay up, word got around town swiftly that the Standard was in trouble. Depositors began to pull out, and soon after the second big stock market crash in 1930, the bank closed, and assessed its stockholders. Its president was later convicted of fraud.

While the Standard Bank did not have a large percentage of the community's deposits, compared to the big three, Cleveland Trust, Union Trust, and Guardian Trust, its collapse made their depositors itchy. Rumors of trouble began to fly daily, to such an extent that Harris Creech, president of Cleveland Trust, had to go into the lobby of the main office and make a speech to several hundred people waiting to withdraw savings to assure them their money was safe and they could have it all; spectacularly, he brought in bagsful of cash to show them. This stopped the run, but it did not wholly reassure the community, for all over the state, small banks were closing. The panic had started in the smaller cities of the surrounding states, had spread to Detroit, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, New York, and was getting no better fast. The principal trouble was lack of liquidity. When mortgages on real estate came due, banks refused to renew without large premiums. The borrowers could not pay, the whole structure tightened up, and small depositors often could not get their cash out; and by the time Franklin Roosevelt became president in 1933, the crisis was nationwide. One of his first acts was to close all banks, then permit some of them to reopen with permission of the treasury.

The period when the banks closed paralyzed the entire country, not only Cleveland, for several weeks. Anyone who had even a small amount of cash was lucky. Travelers were stranded; they could not get money for their travelers checks. Merchants would not accept checks to pay bills. Employees at the *Plain Dealer* for several weeks considered their employers marvelous because they paid in cash, rather than checks. (This feeling of gratitude did not last long. A few weeks later, the paper cut all salaries 25 percent. It was the second wage cut in six months; the

first was for 15 percent.) This same pattern was followed by employers generally. Persons who had not been laid off had their pay severely slashed. The only consolation was that prices for food and clothing had actually dropped. It was possible to get a decent dinner at a restaurant for seventy-five cents, and a suit for thirty-five dollars. Anyone with five dollars in cash was considered rich. Some of the oldest and best blue-chip stocks on the New York Stock Exchange were selling at from two dollars to five dollars a share, but few ordinary people had money to buy them. They needed their meager cash for household expenses.

The Cleveland Trust Company and Central National Bank were allowed to reopen in March 1933, but the Union and Guardian, which had large deposits, were ordered to remain closed, and put in charge of liquidators, who spent the next ten years sorting out the assets. Ultimately, the Union paid off at 100 percent, and the Guardian at 85 percent, but meanwhile millions in deposits were frozen, and dozens of companies as well as individuals were up against it. The anticipated results were not long in coming. A committee from the Ohio Senate began investigations and hearings, at which it was disclosed that heavy borrowings by the Van Sweringens had siphoned off great chunks of funds. The county prosecutor got into the act and the grand jury indicted several officials of banks and savings and loan companies. The president of the Guardian Bank was convicted. So were some executives of savings and loans and mortgage companies. Real estate companies that had sold hundreds of lots on land contracts, in the wide open spaces of Parma, University Heights, Euclid and Madison, had

long since gone into receivership. One of the few businesses that was thriving was that of lawyers, who took over liquidations, trusteeships, receiverships, or acted as attorneys for receivers.

Delinquent taxes, particularly the special assessments against vacant lots for sewer and water lines installed long before any building took place, rose to fantastic heights. It was years before these were paid off, and the legislature passed a law to permit local governments to borrow temporarily against the possibility of their ultimate payment.

No one was untouched. Either he had lost his job or had his wages cut. He couldn't get his money out of the bank, or borrow on his frozen deposits. He borrowed on his insurance, if he had any. He couldn't sell his house or the vacant lot he had invested in, for no one else had any cash either. If he was lucky, he dragged along from week to week or lived with better-fixed relatives. If he was unlucky, he went on relief, and eventually wound up raking leaves in make-work projects.

The morale of Ben Sapp, the ordinary citizen, was at its lowest state, not only because of his own predicament, but because public officials had so often turned corrupt. Prohibition had eroded the moral fiber of the entire nation. Bootlegging and racketeering had become billion-dollar businesses. Speakeasies were heavily patronized and paid off the police for protection, as the bootleggers and gambling joint operators did. Justices of the peace in Ohio, who were in theory judicial or law enforcement officers, were engaged in a legal racket of their own; they hired squads of goons to raid the homes of ignorant foreigners, seize homemade liquor, and haul them across town to kangaroo courts where the justices imposed heavy fines, out of which they paid the raiders.

A Cleveland councilman, William E. Potter, who had been suspected of blackmailing racketeers, was found murdered, and the mystery has never been really solved. The newspaper coverage of the Potter murder was lurid and for a while seemed to divert the public from their money troubles, but that was only temporary.

The Cleveland newspapers, all three of them, were in a state of turmoil, too, and what happened then had far-reaching results twenty to twenty-five years later.

The News, even before hard times cut advertising revenue, had not been able to cope with the increasingly aggressive Press, and was ready to fold, or sell to out-of-towners, when the *Plain Dealer* came to its rescue in 1934. (Hearst and big newsprint companies had made offers.) The *PD* formed a holding company, The Forest City Publishing

Company, to take over both the News and *Plain Dealer*. Dan Hanna, Jr. was given a minority interest in preferred stock, but had no power of decision. This was intended as a fire-alarm rescue, but it turned out to be a twenty-five year headache. The only immediate change in top management was the appointment of Earle Martin as editor. But Martin produced no miracles; his most memorable accomplishment was to design a new type format. It had no effect on the drooping circulation of the News, and the *PD* continued to pick up the deficit.

The *Plain Dealer* was also having an upheaval in the business office. George M. Rogers, general manager since 1920, became ill and spent less and less time at the office. John S. McCarrens, a former executive at the May Company, who had joined the *PD* as business manager before the crash, had to take over Rogers's duties as well as his own, including the negotiations to rescue the News. Inevitably a showdown came and McCarrens was made general manager, and Rogers faded out.

McCarrens was a tight man with a nickel. He was a silent type whose favorite philosophical observation was "most people talk too much." His orientation was entirely on the business side, and he understood little of the editorial department's operations. He was, however, the top man in the corporate structure, outranking Paul Bellamy, who was still listed as managing editor and did not receive the full rank of editor-in-chief until several years after Hopwood's death. This and the continual need for economy, cramped Paul's style; the business office was more of a governing force than it had been under Hopwood and Rogers.

The Press was having trouble with loss of revenue, too, but its business manager was a shrewd, capable man named John G. Meilink. He and McCarrens developed a close personal relationship. They were both hard bargainers, both active Catholic laymen, and even looked somewhat alike physically — short, stocky, broad-shouldered, forceful. They knew the economics of publishing, and they also knew how to make a deal. In one they made, the Press clearly got the better of it, and it hung like a millstone around the *Plain Dealer's* neck for thirty years.

The *Plain Dealer* had acquired ownership of radio station WHK shortly after it took over the News. The *PD* could have used WHK to its advantage, broadcasting local news as the big dailies in New York and Chicago were starting to do. But the *PD* refrained. The reason was that Meilink and McCarrens had a gentleman's agreement: if the *PD* would not use its radio to promote the paper, the Press, through the Scripps-Howard chain, would guarantee an adequate supply of newsprint at a discount, for both the *Plain Dealer* and News. The Press had no radio station of its own. It was a secret agreement, clearly in restraint of trade, and one that the justice department today would have forbidden. However it was ironclad then, and all the editorial employees of the *Plain Dealer* and News were forbidden to appear on any radio programs (or later on TV, either). The Press employees likewise could not appear on other radio stations. The embargo was complete, and it gave great competitive advantage to the Press, because radio was becoming a big national force just then.

Some of the better-known editorial employees (who wrote columns) complained mightily, because they had seen an opportunity to pick up extra income from radio, which would have helped in the depression. But they were told firmly no. They knew there was a mysterious agreement between the papers not to use radio, but did not know of the newsprint angle. This agreement was the first of a long line of colossal mistakes made by *Plain Dealer* management. (More about this in later chapters.)

The Press was improving rapidly during the thirties, now that Editor Seltzer had achieved the permanent tenure his predecessors had lacked. Despite the formation of the first chapter of the Newspaper Guild, Seltzer's rapport with his staff was excellent. In fact, he had them believing he favored formation of the Guild and would have joined it himself, were he still a reporter.

The rivalry between Seltzer and Bellamy endured for twenty-five years, and had much to do with the politics and development (or lack of it) of the community of Greater Cleveland in the fifties and sixties.

Paul Bellamy, who succeeded his good friend and mentor, Hopwood, as editor of the *Plain Dealer* 23 March 1928, was one of the all-time greats of American journalism. He remained as editor twenty-five years.

Bellamy was born into writing. His father, Edward Bellamy, was author of the prophetic book, *Looking Backward*, which accurately predicted the wonders of science in the next generation. His grandfather was a Protestant minister, so Paul had an early education in the Bible as well as Shakespeare, and habitually made biblical allusions in his otherwise earthy conversation. He went to Harvard after graduating from the Chicopee Falls (Massachusetts) high school, and his first newspaper job was on the Springfield Union. He went west to the *Plain Dealer* in 1907. His rise there was phenomenal, for he was made city editor at twenty-five.

From the beginning, Bellamy had not only the respect of his staff but also its affection. They knew him for an imaginative, hard-working, brilliant man who could do anything better than the staff, but he managed to be fair and maintain his sense of humor while driving them. The staff called him Uncle Paul. He was an earthy man, whose language could be picturesquely sulphurous. He also had a fabulous capacity for eating, drinking, and conviviality.

When World War I broke out, he enlisted as a private, was sent to Officers Training Camp and ended up as a first lieutenant. When the war ended, old friend Hopwood offered him a wider

horizon, now that Hopwood was number one in editorial operation. He kept Paul in reserve as special writer, operating out of the front office, until the big reorganization of 1920 permitted Hopwood to name Bellamy as managing editor.

Hopwood and Bellamy made a great team, and it was understood that Paul would succeed to the top job in due time (but no one expected it so soon). Hopwood had already interested Bellamy in the American Society of Newspaper Editors, which he had helped found, and Paul had

made a memorable speech about integrity of the press at the ASNE convention in 1924.

Because of the hours he had to work, 3:00 P.M. until midnight, Bellamy's social friends were mostly other *Plain Dealer* men, with whom he played tennis (badly) and went fishing or hiking (enthusiastically). His closest buddy was Carl D. Friebolin, the witty writer of the City Club's Anvil Revues. Friebolin, the son of a Lutheran minister, found much in common with Bellamy's religious upbringing; and neither of them cared a hoot about organized religion. Bellamy appraised most of the political hotshots through Friebolin's eyes, and vice versa. They were jointly active in the City Club and each had served as its president. Bellamy liked nothing better than to spend weekends at Friebolin's country place at Vermilion, sitting up all night talking.

Bellamy became the top editor at an unfortunate time. Within two years after he took over, the stock market crashed, the depression began, and banks began to fail. Governor George White, a Democrat elected in 1930, was a confidante of both Friebolin and Bellamy, and in the extremely touchy days of 1931-32, when things were really getting desperate, White used to phone Paul almost every afternoon to tell him privately what was happening to Ohio banks. It was a time for extreme care in editing, and cool heads. The Cleveland newspapers stopped publishing quotations on bank stocks. Rumors ran like wildfire as small banks began to buckle in central Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan under the strain of unredeemed mortgages and unsecured commercial paper.

During one of these daily crises, Paul, after a phone confab with Governor White, called all his news executives together to see if anyone could come up with a workable idea to keep the economy from going over Niagara Falls. He went around the room, asking each man to pop off. As is usual in every big newspaper office, there were twelve different opinions, ranging from far left to far right and shading in-between. Bellamy was getting plenty of opinion but little workable advice. Finally he rose, blew a big gust from his cigar, and swore

mightily. "Jesus Christ!" he exploded. "What wouldn't I give for a good yesman!" Bellamy really didn't mean that. He actively encouraged dissent from his staff. Contrary opinion was one thing he deeply cherished, and what's more published. He knew that newspaper guys were by nature ferociously independent, and the way to get the most out of them was to let them spout off.

The *Plain Dealer* had historically supported Democrats for president, but divided its endorsements pretty evenly in local and state elections. In 1940 Bellamy could not stomach a third term for Roosevelt and backed Wendell Willkie, the Republican. But before and during the war, the *PD* was one of FDR's strongest supporters, and after the war, was equally strong for President Truman's Marshall plan. Bellamy was always sturdily patriotic and warmly congratulated all his staff who went into military service. He envied them when they went overseas.

In the middle of the war, July 1943, a sudden tragedy moved Bellamy into the number one spot in the *Plain Dealer* executive suite. McCarrens, who had been general manager for ten years, was murdered in his office by a demented man, Herbert Kobrak, who then killed himself. Sterling Graham, who had been advertising manager, was appointed general manager, but it was tacitly understood that Bellamy was to be chief executive officer on all big policy matters. For the next ten years, he remained at this apex. Graham dealt with business office problems, and I. F. Freiburger of the Cleveland Trust Company, the key man of the various Holden family trusts,

became board chairman and preeminent in the larger financial decisions.

Bellamy long before that had moved into national prominence, as president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He remained active and particularly enjoyed attending its conventions with three cronies, all of whom had also been presidents of ASNE -- Grove Patterson of the *Toledo Blade* (who had been a *Plain Dealer* reporter at the same time as Paul), Marvin Creager of the *Milwaukee Journal*, and Donald Sterling of the *Portland Journal*. They called themselves the Four Horsemen and were very convivial.

Another event took place in 1943 that distressed Bellamy acutely. The *PD* editorial employees voted to join the Newspaper Guild. The Guild had lost in two previous votes. This time, since so many regulars had joined the military and subs had taken their places, the subs, figuring their tenure was less secure, voted to join the union, which the Press and News had had to deal with for ten years. So now the *PD* had to negotiate a salary schedule and working conditions. Uncle Paul considered this a personal affront. He had long regarded the editorial staff as his family, and he could not understand how men he knew had personal affection for him could do this to him. But times were changing and the younger men and war-exempts felt less close to the boss. Paul insisted on negotiating personally with the Guild, although all the other unions negotiated with a labor relations specialist who represented all three papers. He disliked having employees of the Press and News sitting in on contract talks for the *Plain Dealer*, but he could not avoid it now. In later years after the war, when the contracts really had to be slugged out, they took a tremendous amount of his time. It was only in the last couple of years before Paul was retired that Graham insisted that lawyers, rather than Bellamy and W. G. Vorpe, the Sunday editor, negotiate with the Guild. (The Guild in the very beginning got the forty-hour, five-day week, with time and a half for overtime, written into the contract.)

Bellamy was one of the most brilliant conversationalists

anywhere. He was forever quoting the Bible, Shakespeare, and the principal Greek and Roman philosophers, and his choice of language was phenomenally accurate, whether he was talking or writing. Unfortunately, after he became an executive he seldom wrote again, but he could do it brilliantly and forcefully when occasion demanded. His stories about his trip through devastated Germany after the war, and later a round-the-world trip, were classic jobs of colorful reporting. Not only was his language lively, but it was often blue, picturesquely sulphurous, and pertinently obscene. No one was ever at a loss about what he meant.

One of his most famous remarks came when he and a group of other top editors were observing the test of an army jet plane at Eglin

Field in the late days of World War II. The jets were still top secret and hadn't yet been in combat; most people didn't know anything about their development. Paul was standing in a group that included Ogden Reid of the New York Herald Tribune and Arthur H. Sulzberger, Sr., of the *New York Times*, when the fast plane sped down the runway, leaving a trail of flame as it took off. Bellamy leaned over toward Reid. "Ogden," he said. "If you had as much fire as that shooting out of your ass, the Herald Tribune would be a better paper."

Paul spent many years on the Associated Press board of directors, and took a dim view of it when Judge Learned Hand of New York ruled that the AP had to furnish its services to radio stations as well as newspapers. He was a close friend and adviser of Kent Cooper, for many years the AP general manager.

He ran the show himself at the *PD* and ran it excellently but he did not delegate much responsibility. He was seldom away for long periods. Even when he did get away on vacation, a sort of Egyptian curse seemed to follow him, and drag him back to work. Three times when he was in Florida or the Bahamas, sudden death or some other crisis caused him to hurry back to Cleveland. One was the sudden death of Ben P. Bole, the Holden son-in-law who had been president of the Forest City Publishing Company. Another was when his oldest son,

John, a lawyer, who had been suffering from polio but was supposed to be recovering in an iron lung, died suddenly. Another time World War II broke out, while he was on a honeymoon in Nassau with his lively, gregarious second wife, Pat (Mrs. Mary Mitchell Henry), and they had to hustle back to the American mainland on a fishing boat. The only time he got away for protracted periods were on his round-the-world flight and postwar trip to Germany.

This continual attention to duty, plus the strains of wartime, eventually eroded Bellamy's phenomenally rugged constitution, and just before the war's end, he began to decline physically. It wasn't obvious right away, though he had once collapsed in a restaurant. It seemed later that he may have suffered some small strokes, which caused a character

change as well as physical disability. Yet he steadfastly refused to admit there was anything wrong with him. It was a ghastly irony that the place where he was hit hardest was in his speech. The man with the brilliant wit and extensive vocabulary found that he couldn't get his words out when he tried. It was as if invisible wires were holding his tongue; when the words did come out, they were often muddled and hard to understand. He also began to have trouble getting his feet and legs untracked, to start to walk forward, and often stumbled and fell headlong. But it did not seem to embarrass Paul. He was serene and uncomplaining, as if nothing had happened. Pat drove him to work and he didn't miss a day.

Bellamy had different ideas from Seltzer as to how an editor should best promote his paper. Bellamy's door was always open to any and all, to those with panaceas, to candidates and officeholders of all political persuasions. He gave advice freely and it was sought by national, state, and local officials. He dominated editorial policy, but he refrained from going out to speak to small groups locally, or getting involved as an officeholder in local civic affairs. Seltzer's opposing theory was that he should circulate among the local groups, make speeches to them, and hold office in such organizations as the welfare federation and convention bureau.

The *Plain Dealer* at this period held a considerable circulation lead over the Press, and had a Sunday paper, too, which the Press didn't. Bellamy gave the impression that he was trying to ignore Seltzer's activities as a gadfly around town, and using the paper's influence editorially to change and improve things, rather than by making personal appearances. He was ten years older than Seltzer, had gone to Harvard, was widely read. Seltzer left school after the eighth grade, went to work as a newspaper office boy soon after, and whenever he wrote anything it was in short, simple sentences.

Bellamy felt that his evenings belonged to him and he enjoyed spending them with Friebolin, William F. McDermott, the *PD's* dramatic critic and columnist, and other intellectuals and bon vivants. He enjoyed

the theater, visits to New York and Washington and travel in Europe. Seltzer spent his evenings talking to PTA meetings, sokols, turnvereins, and church groups. He concentrated on Cleveland.

Bellamy felt he had enough to do to maintain the editorial quality of the paper during the stringencies of the early thirties; and after the *Plain Dealer* took over the ownership of the News and radio station WHK, he was needed to advise on their operations, too. After McCarrens was murdered in 1943, he felt the additional burden of helping to make important decisions for the business office.

The Press was making big circulation gains during this period, and Seltzer himself was becoming more and more an important factor in Cleveland politics. Yet Bellamy at no time deviated from his long-term formula. He encouraged independent opinion among his staff and continued his open-door policy (some of his subordinates thought the door was too far open to crackpots, ax-grinders and nonjournalists who persuaded him to publish articles that were suspect as to accuracy). Yet he remained fully in charge until 1953, when he was retired and made editor emeritus. Though he continued to come to the office after that, he was not asked for advice. He died suddenly 12 April 1956, while eating dinner at home. His son, Peter, who had worked for the News, went to the *Plain Dealer* after the News was sold and became entertainment editor. He also had two other children, Richard, a Cleveland public relations man, and Mrs. Joan May of Connecticut, by his first wife, Marguerite Stark.

Bellamy was not only a great editor, a brilliant mind, and a powerful influence on Cleveland, but a compassionate, patient, warm human being, capable of great affection who, as he often said, "suffered fools gladly."

National prohibition ended in early 1933, and for a short while the unexpected access to good liquor that would not blind you took the mind of the citizens off the bank closings, the welfare mess, and the low state of politics. Within a few months, the state of Ohio set up state liquor

stores to sell legitimate hootch by the bottle, and began to license restaurants and bars to sell it by the drink. The system still exists today. The principal difference between today and the pre-prohibition era is this: in 1919, the interiors of bars were shut off from the street by swinging doors, they served free lunch, women were not admitted to them, and liquor was sold by private stores. Today doors of bars open on the street, there is no free lunch, and women are regular customers, both at bars, cocktail lounges, and state stores.

In late 1933, the Ray Miller mayoralty fizzled ingloriously to an end, and Harry L. Davis won the election, toward which he had been pointing for six years. Davis had been elected mayor three times before, was elected governor once (1920) and defeated once (1924). He had an uncanny sense of political timing, of knowing when the auspices for success were good, and he made the most of it.

Davis was an excellent example of how a handsome face and figure and a warm handshake often lead to high public office. He had a winning platform personality and a streak of gray across the front of his hair, and these carried him far. He flourished thirty to forty years before today's era of TV, but he would have done just as well on TV, for he looked good and talked well. He went a long way on a record that showed more success during campaigns than after he took office.

Davis was not a prophet with a cause, as were Tom Johnson,

Peter Witt, and Newton Baker. Johnson and Witt beat the drums for single tax, against giant corporations, and for municipal ownership of traction lines and light plants. Baker beat the drum for the League of Nations. Davis was the political quarterback, the opportunist, who profited by the mistakes of the opposition, who knew when to pass and when to run. His objective was to get elected, and enjoy the power of office, not to reform the world.

In some ways, Davis can be compared to his fellow handsome Ohioan, Warren G. Harding, who rose to become United States Senator, then president, by being in the right place at the right time. Davis began

young in politics and hung around a long time, and plenty of people remembered him favorably.

As governor, Davis recommended a reform, the streamlining of the state government, and the legislature, overwhelmingly Republican, passed it. This consolidated various departments under the governor as an appointed cabinet, and gave absolute responsibility to the governor, rather than multimember boards and commissions. Political science professors applauded it, but the Democrats, then the "outs," denounced it as a "ripper bill"; however, they did not tear it apart later when they came to power. The structure still exists, after fifty years.

Davis spent his young manhood in the southeast steel mill area called Newburgh, a place heavily settled by Welsh immigrants. He got into politics first by winning the job of city treasurer. He ran for mayor in 1915 against Witt at exactly the right time, and Witt beat himself. Then, after Davis was in office, the United States entered the war, and he merely had to wave the flag to win reelection in 1917 and 1919. In each campaign, Davis became more and more skillful as a speaker and crowd pleaser.

Davis correctly sensed there would be a Republican landslide in 1920, and it took him in as governor. He saw another landslide coming in 1924, and was right, but this time Democrat Donahey beat him, despite it. He went into the insurance business, and bided his time, figuring he could come back to

public office in Cleveland. It took a while, however. His first effort, to dump the manager plan and proportional representation, was defeated by a coalition of Maschke, Gongwer, preachers, and newspapers. A second attempt failed in 1928, and a third, in which he joined with Witt's disciples, was also beaten by City Manager Hopkins and the papers. But he hung on, figuring that he'd come back eventually, after Hopkins was ousted. By 1933, his patience had paid off, his time to recoup arrived and he was back in again as mayor. He became county chairman as well, since Maschke had resigned.

As Maschke had anticipated, Davis took complete charge of all patronage, put his own cronies in, and thumbed his nose at the newspapers. But he was in hot water all the time. The city could not raise enough money to meet payrolls, and Davis had to issue scrip and submit deficiency levies to have any cash on hand. He had as little luck in finding funds for poor relief as Morgan and Miller had. The police department was shot through with favoritism and Detective Captain Emmett Potts ran the show rather than Chief George J. Matowitz, who was a figurehead held over from Morgan's regime. Gambling joints and bookie spots, obviously protected, sprang up by the dozen. The hotter the heat from the newspapers, the less Mayor Davis stayed in town. He took long mysterious trips.

The clincher came when his safety director, Martin J. Lavelle, who had been a police captain, was present at a wild drinking party on a boat in Lake Erie, during which a girl fell overboard and was drowned. Lavelle failed to report the death and it was not discovered by the newspapers until several day later.

When Davis ran for reelection in 1935, he had to be on the defensive. He seemed to have lost his old platform magic. The newspapers blasted him; the Maschke Republicans, whom Davis had fired, supported Harold Burton; and there was obviously no answer to the sad condition of the city finances, the political police department, and the mayor's frequent absences. Davis's two years became a classic example of boo-

dling and incompetence. It set a new low in maladministration. It was even worse than his previous three terms and it was nearly thirty years before the city saw an administration that turned out to be as much of a disaster -- that of Carl B. Stokes, who became mayor in 1967. Davis got what he wanted. He had come back, but he couldn't hang on.

In the primary, Harold H. Burton, who had been a state representative, then Hopkins's and Dan Morgan's law director, had the strong backing of the American Legion (of which he was the former county commander), business groups, the newspapers, and the

disgruntled Maschke Republicans, whom Davis had thrown out. Maschke himself came out of retirement to take a hand again, and this time he had a candidate who was a new face, had the image of an independent and a fine record in public office. Davis ran third in the primary, and that was the end of him politically.

Now the stage was set for a totally different type of mayor, a long succession of men who had political labels but were independent enough to rate strong newspaper support, who paid more attention to editors than to party chairmen. The election of Burton, the first of such mayors, seemed to perk up the spirits of the town in the thirties.

There was plenty of cleaning up that needed to be done. While the new Burton regime cleared the stench out of city hall, the school board, which for years had been rated as one of the best and most nonpolitical in the country, had turned political. Candidates with euphonious Irish names and little education ran for it, and beat the men and women who for years had been simply urged to run as a civic duty by a citizens committee headed by Carl Friebolin. For a while these latecomers achieved a four to three majority of the board, but the persistence and pestiferousness of one man finally routed them, and kept the quality of the school system high as long as he was on the board. That man was Alfred A. Benesch.

Al Benesch was one of the young lawyers drawn to the gung-ho idealism of Mayor Tom Johnson in the early 1900s; encouraged by Johnson, he ran for the city council. He was

defeated twice, but temporary defeat never bothered Benesch at any age, and in 1911, he was elected councilman-at-large. The next year, Mayor Baker appointed him safety director.

Benesch immediately hit the headlines by issuing orders to the police to close the city's famous redlight district on Hamilton Avenue. A great uproar naturally resulted. Madams, backed by letters from leading citizens, called on Benesch and pleaded with him to let them continue in business. The councilman who represented the area screamed that

Benesch had closed "all the places of indoor amusement." Benesch stood firm, Mayor Baker backed him, the whorehouses closed, and the pussycats went into apartments as call girls.

Benesch would probably have remained at city hall had Witt been elected in 1915, but after Pete lost, Benesch returned to private law practice. That, however, did not prevent him from keeping a sharp eye on government and writing letters to the editor to complain. Finally, after ten years, he could stand it no longer and ran for the Cleveland School Board. He was elected, reelected and reelected and in the end served thirty-seven years, longer than any other man in the city's history.

There was never a dull moment as long as Benesch was on the school board. He was a man of strong opinions who welcomed controversy. He had no sooner taken his seat than he got into direct conflict with his old boss, Newton Baker. Benesch, urged by Witt, believed compulsory military training was out of place in public schools. Baker, who had only recently been secretary of war, disagreed, and the two debated publicly. Benesch persuaded the board to drop military training and in forty-five years it has not been reinstated.

He was an advocate of pay-as-you-go financing, using tax levies instead of bonds. When the depression hit, the schools were thus in better position to weather the storm than cities and counties. The teachers were paid in money, not the scrip that city and county employees were getting. But the depression brought Benesch a different kind of trouble -- the demagogues on the school board, men with hardly a clew as to the management of public education.

For many years, unlike many big cities, Cleveland had kept the schools out of partisan politics. Once the slate was chosen, the newspapers invariably backed it, the party chairmen did likewise and there was seldom even token opposition. In the thirties, though the board members received no salary, political spoilsmen began to covet the custodial jobs under the business office, and unqualified candidates broke the slate despite the newspapers. The new members brought religious bitterness into the board meetings for the first time. A majority

of Catholics were elected, and their opponents immediately charged that the church, which had its own parochial schools, was now trying to dominate the tax-supported public schools. Benesch deplored bringing in the religious issue. He felt he had been elected as a good citizen, rather than a Jew; the orthodox Jews also had their parochial schools, too. He fought the majority bloc hard.

The majority consisted of men by the name of Martin, O'Donnell, Miller, and Bradley. Thoms J. Martin was a union business agent, Johnny O'Donnell a salesman type. Miller was Ray C. Miller, whose name was the same as the mayor's except for the middle initial. Ed Bradley, the most sensible of the lot, was a businessman with some experience in law.

The majority bloc knew little about education but plenty about politics. It was the heyday of the 'ignoramus' and the board meetings became unconsciously hilarious because of the constant misuse of English by the majority. This galled Benesch particularly, for he was a man of culture, a Harvard graduate, and admirer of the superintendent, Charles H. Lake, who was also a well-rounded man. The majority did not dare fire Lake, for fear of real public uproar, but they went after the jobs of custodians and got their own man in as business manager. Benesch's allies on the minority were Mrs. Mary B. Martin, the first black member, wife of a well-respected lawyer, and Mrs. Norma Wulff, a nonstop talker and doer, who had been active in PTA and women's clubs. The combination managed to yell foul so loudly that the majority bloc did not do as much damage as expected.

Tom Martin, the union boss, tossed off malapropisms with regularity. His pronunciation of multisyllabic words was priceless. He referred to wholesale slaughter as a "masacree," and innuendo always came out as "indendo." He accused his opponents of "evasing" the issue and "pervericating." He thought teachers should be "digilent" and certain courses were "innecessary." One of his pet words was "derbis." Once he said, "We ought to tear down all the old buildings, put a torch to the derbis, and build buildings."

O'Donnell also had a habit of getting his syntax mixed up and committing regular bloopers. Once when Benesch, who loved to needle him, asked him about a problem relating to juveniles, O'Donnell said, "Mr. Benesch, you don't know how much I've contributed to juvenile delinquency." Alvin (Bud) Silverman, our schools reporter, used to keep a running file of these malapropisms.

Benesch during this period was also active in another public office. He had accepted appointment by Governor Martin L. Davey as Ohio director of commerce. He didn't know Davey well and seemed out of place amid the Davey cronies. Friends wondered why he took the job. "I guess Davey wanted a Jew in his cabinet," he said. Benesch contended that Davey, though a complete egotist, was personally honest, and "like Harding, unsavory friends let him down."

After Davey was finally defeated in a primary, Al resumed private law practice again, until World War II, when he was put in charge of rent control administration in Cleveland. During all this period he remained on the school board. When the Irish majority bloc was finally unhorsed, Benesch was elected president and held that office many years. He was a strong advocate of foreign language classes in the public schools, and a close friend of Dr. Emile B. deSauze, who raised that department to such a high level that it achieved national recognition. Benesch, when he first went on the board, had fought for the restoration of the teaching of German, which had been suspended during World War I in a hysterical wave of anti-German feeling.

Benesch had an incurable addiction to writing letters to the editor. Hardly a week went by without two or three letters from him. They were always pithy, and usually controversial. Envious readers even thought he was on the newspaper staff. He wrote always in longhand and on the spur of the moment, usually before breakfast. It was his way of letting off steam, a real compulsion.

His wife, Helen, a quiet, cultured woman of great charm (and a gourmet Hungarian cook), took a dim view of his letter writing and tried

to prevail on him to stop. "But I didn't get anywhere," she said. "He kept right on. He had to get it out of his system."

Benesch did not hesitate to tackle prominent men when he thought they were wrong. One of his more famous exchanges of correspondence was with President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard, who had proposed a ten-percent quota of Jewish students at Harvard. Benesch sent him a fiery letter of opposition. He was always opposed to any form of discrimination. In the end, former President Charles W. Eliot sided with Benesch, and so did a majority of the Harvard overseers. Lowell was forced to withdraw his quota plan.

Benesch detested all forms of racial and religious prejudice, and took a strong position in favor of more Negro teachers and better-educated teachers of both races, as the strong tide of black migration from the south began to engulf the city in his final years on the board. Today the Cleveland school population is 75 percent black.

Benesch was a regular luncher at the City Club, and ever willing to take part in argument, which was always on the menu. One day a contentious conservative, who took a dim view of racial integration, fired the familiar question at Benesch: "Would you want your daughter to marry a Negro?" The urbane, unflappable Benesch replied, quietly, "Well, I don't have a daughter, but if I did, I wouldn't want her to marry any Gentile."

Benesch was a physical miracle. A bantam in size, like Baker and Friebolin, he seemed indestructible as he went through his

eighties. He had had serious health problems in middle age and at one time was given up for gone by his doctors. David Dietz, science editor of the Scripps-Howard papers, was in New York once when Benesch was there after a serious operation, and met Dr. Jerome Gross, who had been attending Benesch. He said he'd like to visit Benesch in the hospital. "You better go right away," said Dr. Gross. "He's not likely to be around long." That was forty years ago. Dr. Gross is now dead, but Al was still going strong in his nineties. He survived five major operations, had only

a portion of his stomach left, and was careful about his diet. He believed that not smoking or drinking helped prolong his life. He once smoked cigars and a pipe but gave them up. He never drank alcoholic liquor. "Not for moral or religious reasons," he said. "I just don't like the taste of it." Though a member of the Oakwood Club for years, he never played golf, either. "As Pete Witt said, golf is for the useless rich," he observed.

Benesch took a dim view of campus dissenters who wanted to destroy and take over colleges by force. He also scorned influential and affluent Negroes "who won't take sides." He deplored the fact that the man who makes the biggest noise gets the most attention in public life, "not the quiet man with the soundest rationale." He remained officially a Democrat through his long life, but he believed the government had pauperized people, making it too easy to get along without working, and "there is a tremendous dependence on the federal government, which is not good."

Al would probably have remained on the school board had not his wife died in 1962. He then went to live with his niece and nephew, Dr. and Mrs. George Rose, in Shaker Heights; living in Shaker disqualified him for the Cleveland board. A few years later when the Roses moved back to the part of Shaker that is in the Cleveland school district, "Uncle Fred" felt better. He might run again, he said, if he felt the urge.

Al Benesch and Carl Friebolin were two of the most invigorating, stimulating men in Cleveland history. Benesch died at ninety-four in 1974, after a long illness.

CHAPTER SIX

*The Yo-Yo Swings Upward:
1935-1940*

The election of Harold Burton as mayor came like a breath of spring after a long, hard winter. Plenty remained to be done to get the city back on its feet again, but already there were good signs. It looked as if depositors in the closed Union Trust would soon get a partial payment on their frozen accounts. The Chamber of Commerce was talking of plans to hold an exposition on the lakefront in the summer of 1936, with Lincoln G. Dickey, former manager of Public Hall, a skilled and trusted showman, in charge. The Republican national convention had been scheduled for Cleveland in June. The newspaper editors were pleased again, now that their old enemy, Harry L. Davis, had been defeated for mayor.

It was the perfect example of the Yo-Yo condition of politics, government, and business in Cleveland, the upsy-downsy volatility. It would take a long time to clean up the unhappy debris of the first five years of the decade, but the people, as well as the leaders, were looking forward now, instead of backward. Even the long-standing, apparently insoluble, relief problem was about to be solved, now that the federal government had set up the Works Progress Administration, which would at least give thousands of families regular eating money, instead of the uncertainty of getting support from the city, county, or state.

Burton moved swiftly to solve his major problem, which was getting control of the police department and cleaning out the bad apples. He astounded the community by appointing Eliot Ness director of public safety. It did not at first dawn on most people what a tremendous effect this would have on the community, but the newspaper reporters who had dealt with Ness as a federal agent, and who first suggested him to Mayor Burton, anticipated there would be a great explosion, with aftereffects that would last for years.

Ness had been a career man with the alcohol tax unit, and had no political background at all. He had never run for office or been identified as a Republican or Democrat, and did not work for Burton's election. He was a totally new face, in one of the most politically sensitive offices.

Eliot Ness has now become a legend, a prototype of all the good guys, since TV made a series, "The Untouchables," out of his career as a lawman. A combination of Sherlock Holmes, the Lone Ranger, and Zorro, his name is now as familiar to millions all over the world as Sherlock's. The real Ness was totally unlike the actor on the television tube. A few of the TV incidents came close to what he did in Chicago, where he first started hounding racketeers, but almost none are relevant to his five years as safety director of Cleveland.

Ness was one of the most unusual public officials, in Cleveland or anywhere else. He was totally unlike the picture the public now sees. He was no swashbuckler, no Agent .007, no slick type from Mission Impossible, or the Man from U.N.C.L.E. In his personal life, he was a complete nonhero. He looked less like a detective or private eye than anyone you could imagine. He had a baby face, a soft voice, a disarming youthful ingenuousness; but a brilliant mind. He knew little about politics and cared less. His only foray into elective politics was disastrous. He knew how to perform honest, devoted public service in the name of the law, and he had a natural yen for that.

Eliot was a baker's son, who went to school in Chicago and to the University of Chicago. He got a job as federal agent when prohibition was at its worst, unrespected and unobserved by the majority of citizens,

and unenforced by the local police. The federal agents had to do whatever was to be done about the predatory bootleg gangs who were making millions, such as the one bossed by Al Capone or the one cut down in a garage in the famous St. Valentine's Day massacre. An agent in those wild days had to have plenty of moxie to cope with the hard guys. Most of the work consisted of tracing the financial transactions of the beer barons, whose business could not all be done in cash. Capone could never be nailed for murder or other felonies under state law, but eventually the federal government arrested him for income tax violations and sent him to jail. The agents were offered bribes, threatened, and cajoled, but they were respected. Ness and the other T-men nailed Capone through painstaking work. When they had to they got tough physically. They once drove a truck through barred doors of a Capone brewery to get necessary evidence.

After Capone was lodged in a federal prison (to remain there until he died of paresis), Ness was transferred to Cleveland. He soon attracted the attention of newspapers. He was not one to blow his own horn, but he had a keen natural news sense. The Cleveland reporters soon found out from their Chicago counterparts what a great job Ness had done so quietly there. His Cleveland operations began to make page one regularly. The reporters admired his work and liked him personally. He was a friendly guy, an unusual official, dedicated to his job.

When Harold Burton was elected mayor, his most urgent need was for a strong man to clean up the police department. During the two previous administrations, the top police brass was strictly political. The chief, George Matowitz, an honest man himself, but ineffectual and anxious to keep his job, contented himself with issuing numerous platitudinous orders to enforce the law, but the cops knew they were just so many words. They were careful not to raid joints whose owners had chipped in to the incumbent mayor's campaign fund. Democratic detectives wielded great influence under Democratic Mayor Miller. Republican detectives ditto under Republican Mayor Davis. There was an "outside chief" who got around to pass the political message (the

"inside chief" merely sat in his office and composed the orders). It was a lousy way to run a police department, and the honest cops felt life wasn't worthwhile. Mayor Burton knew he'd have to reestablish authority and bounce the corrupt police. He didn't have much time to find the right man.

Wes Lawrence, the *Plain Dealer* federal reporter who had recently been shifted to city hall, first thought of Ness for safety director. He had admired Eliot's work while covering the federal beat. "Ness would be just the kind of guy Burton needs," he told the day city editor (who was I) after election. "But it seems impossible that Burton would offer him the job. He's strictly nonpolitical. Harold tries to be independent, but he's still a Republican. I don't think Ness has any politics."

Anyway, it was agreed that Wes suggest Ness to Burton and Burton phoned various other newspaper and business friends to discuss it. Everywhere he heard high praise for Ness. So he offered Ness the job.

It just didn't seem possible. Ness was only thirty-three, had been in Cleveland but a short time, had no political connections, wasn't eager to change jobs, though he knew the police department was ripe for an overhaul (who didn't?). The dream turned out not to be impossible, after all. The baby-faced agent took the job.

There were conditions attached to his acceptance, however. One was that Ness would have a free hand to hire private investigators, and pay them out of unofficial undercover funds. Burton knew where to raise such funds -- from his friends in the Chamber of Commerce and American Legion, who were tired of being shaken down. He told Ness he would arrange for the secret funds.

The appointment of Ness was a real bombshell. To say it amazed the politicians was the understatement of the decade. It astounded everyone. Most of the veteran policemen were cynical and didn't believe Ness was for real. The politicians of both parties were sure he was an overpublicized tyro, a Boy Scout built up by the newspapers, who would soon fall on his face and embarrass Burton. Most reporters and editors

hadn't really believed it would happen, though they were hopeful. Ness was totally unlike a policeman, not the type who might command policemen and win their respect. And boy, did he have a job ahead -- like Hercules, trying to clean out the Augean stables!

The young Hercules was not daunted. He had hardly settled in his chair before he hired his private eyes and started to investigate high police officers. He knew just where to look, for his work in ferreting out bootleggers had led often to policemen who knew all about the rackets and may have had a part in them. His young investigators were not known then in Cleveland, which made their job easier. (In later years, they became renowned on their own.) Tom Clothey, Sam Sagalyn, Keith Wilson were a few of his trusted bird dogs; another bright lad who worked for Ness was James M. Limber, now a retired police inspector, former chief of the Cleveland detective bureau. The agents received their pay from the anonymous businessmen, who became known around newspaper offices as the Secret Six. Ness himself, who looked like a recent escapee from a college senior class, did a lot of the gumshoeing, too. He enjoyed it, would simply disappear from his office for several days.

In a remarkably short time, some really fancy corruption was brought to light. One captain, Louis Cadek, was found to have invested \$100,000 in a cemetery lot venture that had elements of a racket, and which had failed in the depression (where would an honest police captain get \$100,000?). Another captain, Michael Harwood, was found to be the real owner of a bootleg joint that had been raided. A falling-domino pattern began to develop. One policeman told of payoffs and that led to another. Saloon keepers began to phone Ness with tips. Wives of men who had squandered their paychecks in gambling joints gave him names and addresses. Very quickly, seven policemen, ranging from a deputy inspec-

tor to lieutenant to patrolman, were indicted for various forms of graft.

At first there was skepticism in newspaper offices as to whether Ness would get full cooperation from the Democratic prosecutor's office. That

fear was soon dispelled. The prosecutor then was Frank T. Cullitan, who was running the same sort of honest, aggressive office that Ray Miller had. The office was manned by bright young lawyers, many of whom were getting paid more than their boss, whose salary was held down by state law. Miller had vigorously prosecuted crooked councilmen; Cullitan was ready to do the same thing with crooked policemen. He and Ness became firm friends and great teammates.

In every case that Ness dug up, the indicted policeman was convicted and sent to prison. The convictions had the cleansing effect Mayor Burton and Ness needed, for a half dozen other policemen of high rank and much seniority, who had not been indicted, decided it was time to retire on pension. A whole new day dawned, a new lineup of top brass, in whom Ness had confidence, was promoted, and by now the entire department knew that the kid, Ness, was for real, and plenty tough.

Soon there came another chance for Ness to shine, in a different field, the murky world of union rackets. In the early thirties, when widespread union organization got the sanction and encouragement of the Roosevelt administration, many predators, less interested in legitimate unionism than in lining their own pockets, began to operate in Cleveland unions. Everyone seemed to know who they were, and the shakedowns they engaged in, but no one had the guts to track down the evidence that would drive them out of business.

Two of the most notorious union racketeers were John McGee and Don Campbell, officers respectively of the window washers' and glaziers' union. Businessmen who refused to cough up found their expensive plate glass windows mysteriously broken, and it was almost impossible to get them replaced. Store fronts remained open to bad weather, or ig-

nominiouly boarded up. Installation prices skyrocketed. Most of the suffering businessmen had decided that the simplest course was to pay the tribute. But two of them did not -- Vernon and Gordon Stouffer, who had built up a flourishing restaurant business from practically nothing, in

the midst of depression. They complained to Burton and Ness. Eliot moved in eagerly, and before long, his sleuths caught Campbell and McGee red-handed. They were sent to the penitentiary. It took guts for the young Stouffer brothers to stand up against this racket, but with Ness and Cullitan on the job, they showed what could be done. Union relations began to improve all over Cleveland.

The community was far from cleaned up, however; in several suburbs, protected gambling joints were openly operating. One was the Mounds Club in Geauga County, unreachable by Cuyahoga County or Cleveland police, a snazzy place where fashionable Heights matrons and burghers used to eat well, gulp bootleg booze, and gamble without hindrance, often for high stakes. Another was the Pettibone Club in Bainbridge, also unreachable from Cleveland. The most obvious one, right under the noses of the Cleveland police and almost surrounded by the city, was the Harvard Club, in Newburgh Heights. It had all the earmarks of a well-protected fortress, and ran night and day without hindrance. The village police ignored newspaper criticism. The Cuyahoga County sheriff was reluctant to move. Though the newspapers pestered continually, nothing happened, and the public yawned. Plenty of suckers were always ready to go where the action was and lose a bundle.

The Cleveland police technically had no jurisdiction there, since it was in another municipality. Obviously the only way to get inside the club would be with a search warrant. Frank Lausche, then a young common pleas judge, was persuaded to issue the search warrant. Prosecutor Cullitan could serve it, since the sheriff would not act. Safety Director Ness told Cullitan he would go along, too; he was certain some big-shot criminals had connections with the club. So Ness and Cullitan,

with assistant prosecutors -- and reporters, too -- went out with the warrant. The group was met by guards with tommy guns, who were always on duty at the fortress's door; but they got inside.

Ness was unarmed (he always went unarmed to dangerous places) and there could have been a nasty confrontation. It didn't happen; Ness simply faced down the lookouts and went in. Of course, they found nothing inside for which arrests could be made, for a tip-off had warned the manager; but Ness was right -- big shot criminals were connected with the club. He found out later that Alvin Karpis, a much-wanted hoodlum from Chicago, had been inside the club when Ness and Cullitan arrived, but made a fast escape before they reached the door.

After that the Harvard Club gradually lost popularity, and eventually folded. The reputations of Judge Lausche, Director Ness, and Prosecutor Cullitan went up several notches.

Ness's activity as safety director was not confined to sensational investigations. He had a sensible plan for modernizing the police department by putting it on wheels, getting more men on patrol in autos directed by swift radio communication, a technique that today is standard in all big cities. He never was able to get as many patrol cars as he wanted, since the city was still having financial problems. (The Secret Six did not put up money for autos.)

Ness also tried to set up the traffic division as a separate force, not to be considered, for budget purposes, the same as police. He felt that, though the traffic cops were uniformed and had to make arrests and citations, they should not be considered in the same light as policemen who tracked down felonies.

Ness also did a great deal to modernize the fire department, putting in high pressure pumpers, newer equipment of all sorts, and giving the firemen more training.

During most of Ness's tenure as director, his number one assistant was Robert W. Chamberlin, a young lawyer who had grown up here, played football at Lakewood High and University of Michigan, and was an officer in the Ohio National Guard. Chamberlin was Ness's landlord when he first came to Cleveland as a federal agent; the Nesses had a small cottage on Chamberlin property in

Bay Village, and a close, neighborly relationship developed. When Ness's first assistant, John Flynn, was eased out because he became too political in his judgments, Eliot appointed Chamberlin and the two stuck together like glue until Chamberlin was called to federal service with the Guard in 1940. (He later served in the Pacific and in Europe, and retired as a reserve brigadier general.)

Eliot was a gay, convivial soul, who liked nothing better than to sit around till all hours, drinking with friends, or dancing. It seemed to unwind him to visit night clubs and hotel dance spots. He was not a heavy drinker, but he could keep at it for long periods without giving any appearance of being swacked. During his latter days as director, after he had finished his cleanups of the crooked police and racketeering unionists, he was seen more and more at public drinkeries, usually with newsmen. This made him vulnerable to backbiting by his enemies, who were now numerous because of the predators he had sent to jail. They spread the word that Ness was a lush; so how could a man who was on the sauce all the time be so all-fired virtuous? His close friends had doubts that so much public drinking was wise.

Eliot seemed unaware that this was rendering him vulnerable. He really enjoyed the bright lights and the companionship. Probably it was because he was lonely. He seemed to have trouble keeping any sort of lasting love life. When he first came to Cleveland, he seemed happy with his first wife, Edna, but not long afterward, they quietly divorced and she left town. He did not talk about it. Women were attracted to him, and during his bachelor period, he never lacked for gals who were charmed by his boyishness. But the relationships were short-lived, and one of them said privately that he didn't have the essentials to keep them going. So it was somewhat of a surprise when he married a second wife, Evaline, an artist.

This marriage seemed to be working. But it, too, fell apart, and they were seen less and less together. Ness must have been conscious that a second divorce would harm his public image, for this divorce

petition was slipped quietly into the clerk of court's office after hours, and not discovered by reporters until days later. It was revealed almost at the same time as the discovery that Ness had been involved in a slight traffic accident about 3 A.M. when he was coming home after a party. The implication was that he was under the weather from drink and hence had not reported the accident, which, as safety director, he certainly should have done.

The gossips went to work on Ness's reputation after the accident and the second divorce, but in newspaper offices, his reputation for integrity was still unsmirched. The reporters and editors, high and low, were willing to forgive him if his only peccadillos in private life resulted from staying out late with convivial friends. The most convivial friends happened to be journalists. Two of Ness's closest buddies were Ralph Kelly of the *Plain Dealer* and Clayton Fritchey of the Press. They spent a lot of time with him after hours as well as at city hall, and could always be counted on to know exactly what Ness and the Secret Six were up to.

(After Ness left Cleveland, Fritchey went to work for other Scripps-Howard papers, became an editor in New Orleans, and finally got into the high councils of the Truman and Kennedy administrations. He was administrative assistant to Adlai Stevenson Sr., ambassador to the United Nations, and after Stevenson died suddenly, Fritchey resumed column writing. Kelly eventually left the *Plain Dealer*, took a political public relations job in Columbus and ultimately returned to Cleveland to work on the News. He died in his fifties.)

Much cocktail-party talk has sloshed around about what might have happened if Ness had decided to run for mayor in 1941, after Mayor Burton had left city hall. Eliot was then at the peak of his popularity. He could not have had a better press run up to that time. It seems not to have occurred to him then that he might easily have gone on to elective office. He

just didn't think of himself as a candidate. But he was such a commanding public figure that when Lausche was elected mayor in

1941, Lausche kept him on as safety director, an act that caused permanent estrangement between Lausche and Democratic boss Miller. Ness solved the problem himself a few months later by finding a way to get into the war effort and resign.

Instead of trying for a military commission, which he could easily have obtained, he accepted a civilian assignment with the War Department, trying to keep venereal disease under control in cities near army camps. It was a kind of police work, and must have seemed challenging to Ness. It took him out of town, and he dropped out of the public eye until after the war ended. Then he returned to Cleveland, and about this time married a third wife, Betty Anderson Seaver, an attractive young sculptress and divorcee, who had graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art. He also went into the import-export business with Dan T. Moore, an old friend and a Democrat, who during the war had been in Egypt with the OSS, assigned to keep track of King Farouk.

Suddenly, encouraged by old personal and political cronies, mainly Ralph Kelly, Eliot was urged to run for mayor as a Republican. He had never taken part in political activity during his years as safety director and for him to turn up suddenly as a party candidate for mayor seemed incongruous. The Republicans were desperate for a candidate to run against Mayor Tom Burke, who seemed unbeatable by anyone but Superman, and possibly not by him. Ralph Kelly and the party duumvirs, former Senator Bender and Councilman DeMaio (who were rapidly becoming chiefs without Indians) persuaded Eliot he was Superman. He wasn't. The campaign was a disaster. Clevelanders had almost forgotten Ness's amazing record. He was a wretched public speaker. He had a winning private personality, a good-looking wife, and a fine record in public office, but his day had passed. Burke clobbered him.

From then on, it was downhill all the way for Eliot. Like Alexander the Great, he reached his peak too young, and after being safety director, had no more worlds to conquer. His career as a lawman did not bring him opportunities he now needed in business. He had

accumulated no private resources during his years of working for the public, nor did his specialized talent for police work necessarily equip him for business. The export-import business in the Middle East did not pan out. He tried other commercial activity without notable success. For a while he was chairman of the Diebold Safe & Lock Company of Canton, through his friendship with the Rex family, which then controlled it; but when the company reorganized, he was dealt out. Though his family life had stabilized (he and Betty had adopted a small boy, Bobby), and he was popular socially, this didn't produce the big jobs that paid big money. Finally, he moved to Coudersport, Pennsylvania, to engage in a small manufacturing business. It was there that he died of a sudden heart attack at fifty-three. As a young man he had fame, but in middle age fortune eluded him.

Had Eliot lived a little longer, he might have cashed in. Just before his death, it occurred to him that his gold mine of experience as a lawman could be made into an exciting book or a TV or radio show. With this in mind, he had started to give material to a professional writer who was to ghost it. Eliot died before the book was well under way, and before TV and movie rights had been contracted in his name. The writer, however, knew a good thing when he saw it and kept on going. Before long a TV series was on the tube and bringing in royalties to the author. It became instantly popular as "The Untouchables." Not much of the royalty money was coming back to Ness's widow and son, who needed a substantial source of income, since Eliot had left them no estate worth mentioning except his golden reputation. Ultimately, Betty obtained a larger share of the proceeds, but nothing like what would have been available had Eliot lived.

It was inevitable that such a popular American folk hero, as portrayed on TV, would become popular abroad, too, and

"The Untouchables" soon had TV watchers in Europe bug-eyed. A few years ago the Ness legend was so popular that Paris-Match sent its New York correspondent to Cleveland to do a personal story about Ness.

Mrs. Ness is still living quietly in California. Bobby grew up, did service in the Navy, and is back, and married. "The Untouchables" is still coming through regularly in reruns. It seems immortal as entertainment and the fictionized Eliot Ness is well known all over the globe, as a white knight.

Ness had unique views. It was hard to understand at first why a young man of his appearance, education, and background would choose police work for a career. He was frank about it. "I looked around me after a little while and decided there really wouldn't be much competition in that field," he told me with a grin. He was right, too. A man of superior intelligence, with ample guts, simply had to rise to the top in police work in the thirties. Today, with more emphasis on professionalism in police work, top officers going to college to learn executive management and college graduates being recruited onto the forces, this would not be quite so obvious.

Ness was way ahead of his time. He did a phenomenal job as safety director, and was the only man ever to serve in the job under both a Republican and a Democratic mayor. He lacked political savvy, and had no phony charisma. But he had a great sense of humor, was down to earth, without a swelled head; frank, highly devoted to duty. Could he have been elected, he would have made a great mayor or governor.

The summer of 1936 was a big one for reviving the sagging spirits of Cleveland, indeed of all northern Ohio. The Great Lakes Exposition put a lot of men to work erecting new buildings on the made land north of the railroad tracks next to Lake Erie. Lincoln Dickey, an old pro, had planned well. Not only had he a big exhibit devoted to science, but big league entertainment -- Johnny Weismuller, the champion swimmer, and Eleanor Holm, the movie actress, in an Aquacade, with gorgeous gals doing water ballets; Sally Rand, the fan dancer, who performed at a restaurant aboard a remodeled lake

freighter; an International Village, with many little sidewalk cafes and shops that sold authentic foods, drink, and clothes from all parts of Europe. Visitors were attracted from all over the state and adjacent West

Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York. The newspapers gave the Expo tremendous coverage.

While the Expo was still in progress, the Republicans from all over the country swarmed in, trying to find a presidential candidate who could stay in the ring with President Roosevelt. They found him in Governor Alf M. Landon of Kansas, but he didn't exactly stay in the ring. Roosevelt carried forty-six of the forty-eight states, in the biggest landslide up to that time. The convention brought hundreds of visitors to Cleveland, the city was back in the national headlines again, and the citizens felt as if they were again on the upgrade.

After that convention came two others, also political and more colorful, the Townsendites and the Coughlinites. The depression was a great time for the flowering of wild economic ideas, and one of them that bloomed strongly then was put forward by Dr. Francis E. Townsend, a Californian who wanted the federal government to pay everyone over sixty \$200 a month. The idea of getting something for nothing has always attracted humans, and Dr. Townsend's plan became instantly popular among the oldsters, and many middle-aged folks who would soon become eligible. Townsend Clubs sprang up everywhere, and bombarded the newspapers with pleas to promote and cover their meetings. When the papers decided there was little news in routine club meetings, and editorially denounced the plan as wild-eyed economics, the Townsendites were bitter. They had money enough, however, to pay expenses for delegates, and they held a national convention in the Public Hall, shortly after the Republicans. Covering it was an ordeal like that of white newsmen covering a convention of black activists in the 1960s.

A few weeks after the Townsendites, came another national gathering, the disciples of Father Charles Coughlin, the Detroit "radio priest" who was the principal critic of President Roosevelt in the thirties. Coughlin, a skilled orator with

a great sense of the dramatic, had a weekly radio program in which he regularly scorched the president and the ruling Democratic party, and blamed them for every known variety of political and economic ailment.

Adolf Hitler was going strong just then, and the United States was beginning to make undercover moves to halt him. The country's sentiment just then was strongly antiwar, and Coughlin appealed to this, winning adherents among Protestants as well as Catholics.

One of Coughlin's loudest fans was Municipal Judge Martin L. Sweeney of Cleveland, who had run unsuccessfully for mayor, and was in a daily hassle with the regular Democrats of Burr Gongwer, and the newspapers. So Cleveland was a natural place for a Coughlinite convention. It' too, was an ordeal for the newsmen, who generally took a dim view of the Reverend Coughlin, and considered him a demagog.

Finally in August, the national convention of the American Legion came to Cleveland. It brought thousands of ex-soldiers, filled with gaiety and the good booze now available since the demise of prohibition. Parades were endless and so were pet-pinching incidents. The downtown merchants and hotel keepers loved it, for business was perking up, and the city seemed to be on one of its upward swings again. In November, Roosevelt was swept in again by the landslide, the Democrats were solidly entrenched in Washington and Columbus and in the Cleveland county offices.

The Great Lakes Expo had been such a spirit-lifting success that the business community put up the funds to repeat it in the summer of 1937, and it once again was a magnet for vacationers.

About this time, it looked as though the *Plain Dealer* was finally going to take hand in the editorial management of the afternoon News, which it had rescued from bankruptcy in 1934. Nathaniel R. Howard, who had been a protégé of Hopwood and Bellamy, having risen swiftly as reporter, political writer, city editor, and managing editor, was transferred to the News to become editor, replacing Earle Martin. Howard took with him three of the *Plain Dealer's* key men -- Paul Hodges,

from the Washington bureau, to be city editor; John W. Vance, reporter, to be chief editorial writer; and Lawrence F. Levenberg, copy editor, to

be telegraph editor. It looked like the beginning of a joint effort of sister papers to move against the Press, which was coming up fast under Louis Seltzer.

Howard took over the job in 1937, and Stanley P. Barnett replaced him as managing editor at the *Plain Dealer*. It looked as if the Forest City Publishing Company was finally going to put some big money into building up the News. The long lease of the *PD* property by the Liberty E. Holden estate to a management group (which had endured through Baker, Hopwood, Rogers, McCarrens, and Bellamy) had expired. Rumors flew wildly, and the general expectation was that a lot of editorial personnel would be shifted back and forth between the *Plain Dealer* and News.

This didn't happen. The principal immediate result of Howard's appointment was the departure of A. E. M. (Al) Bergener, as managing editor of the News. Bergener was sent to Washington as a sort of special writer, and Hugh Kane, who had served as city editor and Sunday editor (when the News had a Sunday paper) became managing editor. The News business office also had a shakeup, and Charles F. McCahill came in from Rochester as general manager.

The outbreak of World War II in Europe in September 1939, created an uncertainty about the future of business, and Howard and McCahill did not get the anticipated infusion of funds. The circulation of the News did not increase, and no further transfers of key personnel from the *Plain Dealer* took place. Hodges later resigned to go with Castle & Cooke on the west coast, and Vance quit to become assistant public relations director of International Harvester Company. Levenberg stayed with the News until it was sold in 1960, eventually became chief editorial writer, then went back to the *Plain Dealer*.

Mayor Burton was easily elected to a second term in 1937 and a third in 1939. He was achieving popularity by his good appointments and attention to duty, and soon sought broader

fields of government. Like his friend Dan Morgan, Burton became one of the few who achieved success in all three branches of government -- the state legislature, city executive, United States Senate, and later as a justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Burton got into politics belatedly, after World War I. He came originally from Massachusetts, went to Bowdoin College, saw active service as a captain in Belgium and France and returned with the Croix de Guerre and Purple Heart. He was one of the group of bright young men whom Maschke helped elect to the legislature in 1929.

In 1940, three-term Mayor Burton ran for United States senator. The favored candidate of downstate Republicans (especially Edwin D. Schorr, the boss in Cincinnati) was Congressman Dudley White of Norwalk, who had a good record and attractive personality. Burton found that his best talking point was to refer to himself as an "off-Schorr" Republican, which put him in position of fighting a boss, and giving himself the color of independence, which had served him so well in Cleveland. It was effective, and so was the fact that for years, Ohioans had been voting for a man named Burton for United States senator (Theodore E. Burton). The combination of the big vote in Cleveland and the name Burton was too much for White. Burton won the primary, then easily defeated John E. McSweeney, a former congressman and state welfare director, in November. (The senatorial seat had been open because Vic Donahey, after six years in Washington, found out he didn't really enjoy it there, and declined to seek reelection.)

Senator Burton became a close friend of Senator Harry S. Truman, of Missouri, also a World War I veteran, and after World War II broke out, served with Truman on a committee investigating wartime contracts. Truman admired Burton's perspicacity and tirelessness, and when Truman became president in 1945, he appointed his old buddy Burton, though a member of the opposition party, to the Supreme Court. There he remained until Parkinson's disease forced him to retire in the mid-60s.

No mayor of Cleveland ever worked longer hours than Harold Burton. It was legendary that several nights a week lights would be burning in the mayor's office long after his subordinates had all gone home. With a lawyer's caution and attention to pestiferous little details, he went over important contracts and ordinances himself. He explained city expansion projects in great detail to reporters and councilmen. He made a lot of speeches. They were not oratorical gems, but he conveyed the impression of deep sincerity. Heavy dark circles under his eyes (they may have been the natural result of too much pigment, for he was dark-haired and dark-eyed) made him look perpetually fatigued. But if he was tired, it didn't show in his work record.

Burton never pretended to be a backslapper, or a ball of fire. Perhaps it was the lack of such outgoing characteristics, in contrast to Davis, that made him popular. He was always good old Harold, to his friends, supporters, and employees. (His detractors said the reason he had to do so much overtime work was that he wasn't sharp enough to plow through it swiftly and let others handle the detail.) He saw no reason to hurry official business, and it didn't bother him that the job took up his evenings. He preferred work to socializing.

The socializing he left largely to his vivacious, imaginative wife, Selma, especially after he went to Washington. He never cared for the cocktail circuit, and after he went on to the Supreme Court, he made a regular practice of going to his chambers each night to work for a while in quiet. Mrs. Burton, a tall, friendly woman, did not hesitate to set new fashions. For a while, she had the social set buzzing by wearing two earrings on one ear.

Burton was proud of his Swiss ancestry (his mother was born in Switzerland) and for several years while on the court he would go each summer for a visit to the canton where his mother was born.

In the 1930s, George H. Bender was coming on strong as a big figure in Republican local and state politics. Originally elected to the state senate as a dry during the prohibition heyday, young Bender came up very fast because of his flair

for getting publicity, and his friendship with the press corps in Cleveland and Columbus. He quickly recognized after his first term that prohibition was losing favor in the cities, although the pastors and the Anti-Saloon League kept the legislators in central and southern Ohio terrified of their power. One of the principal reasons the dry law was becoming unpopular was that its enforcement was becoming a menace to personal liberty because of the raiding squads operated by justices of the peace. Carte blanche had been given these petty officials by the Ohio law, which permitted them to raid for suspected liquor not only in their own townships but all over the county. Greedy, unscrupulous men soon saw easy money in this and hired special agents, often experienced thugs, who foraged for victims among the illiterate ethnics, who had never really understood why America, which had made them citizens, would permit them to be arrested for possessing a few jugs of homemade wine or schnapps.

The victims were invariably found guilty and fined \$1,000 and costs. The fines were used to pay the raiders on commission, as well as make the J.P.s rich. Finally the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that the raiders were interfering with civil rights and exceeding their authority, and ordered the racket stopped.

The professional drys, however, refused to take this lying down, for they had been enjoying the heady sensation of controlling legislatures as well as Congress. Nowhere in the country was the prohibition movement stronger than in Ohio. The national headquarters of the Anti-Saloon League was in Westerville, just outside Columbus. They had succeeded in getting a stiffer dry law enacted in Ohio even before the national prohibition amendment went into effect. C. C. Crabbe, an active dry who had been lawyer for the Anti-Saloon League, was now attorney general of Ohio. So the drys cooked up a new bill to overturn the unfavorable Supreme Court decision that outlawed the raiders. It was called the Marshall Bill (after its sponsor, Senator J. T. Marshall) and was the most controversial of the 1927 session.

By this time, Senator Bender had become the most vocal

opponent of the drys and their Marshall Bill. He had started in politics as a vigorous crusader for prohibition, and an active churchman. He neither drank nor smoked, and was regarded as a paragon of virtue. It was largely his support by church people and conservatives (plus his inborn sense of how to make news) that had got him nominated in the Republican primary at age twenty-four. Nomination in those days was equivalent to election.

Bender was always quick to sense when public opinion was changing. He discovered that, by opposing the J.P. raiders, he could be on both sides of the fence at once, something all successful politicians love. He could say he believed in prohibition, didn't drink himself, but was opposed to raiding for profit. The newspapers praised him and his name was constantly in the headlines. But the professional drys were on to him now. They still had the votes in the assembly to drive the bill through, which they did. Bender had the help of other big city legislators; Maschke, with whom he had not been on chummy terms, also tried to defeat the bill. But the bill passed. Bender had warned that if it passed, he would circulate petitions for a statewide referendum.

As soon as the session ended, he started raising funds for the referendum, and easily got enough signatures. It was his first venture into statewide fund-raising and launched him on a much broader political career. The referendum defeated the drys' pet bill, and the raiding J.P.s were finished. It raised Bender's status tremendously.

Bender enjoyed heavy-handed ridicule, and, in the 1927 session, he pulled a stunt that infuriated the drys and had the correspondents in stitches. He had already gathered several thousand signatures on a petition opposing the Marshall Bill, and had pasted them together in an enormous rolled-up sheet. He warned that he intended to present a large petition to the Senate before the final vote, but nobody was quite prepared for the way he actually presented it. He hired a small German band and had them waiting in the State House corridor before the Senate met. When the formal afternoon ses-

sion began, Bender told the leader to strike up the band, and it went oompahing up the long stairway to the Senate chamber, followed by paraders carrying the petition, which was about fifty feet long. The band proceeded inside the chamber, but was blocked at the rail by the sergeants-at-arms, who had been rounded up by furious rural dry legislators. The petition was presented, and the band sent home. The theatrics were perfect. Bender got the story on page one all over the state.

Bender got ahead largely because of tremendous energy, a thick skin, and a talent for landing on his feet despite reverses. Through his long career, no matter how much he changed his views, he still exuded the evangelical, hymn-singing optimism and pleasant good humor that had launched him as a political boy-wonder before he was old enough to vote. He was always cheery and good-humored.

Bender came from Protestant Czech-Bohemian stock, and he had a firm base among the ethnic groups; when his name, which was originally Benda, finally emerged on the ballot as Bender, he picked up supporters in the Anglo-Saxon suburbs, too. As a teen-ager, Bender had enthused about the Bull Moose anti-establishment campaign of Teddy Roosevelt and had made speeches favoring T.R. As a young man, he engaged in a variety of businesses -- sold and wrote advertising, dabbled in newspaper editorial work, and for a while, in 1924, was manager of a small Cleveland department store, Bedell's. He got his biggest kicks out of associating with newspapermen. This came naturally to him, for he had one of the most sharply sensitive noses for news ever known. (The only person who compared with him thus was Carl Friebolin, who also preferred newsmen's company to any others'.)

The legislative correspondents could count regularly on George to come up with bills to confound the establishment and issue public statements to embarrass bosses and lobbyists. Hardly an evening went by during the session that he did not eat dinner with his closest friends among the reporters. (Naturally, this did not endear him to the other legislators.) He

enjoyed needling the majority leader in the Senate, and harassing the county chairman at home. He was always good for a speech to back up statements he had previously made to reporters. He never refused to answer a question.

At first the party regulars looked on Bender as a freak built up by the papers. But they soon recognized that he had native shrewdness as well as that passion for publicity, and they made use of it. When Bender raised a bundle of money for his Marshall Bill referendum (a big job of organization, requiring forty thousand signatures, at least), they recognized him as a pro. He was still under thirty when he won his big victory over the drys.

Bender returned triumphantly to the Senate in 1929, and became more and more an important figure. He now had four terms under his belt and had made friends with the Republican regulars whom he had previously tended to ignore. He was feeling his oats so much that he pulled another practical joke on the Senate, which caused much red-faced embarrassment to the lieutenant governor and most of the senators.

During a week when things were dull, Bender had gone to Keith's Theater to see a vaudeville entertainer, Jim McWilliams, who had a delightful satirical act of impersonating a senator making a corny political speech, complete with gestures and bouncing up and down with light knee-flexing. It was so close to the real thing that if you didn't know better, you might believe he was actually running for office. He was billed as the "Senator from Virginia." (McWilliams did indeed live in Norfolk during the off season, and he had the right accent.)

Bender invited McWilliams to stop in at the Senate the next afternoon. It was not unusual for visiting hotshots to be introduced at the legislature, and he voted the honorary privilege of the floor for a few moments. But Bender had a more diabolical purpose. He was going to show the Senators just what hicks they were.

So when McWilliams arrived, instead of telling Lieutenant Governor John T. Brown, an amiable but unsophisticated

farmer, that Jim was an actor, Bender introduced him as the "Senator from Virginia." Brown, who hadn't been to the theater and was a courteous gentleman, easily swallowed the bait, and when Bender introduced a resolution to give McWilliams the privilege of the floor, Brown invited him to sit beside the presiding officer's chair, and introduced him as Senator McWilliams from Virginia. When the resolution was adopted by unanimous voice vote, as was customary, Bender suggested that the senator say a few words.

So McWilliams began his usual delightful low-key routine. It was delicious satire on political speechmaking. For three or four minutes, none of the other senators caught on, but when Jim started to really corn it up, and began to bounce up and down (Newton Baker used this oratorical trick, too), it dawned on them that they were being suckered, especially when they saw Bender and the reporters laughing themselves silly. First, amazement crept over their faces, then resentment, then anger. Little huddles of fury took place all over the chamber. When McWilliams finished his peroration, the senators were fit to be tied.

McWilliams hastily made his exit. Lieutenant Governor Brown and the rural senators wondered what to do to recapture face. But Bender had wisely vanished, too. Cooler heads finally prevailed, for they knew that censuring Bender would simply play into his publicity loving hands. Bender at this time was wisely biding his time. He was half in the Republican machine and half out. He had not become embroiled in the antimanager charter fight (he did not like Harry Davis, but stayed aloof). He had secretly enjoyed the land graft scandals that had rocked the council, but he didn't get into the act. He sensed that the charges of corruption would gradually diminish the power of both Maschke and Hopkins, though neither was involved in the graft. He became especially friendly about this time with Councilman "Sonny" DeMaioribus, who was becoming a power on Mayfield Road. He made some anti-Hopkins speeches in the council campaign of 1929. But the political writers were not really prepared for the strength that Bender showed in the council

after Maschke had decided to give Hopkins the bounce. He almost had a majority.

The census of 1930 had shown that Ohio was entitled to another seat in the House, and the congressman was to be elected at large. Bender's campaign against the Marshall Bill had given him all the statewide prominence he needed, and he was elected to congress. When Roosevelt's 1936 landslide swept out all Republicans, Bender lost his seat to Stephen M. Young (also from Cleveland and destined to become United States senator twenty years later). He later regained the seat and served several terms in the House.

By this time, Bender had learned how to make money out of politics, and unhesitatingly did so. He established himself in the insurance business, following the example of Gongwer and Davis. After Maschke died and Davis was defeated for reelection in 1935, Bender and DeMaoribus controlled what little patronage the Republicans had left. There wasn't much in the forties. When John W. Bricker was governor, there were again some state jobs. DeMaoribus had his own business interests (primarily a brewery that had been rebuilt legally after prohibition ended), and Bender had his insurance business. Also Bender had perfected the technique of continuous fund-raising.

Political fund-raising is a shadowy business, skirting the law regularly. It has always been possible (still is, today) to raise fabulous sums for elections and never completely disclose their source, or how they are spent. The laws are strict about amounts that can legally be given to individual candidates, and reporting them promptly to election boards, but they are muddy about gifts to committees. So actual funds given by corporations and unions, and lobbyists representing them, almost never appear in full as campaign expenses. All the political pros know this, and ignore the law, with tongue in cheek.

Bender had discovered how easy it was to raise funds during his Marshall Bill referendum, and he continued to raise money for his campaigns for congress. He was not the first, nor the last, to become expert in the perpetual campaign fund, which is described by cynical

pros as "hunting out of season." His expertise at it resulted in an attempt to send him to jail for violating the letter of the law. His sudden rise to the top in the thirties caused some of his former friends to suspect him. Since the Democrats controlled the prosecutor's office, they were eager to find witnesses against him. He was indicted, but acquitted.

It was about this time that many of his former associates and admirers began to wonder if George had not used them, by dropping their names, to promote his own ends. He had begun to distribute expensive Christmas and birthday presents to journalists; instead of trivially inexpensive belts and cuff links, he gave Swiss watches, cases of liquor, and so forth.

Bender meanwhile had become completely a Republican regular, one of the inner Ohio group. He was for Taft for president against General Eisenhower in 1952. He had become the regular cheerleader for Ohio in big political rallies, leading crowds in singing the Battle Hymn of the Republic in a booming baritone and getting the old-time evangelical quality (which he never really lost) into his voice. He was a ubiquitous and ebullient figure around Washington, and on the friendliest terms with Washington correspondents.

When Senator Taft died in 1953, Bender reached for the opportunity to go to the Senate himself, and opposed Tom Burke, who had been appointed by Governor Lausche, in the 1954 election. With the help of newspapers (including the *Plain Dealer*, which decided that President Eisenhower needed Republican help in the Senate), he beat Burke by a narrow margin. But George was not a United States senator long. Two years later, Lausche, then invincible in Ohio when running for any office, took on Bender, and defeated him easily.

Bender by this time had succumbed completely to the lush political life on the Potomac, a totally different atmosphere from that around Columbus when he was a young teetotaler fighting the corrupt dries. He had relaxed his rigid views

against drinking and smoking and indulged in both. He threw lavish parties, which included old Ohio friends, lobbyists, journalists, and members of his staff. One of his sons-in-law, Joe Bartlett, was appointed reading clerk in Congress. He bought a big estate in Chagrin Falls, which was the scene of large and delightful parties, where liquor flowed freely. The young George, a crusader for purity and honesty, had metamorphosed into a famous host, whose generosity was fabulous and acquaintance universal. He was congressman, political boss, and goodwill ambassador all at the same time. He also had some strange friends, including a few from the politically pragmatic Teamsters Union, which supported him regularly. Unions didn't usually back Republicans.

During his campaigns for the United States Senate, Bender pulled out all the old tricks from his political bag, and several new ones, too. A mysterious explosion shook his garage in Chagrin Falls early one morning, and he blamed it on political enemies. Newspaper gossip insisted that George himself was aware of just when and where the bomb was going to explode. It did little damage, but a bomb story got into the papers.

After his defeat by Lausche, Bender became morose, instead of his usual bouncy self, and seemed to fear the future. He was obviously depressed. A few months after he left the Senate (but not Washington), he came back to his Chagrin Falls estate for a visit, and was found dead in his garage, presumably from monoxide fumes. He may have had a heart attack after driving in.

After Bender died, the entire responsibility for Cleveland Republican affairs fell on DeMaioribus, and the party became practically nonexistent. Sonny hung on, however, until he died in 1966. Then the party organization took on a new lease on life, under Saul Stillman and Robert Hughes.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Things Look Better: 1941-1952

The return of euphoria in Cleveland during the Burton administration in the late 1930s continued as the 1940s approached. One reason was that the outbreak of World War II in Europe started business humming again, and finally put an end to the unemployment that had plagued the whole country for nearly ten years. President Roosevelt hadn't succeeded in bringing the country out of the depression yet, and as late as 1937, a new recession hit hard the iron and steel business in the Middle West.

The more Adolf Hitler succeeded in his seizures of adjacent countries, and the darker the storm clouds grew as Hitler took over in Austria, and put the pressure on Prime Minister Chamberlain of Britain and Daladier of France to let him take over the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia, the more the domestic problems of the United States began to be solved. Our country was definitely isolationist at this point, but Roosevelt, in his determined but oblique way, was gradually edging toward war. When England started to rearm in 1938, she ordered large quantities of military aircraft from the United States. When England entered the war in September 1939, after Hitler had invaded Poland, our munitions industry got another big boost, and soon afterward, American destroyers were helping convoy the war material to England.

By early 1940, it became apparent that Roosevelt was going to break precedent and run for a third term, on the basis that he alone was qualified to lead the country during these parlous times of half-war and half-peace. He sensed that the mood of the country was turning away from isolationism, as resentment against Hitler increased, and many concerned citizens felt it was only a matter of time before the United States would have to get in. A bill to authorize the military draft passed the House of Representatives by only one vote, although the president had nationalized the National Guard and called up reserves in both army and navy in the summer of 1940. The Ohio National Guard went into training in southern camps.

Roosevelt won his third term easily against Wendell Willkie, the surprise Republican nominee who had beaten out Senator Robert Taft and Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, largely because Willkie had substantially the same views on foreign policy as he did.

The gathering storm in Europe had taken Cleveland citizens' minds off their local difficulties. The welfare mess and unemployment had receded, Eliot Ness had cleaned up the police department and some of the unions, and the two Great Lakes expos had brought visitors in to spend money in downtown stores and go to movies and good restaurants. The new stadium had not only accommodated the Sunday baseball games of the Indians but had been used for the Schmeling-Stribling heavyweight championship fight, an outdoor performance of the grand opera *Aida*, and for a Eucharistic Congress, which brought in thousands of Catholics from all over the world. The Metropolitan Opera Company was playing a week here every spring at the Public Hall. The Cleveland Advertising Club was making big moves with its "Come to Cleveland Committee" under president Charles H. Kellstadt, a business dynamo who was head of the Kinney & Levan store, and later became head man of Sears Roebuck. Things would have looked unusually good, as the Yo-Yo swung upward again, except that the big banks continued to

exercise great caution in lending, after the mammoth collapse of the Van Sweringens' empire. The liquidation was still going on, and many owners of the holding companies, Allegheny Corporation and Blue Ridge Corporation, found their stock was worthless. Another big bust had occurred in Cleveland during the depression, that of Continental Shares, a project of Cyrus S. Eaton, which had been widely sold to businessmen through the respected old brokerage firm of Otis & Company.

Because the Terminal Tower development had moved the Higbee Company from its long-established store at East Thirteenth Street and Euclid to the new building on the Public Square, the Euclid Avenue business firms developed schizophrenia. Halle Brothers Company hung on to its location on Euclid opposite East Twelfth Street and Sterling & Welch did likewise on the other side of the street. The May Company at Ontario and Euclid, was happy to remain there, across the street from the new Higbee store. Around the corner on Prospect was the Bailey Company and halfway up Euclid was William Taylor Son & Company.

This shifting of the downtown axis toward the Square resulted in a tug-of-war between upper Euclid and lower Euclid. The Upper group had the Playhouse Square theaters and restaurants, as well as Halle's and Sterling & Welch. The Lower group had Higbee, May, Taylor and Bailey. The specialty shops and smaller stores, of which there were many then, grouped around the big boys, and each group organized an association, for pressure and lobbying.

There wasn't much physical change along the avenue. Many of the smaller shops were renting from absentee landlords in Boston and New York. The title to others was held by trusts, the beneficiaries of which were second and third generation descendants of some of the old millionaires who had built up the original downtown Cleveland. It was hard to interest such landlords in putting up new buildings. They were content to make a profit, pay their taxes, get by with as little maintenance as possible, and sit tight. A great deal of the Euclid Avenue property was in the form of ninety-nine-

year leases. So a sort of mild stagnation had taken place, now that the worst of the depression was over. The shops and small stores were pretty much in the same places as they had been in the twenties. The biggest change had been the opening of two new Stouffer restaurants and a big Childs' restaurant, after prohibition had been repealed.

It was in this atmosphere, half self-satisfaction and half inertia in Cleveland, and an overhanging worry about the United States possibly getting into the war in Europe, that the city made another of its volatile political turnovers, from Mayor Harold H. Burton to Mayor Frank J. Lausche. Burton had taken off for the larger horizons of a United States Senator in 1940. He turned over the city hall to Edward Blythin, his law director, who had previously been solicitor for a dozen suburbs, but had never run for office in the city of Cleveland. Blythin was an able man of excellent reputation (who later became a common pleas judge) but he did not have the campaign charisma to match that of the man the Democrats chose to lead the big comeback that kept them in power for the next thirty years, Common Pleas Judge Frank J. Lausche.

Lausche had been warming up on the sidelines for several years. He had received high praise from the newspapers. He was aces-high with the ethnic groups that held the balance of power. Urged on strongly by Press Editor Seltzer, in 1941 he made his move from the bench to higher office.

Frank Lausche was one of the strangest birds ever to fly high above the jungles of Ohio politics. He was elected municipal judge, common pleas judge, mayor of Cleveland (twice), governor of Ohio (five times and once defeated), senator from Ohio (twice). He had the magic formula for reaching the voters and gaining their confidence. Yet it's hard to put a finger on exactly what made him such a big winner. Probably because he was such a superb psychologist. He always had his ear to the ground. (His detractors insist that he had both ears to the ground and his feet on either side of the fence.)

Lausche had strong appeal to the cosmopolitan groups, the

tightly knit little enclaves of Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Slovenians, Italians, Germans, Serbs, Croats, and so forth. Lausche was one of them, the son of Slovenian immigrants who came over from Ljubljana, in what is now Yugoslavia. His mother was the woman to whom all the neighbors brought all their troubles. He grew up with several brothers and sisters in modest surroundings on St. Clair Avenue. He played sandlot baseball and was good enough to play third base in the minor leagues. He was in the army in World War I. He studied law at night law school.

It was not easy, unless you watched him campaign, to understand how this young descendant of Catholic immigrants could appeal to the white Anglo-Saxon, Protestant farmers of central and southern Ohio, a deeply conservative, prejudiced lot. Yet he did appeal to them. He had them believing he was another Abraham Lincoln, a rugged, independent, unbossed type, representative of all the good old American verities, beholden to no one. To the ethnic groups in Cleveland, he was simply one of their own. To the downstate small-towners he was for economy in government, against unions and bosses, in favor of home, mother, and the flag. He was one of the common people, who drove an old car, wore unpressed suits and didn't bother to comb his hair. His bushy, uncombed mane was his trademark.

Lausche's early tries for public office were failures. He first ran for the legislature in the twenties, nominated on Gongwer's Democratic slate. But the county was heavily Republican then, and he was swamped. He was active in the Slovenian twenty-third ward, the greatest Democratic stronghold, then dominated by Adam Damm, but he had friends in other ethnic bailiwicks. When he ran for municipal judge he was easily elected. Before his term was completed, he ran for common pleas judge, and won there too.

Lausche was regarded by courtroom lawyers as a first-rate judge. His temperament on the bench was even and judicious, he knew as much

law as the older judges, and he was particularly good in equity cases, which depend mostly on

common sense. He didn't try to duck tough cases, was fearless and could not be reached through the usual political pressures. It was not surprising when County Prosecutor Frank Cullitan and Safety Director Eliot Ness needed a judge to issue a search warrant to get into the notorious Harvard Club, that they went to Lausche. With his keen sense of knowing what the voters would approve and an inborn tendency to be a crusader, Judge Lausche issued the warrant. The resulting favorable publicity set Lausche up as a local hero, along with Ness and Cullitan.

President Roosevelt had swept Cuyahoga County in heavy landslides in 1932 and 1936, and it seemed inevitable that the moment Burton ceased to run for mayor, a Democrat would win. Ray Miller, who had become Democratic chairman, was favorable to Lausche; Frank had helped Miller defeat Witt in 1931. Lausche was easily elected over Blythin in November 1941.

His cabinet consisted mostly of good Democrats recommended by Miller, but there was one exception, Eliot Ness. Over him Lausche and Miller fell out and remained bitter enemies for twenty-five years. Miller had accepted union campaign contributions with the understanding Ness would depart, and said Lausche had agreed. Lausche denied it. The Press and *Plain Dealer* urged Lausche to keep Ness, saying the job should not be political and Ness had cleaned up the town. Lausche went along with the editors and infuriated Miller. It was this incident that first started in circulation the story that Lausche did not keep his promises. Lausche turned it to his advantage by denouncing bosses at every opportunity. He dramatized himself as a rugged independent.

Lausche had no sooner taken office than the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, the United States declared war on Germany, and everything became abnormal. Men hurried to join the army and navy, by the thousands; ration cards for gasoline, sugar, liquor, tires, and so forth became a reality; wages and prices were frozen. The booster efforts of the Cleveland Advertising Club and Chamber of Commerce

turned into the War Efforts Committee. No one will know whether Lausche would have made a good mayor in normal times, but he was certainly what the doctor ordered in wartime. No one could make a better patriotic speech. Naturally an emotional, sentimental man, and with the devotion to the United States that is more intense among the ethnic groups than the sons of early settlers, he could always bring tears to listeners with his flag-waving oratory. He spoke early and often to any sort of public meeting, urging wholehearted support of the war. He regretted that he was now too old for active service. Mayor Lausche was easily reelected in 1943. In 1944 he won the Democratic nomination for governor and in November was elected by a small margin, about ten thousand votes. He won the nomination by getting a tremendous majority in Cuyahoga County and just holding his own downstate. After he was nominated, he spent the rest of the campaign going to every county fair he could reach, talking to citizens on street corners, just visiting and shaking hands. He made few formal speeches, but had friends in every normally Republican county. Somehow he managed to put together the winning combination -- Republicans downstate and Democrats in Cleveland. He had a lot of contacts with supporters of former Governor Vic Donahey, whom Lausche emulated by following Vic's pattern of economy and "down with the bosses." He paid little attention personally to Cleveland -- the newspapers and the voters were all for him up here anyway. He could carry the county by simply filing his petitions and occasionally showing up at a meeting. He spent his time mostly downstate.

From that time on, Lausche carried on a perpetual campaign in the small Ohio towns, demonstrating that he was a man of the people, fighting to save the taxpayers' money and preserve the noble American virtues. It was an amazing performance, for he ran as a Democrat and acted like a Republican. It was the only way a descendant of Slovenian immigrants could possibly have convinced the farmers and small-town Protestants. Lausche had them transfixed for more than thirty years.

He had only one serious setback. At the end of his first term as governor in 1946, he got caught in the backlash against high meat prices and price controls. Directly after the war's end, there was growing resentment against all wartime restrictions. An active black market was operating in meat, butter, liquor, and women's stockings. Returning veterans found they could not get places to rent, because of rent control. The wartime occupants simply declined to move out, though they were using too much space. All the Democrats in office caught the full force of the backlash. Lausche, though in no way responsible for a condition that was national, was caught in the downdraft, and Attorney General Thomas J. Herbert, a handsome and popular Republican, ran against Lausche and defeated him. Lausche was cut to the quick, practically disappeared from the statehouse in mid-November and December, and during that time, his subordinates ran wild, granting last minute political favors through liquor permits and pardons.

Despite this, Lausche didn't sulk long on the sidelines. He ran again in 1948, and this time beat Herbert. As usual Lausche ran his own campaign, paying little attention to the national or county tickets; till the very last minute he ignored Truman until the president whistle-stopped through Ohio. He was reelected in 1950 and in 1952, despite General Eisenhower's Republican landslide, and again in 1954. By 1956, he figured it was time to try for the Senate, against George Bender. Bender was a soft touch, and Lausche won easily despite another Eisenhower landslide. He seemed to be at his strongest when there was a strong Republican trend. In 1962, he was reelected senator.

The Republicans seemed demoralized every time they tried to find a candidate to oppose Lausche. Charles P. Taft of Cincinnati tried for governor, and lost. State Auditor James A. Rhodes, who against others was a Republican powerhouse, didn't get to first base against Lausche. John Marshall Briley, a competent businessman from Toledo, didn't get off the ground. No Democrat seriously challenged him in the primary and every Republican seemed hexed. Lausche

had no trouble getting campaign funds from Republican businessmen and always got widespread newspaper support. The Democratic chairmen in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo, and Dayton ground their teeth at the thought of him, for he made his own appointments, and was strictly unorthodox. He thrived on the anti-boss legend.

Lausche leaned so far backward in avoiding any intimation that he could be pressured for favors that regular Democrats claimed his enemies could get more from him than friends. A large county chairman told me that he had once gone to Governor Lausche with a simple request to appoint a competent man of known integrity to a state job in his county. "The job has to be filled, governor," he said. "This man has all the qualifications and besides, he is an old friend of yours." "Oh, I couldn't appoint a friend," the chairman reported that Lausche said. "It would look as if I was being influenced." (The man didn't get the job.)

All during his office-holding, there is no doubt he paid more attention to Seltzer and Bellamy and the political writers of their two papers than to party officials. The papers liked mavericks and Lausche was a maverick, for sure. Another reason they liked him was that he was always making news.

His performance during and after Eisenhower's election in 1952, was typical. Lausche sensed correctly that Eisenhower would carry Ohio by a big vote. He felt strong himself, but he wanted the Eisenhower fans, many of whom were independents, to vote for him. So when General Dwight D. Eisenhower came through Columbus, for a brief speech on the statehouse lawn, and the general was brought up to a side entrance before going on the platform, Governor Lausche carefully inconspicuous (but making sure the reporters and photographers were watching) made a sudden appearance at the entrance, greeted the candidate with great cordiality, then slipped back to his office while Eisenhower went to the speaker's stand. It got Lausche as much attention as if he had taken part in the formal meeting. The Ohio papers gave it, big play.

Even after the election, Lausche was still playing the bipartisan role. One of the strangest political sights ever seen took place at the Sulgrave Club during the day prior to Eisenhower's inauguration in January 1953. The Ohio Republicans, heady with triumph after twenty lean years of Roosevelt and Truman, were staging a huge reception at the club and all the party hotshots were there in the receiving line -- Senators Taft and John W. Bricker; George M. Humphrey, the Cleveland millionaire who had been appointed secretary of the treasury; Congressman Frances Bolton, Attorney General C. William O'Neill, George Bender, and all the councilmen, legislators, ward leaders who could crowd in. The place was packed; at least five hundred people were going through the receiving line when a commotion broke out in the rear room. It was Frank Lausche, the Democratic governor of Ohio, slipping in the back door, to come to the Republican reception. Naturally, the crowd started to pay him more attention than the orthodox receiving line. Lausche, with great friendliness and mock modesty, loved it, and was shaking hands like mad.

The back door performance at the Sulgrave Club wasn't the only Lausche show of the day. That night at the posh Chevy Chase Club, the Republicans were still celebrating, with a formal dinner, at which Taft, Bricker, Humphrey, and the other top dogs were to speak. Who should show up again but Governor Lausche! He was asked to say a few words, and got more applause than all the others. He was obviously at home in that group. Which was not unusual, since he had supported Senator Taft in his fight for reelection against the ludicrous Democratic nominee, State Treasurer "Jumping Joe" Ferguson. Lausche had not campaigned for Taft, but just before election he had said, "I cannot vote for Ferguson."

When Lausche reached the Senate, he still could not be catalogued as a Democrat. He voted with the party to organize the Senate, but after that, he was strictly a maverick; made his own decisions, played his own game, and was often on the outs with Lyndon B. Johnson, then the

majority leader. He opposed deficit spending and refused to be bullied by the

unions. (Both these positions made a hit with Republican fat cats.) He was so much a party irregular that when Democrat Stephen M. Young was sworn in, Young refused to have Lausche go through the usual protocol of walking down the aisle with him. The two were seldom able to agree on appointments to federal jobs. He was a strong foe of communism and happy to serve on the foreign affairs committee. He had few specific programs, few cronies, and little influence on the policies of the Senate or the White House. His relations with the state and local Democrats were so strained that he was not even asked to take part as a delegate to the national conventions of 1964 or 1968.

He got away with being a perpetual lone wolf, right up to the time of his biggest defeat, which occurred, of all times, in the Democratic primary of 1968. (When he lost the senatorial nomination to John J. Gilligan, that finished him.) One of the reasons he stayed in office as long as he did is that he had a certain mystique about him --his awkward phraseology, which was hard to define in simple English; his serious mien and air of preoccupation that indicated he knew things that ordinary men did not, somewhat like the prophets of old; his bushy, wiry pompadour, seemingly uncombed (he seldom wore a hat; he was always losing them); his ability to stir emotion with his splendid voice and oratorical phrases. He had all the qualifications of an actor -- a deep resonant voice, well-timed delivery, appropriate gestures, and an unerring sense of the dramatic. You had to admire his technique, though you were not quite sure afterward what he had said. One thing you were sure of -- he was focusing attention on Lausche as a man to be remembered (remembered favorably at the next election), a man of principle, a cut above the ordinary politico who thought in terms of jobs and favors.

His number one asset was his charming wife, Jane, a thoroughly likeable woman who gave the impression of being a nonpolitical, simple-minded soul, whose mission in life was to see that her

preoccupied, absent-minded husband always had a few bucks of change in his pocket, a clean shirt in his

valise, and was taken to the airport on time. Jane was always amiable, always amused, always well-groomed -- qualities that endeared her to the Republican women. They figured that Jane was a martyr to Frank's idiosyncrasies and that she hated public life. The opposite is probably true. She enjoyed it and the innocent-lamb role she played was as effective as Frank's mystique.

Jane had plenty of physical trouble in the last ten years of Frank's public life, for she was accident-prone. In Columbus she was in a serious auto accident that bashed in her face, required prolonged plastic surgery, and left her with permanent dizziness from an inner-ear derangement. Later she fractured her pelvis and her arm in a fall and was in the hospital for several months afterward.

Jane was beloved by all the cosmopolitan families among whom they circulated in Cleveland. She was a Protestant and this, too, permitted Frank to work both sides of the street. They went to different churches in an irregular sort of way, but did not make a big thing of it, and managed to avoid most of the criticism that comes from bigots, because they were so amiable and clever.

It was hard to figure out how much of Lausche was phony and how much was real. There is no question that he believed everything he did was sincere, and according to his conscience. There is also no question that he knew what his every act, vote, or speech would mean in terms of public reaction and news coverage. How much of his inattention to little personal details of dress or protocol was staged, and how much was simply part of his oddball way of life is impossible to determine -- his losing of hats, missing planes, and keeping no fixed schedules. (Reporters trying to cover him went out of their minds.)

He showed up once at a Gridiron Dinner in a tuxedo, the only man who did not wear white tie and tails. He had forgotten to pack them, he

said. This unorthodoxy seemed not to embarrass him, and the other guests and reporters were not entirely surprised.

Carl Friebolin was rough on him in his Anvil Revues, but Lausche never missed one. Carl always wrote Lausche into the script. (Fred Stashower played the part so often that eventually he seemed to look like Lausche.) Toward the end of Lausche's last term as governor, Friebolin had Fred wearing a stovepipe hat and inverness cape, a la Lincoln, and meditating on whether he might be assassinated. The skit brought tremendous laughs, and Lausche, sitting among the goats, appeared to enjoy it, too. Then after the show, he'd go out to Carl's small party for the cast and a few other friends, and drink beer and smoke cigars (he never seemed to carry any of his own except an occasional White Owl, and was always borrowing one). A week or so later, Friebolin would invite him out to Vermilion with some federal judges. Lausche never showed rancor about the kidding. He would have been hurt if he had been left out.

The partisan facts of life finally caught up with Lausche in the form of a young Democrat named John J. Gilligan, who had served one term as a congressman from Cincinnati. Lausche had not been seriously challenged in a Democratic primary since his first run for governor in 1944. Once nominated, he regularly made monkeys of his Republican opponents (except in 1946, the year of the meat shortage). At first Gilligan's bid for the senatorial nomination appeared quixotic. It soon developed that the long years of quarreling with the county chairmen and the union bosses were catching up with Lausche. Gilligan found himself in possession of a big campaign fund, from the unions, big enough for an extensive campaign on TV. Lausche, on the other hand, could raise no substantial sums from his Republican friends, who didn't sense that he was in any real danger in the primary. Lausche did not go over well on TV. He was on the defensive for the first time, and Gilligan based his attack on the allegation that Lausche wasn't really a Democrat. As it finally turned out, Lausche did not hold his own in his home

county, which had pulled him through in the past. Gilligan won the nomination.

Lausche had his revenge. He supported William Saxbe, the Republican nominee, a country-squire type who had been speaker of the Ohio House and later attorney general. Saxbe won. He later was appointed attorney general of the United States and then ambassador to India.

(Two years later Gilligan ran for governor and was elected over Roger Cloud, Republican. He lost for reelection in 1974 to ex-governor James A. Rhodes.)

Lausche was as much of a loner in national politics as Wayne Morse, who started as a Democrat and turned officially into a Republican, before he was finally defeated. Lausche didn't change parties, but he seemed constitutionally unable to play on a team with anyone. A cardinal rule of politics is that you campaign for the whole ticket. Lausche campaigned for no one but himself. Because of his uncanny sensitivity to public reaction, political writers watched him like a weather vane. His deft maneuvers when presidential candidates came to Ohio were something to watch. When John F. Kennedy came to Cleveland in 1960, Lausche rode in Kennedy's car for a while, but disappeared soon after. This meant to the reporters that Kennedy would run well in Cleveland, but not so well downstate. Which is what happened. In 1948, Lausche got aboard President Truman's train for a short ride on the last hop through Ohio. This indicated to the writers that Lausche felt Truman would not get clobbered in Ohio. Until that time, Lausche had been notably absent at meetings for Truman. In that last week, Lausche apparently had learned something from the farm belt. (Truman finally squeaked through with a seven thousand majority in Ohio.)

He certainly knew how to get himself elected, and he certainly knew how to persuade editors and conservative businessmen that he was a statesman.

When Lausche became governor in January 1945, his law director, Thomas A. Burke, succeeded him as mayor. Burke was elected easily the following November, and had no serious opposition from Republican candidates in 1947, 1949, and 1951. He had been an excellent assistant prosecutor under Ray Miller, and a competent law director for Lausche. He was the fair-haired boy of the newspapers, personally a charmer a good speaker with a keen sense of humor, and a shrewd politician who made no major mistakes during nearly nine years at city hall.

Burke was not the type to go out looking for new worlds to conquer, to set himself up as a doer and an activist for the next election. The local Republican organization had slid into a position of such impotence in the city under the dual leadership of George Bender and Sonny DeMaoiribus that it could elect only a half dozen councilmen out of thirty-three, and was regularly defeated in contests for county offices. So Burke had nothing to fear. He had the newspapers with him, the business community cooperated with him, his friend and patron, Lausche, was governor, and the Democrats were in the White House all the time he was mayor. All he needed to do was coast, and that was mostly what he did. It seemed for a while like a sort of golden age in the city that was so habitually volatile.

There were the usual problems of adjustment after the long world war, and returning veterans found it difficult to get rental apartments, because wartime rent controls had frozen in a lot of tenants at cheap rent and more space than they needed. Inflation had shot up prices of all houses, and it took a long while for new building to catch up with the demand. A great rush to build new small homes in the suburbs took place, and the veterans often moved into little communities that hadn't adequately planned paved streets, schools, sewer and water lines. This wasn't the city of Cleveland's problem, but it was the start of an outward movement of population that has continued to this day, and has set in motion many big economic changes that affected the community.

Almost before anyone realized it, because of this outward movement, the whole picture of retailing changed, and the big downtown stores began to set up branches in the suburbs. Sears Roebuck, with Charley Kellstadt as local boss, was most aggressive (though it had no downtown outlet, it did have big stores on east and west sides). May Company got busy, with branches in University Heights and the new Parmatown shop-

ping center. Higbee and Halle came on more slowly, but Halle had a branch in the Westlake-Rocky River neighborhood, and a small store at Shaker Square. Finally, Higbee and Halle eventually put up stores at opposite ends of the new Severance Center in Cleveland Heights. By this time, in the early sixties, enormous discount stores were doing business in all the suburbs, east, west and south, were open on Sundays and evenings, and pulling in a lot of business. The population had become more and more mobile, as soon as the wartime freeze on automobiles was lifted.

Public transportation within the metropolitan community was having big problems, too. The Cleveland Transit System, which had done a flourishing business during the war, had started to change from trackless trolleys, which used the old overhead wires, to new buses, and was revising routes to cope with population shifts and extending service to Rocky River, Bay Village, Cleveland Heights, and so forth. The main item of change, however, was the building of a new CTS rapid transit line, from Windermere in East Cleveland to the Union Terminal.

This new rapid line became a major concern of Mayor Burke. In order to get the funds to build it, the structure of the transit board had to be changed, and CTS was required to set aside an amortization fund for the new bonds, and to pay operating costs out of the fare box. The five-man transit board (one appointment a year) had to be approved by the council. One of Burke's first appointments was Allen J. Lowe, the popular downtown hotel manager.

Though the Van Sweringens' grandiose railroad empire had collapsed, it had left a serendipity to the city of Cleveland in the form of

right of way next to the New York Central tracks, all the way in from Collinwood to the Square. All that was needed was to lay the tracks and hang overhead wires. In the last few miles, from about East Fifty-fifth Street, the CTS rapid could share the tracks with the Shaker rapid transit. The CTS rapid was to be built in stages, the East Cleveland-to-Square section constructed first, and after that, it would be extended to the west side, as far as Triskett Road and Lorain Avenue. To connect with these main rapid lines, feeder bus routes were set up, with transfer privileges.

It was a happy sort of dream, supposed to entice citizens to leave their cars at home, or else drive to the end of the line and come in on the rapid. The principal trouble was that the East Cleveland section did not tap the main centers of population. It did cut through the Western Reserve-Lakeside Hospital community at Cedar Road, but it ran too far south after that to pick up passengers from the populous Hough, Euclid, and Wade Park districts, which in the 1950s were beginning to fill up with hundreds of blacks who had emigrated from Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia. So the CTS rapid did not start to pay for itself until the west side line was built, and tapped the populous suburbs of Lakewood, West Park, and beyond. The feeder-bus plan was only mildly successful.

Anyway, the dedication of the East Cleveland line was done with much hoopla while Burke was still mayor, and the "we are on the move" attitude was given great attention by the newspapers.

About this time, too, airport extension became a hot problem. The city built a landing strip for small planes on the filled-land on the lakefront, to take some of the traffic away from the Hopkins airport, which was growing like a weed, requiring a new terminal building and new wings. The lakefront strip was named the Burke Airport after Tom, the smiling Irishman, had left office; later it was enlarged to accommodate small jet planes, with a terminal building and parking facility.

The late forties and early fifties could have been a time to rebuild the downtown and avert the dismal deterioration that became so obvious twenty years later. In addition to Burke's tendency to take things easy,

and not go out looking for trouble, there were two other factors of inertia: (1) the caution of the big Cleveland banks, and (2) the ownership of so much Euclid Avenue property by absentee landlords or trusts. The banks were still gun-shy after the traumatic collapse of the Van Sweringens. The Union Commerce Bank had taken over the big ornate headquarters of the Union Trust at East Ninth

Street and Euclid. The Guardian Trust did not reopen, and ultimately paid out only 85 percent on deposits; its building at East Sixth and Euclid was eventually taken over by the National City Bank. The Central National Bank absorbed the Midland Bank and had headquarters in one of the Terminal group. All of them were cautious and many times in the ensuing twenty years new small businesses that wanted to expand got a cool reception when they wanted to borrow money and had to go to New York or Chicago for a big loan.

The Cleveland Trust Company, the biggest bank and the one that had best survived the crisis of 1933, set the pattern of caution, however, largely because of a surprising change in the top leadership. George Gund, a big property owner and industrial investor, had been quietly buying up the bank's stock, and at one annual meeting showed up with enough of it to get himself elected president. The business big shots had expected when Harris Creech retired that I. F. Freiburger, the vice-president and trust officer and a man greatly respected, would succeed him as president. Gund's astonishing takeover leapfrogged Freiburger and left him in second place.

Gund was a shrewd investor, who operated quietly. Practically no one expected him to become head of one of the largest banks in the Midwest. He had owned and operated a brewery on the west side, and in the depression had bought up Kaffee-Hag stock cheaply and turned it into handsome profits later. He owned some small downtown rooming-house-type hotels. His fortune grew, but his lifestyle gave no indication of it, for he wore old clothes and ancient hats and lived modestly. The county-estate, country-club life was not for him, and he was known as a tight man with a buck. Gund's thrifty personality dominated the bank

after he gained control, and because so much of Cleveland's wealth was held in trust by this biggest bank, extreme conservatism became the fashion. Though much of the downtown was starting to deteriorate, no new promoters with big ideas, like the Van Sweringens, appeared to buy up the real estate from the absentee landlords and the old-family trusts, and put up new buildings.

As the retail business began to drift out toward the suburbs, there were some important changes in middle-sized downtown retailing. The big and famous grocery stores, Chandler & Rudd and Southworth's, which delivered quality foods, gave up under the competition of the increasingly popular suburban supermarkets. W. B. Davis Company merged with Sterling and Welch and the Lindner Company. Changes in ownership took place in the five-and-ten-cent stores, which in the inflation, were becoming twenty-five-and-fifty-cent stores. The ferment had started, but no big new office buildings were erected, no new hotels planned (although the convention business was good because of the Public Hall). The Cleveland Trust Company main office at East Ninth and Euclid still remained in a small, dirty, old domed building, although the bank had had to move its expanding operations into an annex next door on East Ninth. The Gund bank was not planning to compete with the ornate Union Commerce building across the street.

An unexpected newspaper strike, the first in Cleveland's history, shut down the *Plain Dealer* for a month in January 1946. The chairman of the pressmen's union, a tough Irishman named Emmett Flanagan, objected to an editorial that was set to run the following morning, and refused to allow the presses to turn unless it was removed. Editor Bellamy refused to allow the union to tell him how to edit his paper, and a 2 A.M. confrontation occurred, among Bellamy, Sterling Graham, and Flanagan. The result was a shutdown of all the three papers the next day. Since it seemed to be a personality clash, the general expectation was that it would be settled in a day or two, but it lasted nearly a month before Mayor Burke and federal mediators could get the international union president to come up from Tennessee and tell the local union it

was violating its contract. During the entire period, the *Plain Dealer* kept its whole employee force on the payroll. (Six years later, when the *Plain Dealer* and News started to publish out of one building, Flanagan was appointed superintendent of the press room, a management position.)

After the war ended, Nat Howard (who had been on leave to work in Washington with the Office of Censorship) returned to resume his old job as editor of the News, which had been filled by Hugh Kane as acting editor. The promised infusion of new money for promotion, to cope with the growing Press, did not materialize. Instead the Forest City management decided to try to save money on production costs by moving the *Plain Dealer* into the News building at East Eighteenth and Superior, where the morning, afternoon, and Sunday papers could be produced out of one composing room, engraving room, stereotype room, and press room. To do this would mean putting a new building alongside and on top the News and wrapping it around the News building while it was still operating, a difficult, expensive feat of construction.

Something had to be done to give more room to the *Plain Dealer*, for in the two or three years after the war, when newsprint rationing ended, and the stores bought more advertising, the Sunday paper doubled in size, and the composing and press rooms were bursting at the seams. Buying enough additional newsprint for the bigger Sunday paper became a major headache for General Manager Graham.

One of the biggest morale boosters for the town during the Burke mayoralty was the sudden rise to the top of the Cleveland Indians after Bill Veeck and some friends bought the club from Alva Bradley and associates, who had owned it for twenty years. Tremendous crowds came out to see baseball after the war, as the big stars returned from the service. Bob Feller, the strikeout king, was back, and Lou Boudreau, the youngest manager, had taken over, and within a year or two, the Indians won the pennant in 1948, and after that the World Series, from the Boston Braves. Thousands thronged Euclid Avenue to greet the team, after their return with the big prize.

The oddball Veeck himself added to the color of the downtown scene, and attracted a coterie of enthusiasts that included many newsmen, public officials, and racetrack types. He was completely unorthodox in dress, always appearing in an open-throated sports shirt, and hobbling with difficulty on an artificial leg (he had had several operations on his leg after osteomyelitis developed while he was in the Marine Corps, and finally had it amputated).

It was a high old period, and the downtown was alive with entertainment. Short Vincent Avenue, where the bookies hung out, was the magnet for B-girls and bars. Numbers games flourished in the growing slums. At the city hall, Mayor Burke coasted along as if he'd go on forever. He mowed down mayoral candidates Eliot Ness, Ray C. Miller (the Republican Ray), Johnny O'Donnell, and Judge Bill McDermott in rapid order. He was a buddy of Louis Seltzer, Paul Bellamy, Sterling Graham, and Nat Howard, and there was no powerful criticism of him. His executive assistant, Joseph Philip Sullivan, one of the brightest political minds of any age, warded off trouble until he was appointed to the municipal bench by Governor Lausche. Seltzer, who had nudged Lausche into running for mayor, was gaining more and more power each year as Burke followed the Lausche pattern of paying the most attention to what the editors were saying. Boss control in both parties began to diminish.

There was even an attempt in this period to get a new county home-rule charter passed. Long sessions were held by an elite charter commission, and an acceptable charter finally agreed on by the framers. The Citizens League and the newspapers supported it. As usual, most of the citizens ignored it and it failed to carry enough suburbs. Nor was there much enthusiasm for it by the central city voters. That old devil, fragmentation, was still present in Cleveland, even though by the time Burke left office (to become senator after Bob Taft died) the movement to the suburbs was well advanced, and the central city had started to decay rapidly.

Tom Burke and his vivacious wife, Jo, were universally popular. Tom inherited the support of the ethnic groups from Lausche, who was still around in the background. He had support from the black Democrats, too, for their upward push did not begin until Burke had been out of office ten years. He seemed to lead a charmed life politically. Unfortunately, the charm did not carry over statewide. Congressman Bender, better known throughout Ohio after running for statewide office for twenty years, beat Burke in 1954 in a close fight.

After that defeat, the only time he ever lost, Burke dropped out of politics. He had inherited some money, and did not need to work hard as a lawyer. At one time, he bought a piece of the Indians, in one of the groups that followed Veeck as owners, and he served on a few corporate boards. For the next ten years, however, he enjoyed the role of relaxed elder statesman. His wife, Jo, died in the mid-sixties, after a long illness. His second wife, formerly Mrs. Evelyn Sedgewick, survived him when he died of cancer in 1971.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Undercover Newsprint-Radio Deal

Newspapers in Cleveland in the last fifty years have had an extraordinary influence on the politics and economics of the upsy-downsy industrial community on the lake. In many other big cities, one newspaper, often a hard-shell conservative one editorially, has been dominant (the *Columbus Dispatch*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Philadelphia Bulletin*, *Kansas City Star*). In Cleveland, the liberal tradition begun by Tom L. Johnson, carried on by Peter Witt, and enthusiastically followed by the ethnic groups, had a much higher valence than in any other big city. The City Club's weekly forum, where any point of view could be heard; the club's annual Anvil Revue in which Carl Friebolin threw satirical darts at public figures while they sat there and pretended to enjoy it; the habitual hacking away at bosses by the Press; the continual pressure of the *Plain Dealer* for civic uplift, which often was opposed by the party organizations -- all these contributed to the town's volatility, and helped it always to look forward rather than backward. No tightly knit junta of tycoons called the shots, nor did they control the newspapers. The Hannas had tried it when they owned the *Cleveland News*, but never really made the grade. The Press, from the beginning, when E. W. Scripps founded the Penny Press, was a rabble-rouser. And the *Plain Dealer* was independently owned and managed by citizens who had a strong civic conscience and motivation to make the city a better place to live and work.

This lineup of newspapers, each working on its own plan, had endured for several decades. There had been no attempts by outsiders to break into it, once the *Plain Dealer* had bought the morning *Leader* from the Hannas in 1917. Late in 1922 a group of businessmen, who had the quixotic idea they could pressure the *Plain Dealer* into becoming more

of a financial compendium, started a morning paper called the *Commercial*. Most of the capital was put up by utilities, but the Van Sweringens were in it, too. It soon fell on its face, however, for it did not have the wire services or the local staff to really compete with the *Plain Dealer*. Only the night wire of the United Press was available; the Associated Press, International News Service, and the best syndicated comics and features were all under contract to the *PD*. Nor could the *Commercial* set up a circulation and advertising staff that was really competitive.

This feeble journal limped along for two years. At this point, the Van Sweringens, by then a growing economic power that seemed to have the whole community by the tail, decided they would pour more money into the paper, make it a journal of general interest instead of purely financial, and reorganized it as the *Times-Commercial*. They seduced a good local staff from the other papers, and persuaded Earle Martin to leave the Press and become its editor. For a while it seemed as if it might give the *Plain Dealer* a real fight. The department stores, while not going all out to support the new paper, quietly hoped it would succeed, to act as a brake against increasing advertising rates. (The stores at this time were subsidizing the *Shopping News*, an all-advertising throwaway, to promote their frequent sales.)

The *Plain Dealer* met the competition by increasing its telegraph news: it added the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* wire services. It also had excellent downstate coverage, with a correspondent in each of the eighty-seven other

Ohio counties, and it gave big play to its own Washington and Columbus bureaus. Its advertising and circulation departments were experienced and kept the business coming in. There simply weren't enough new readers or enough new business in northern Ohio for the *Times-Commercial* to get off the ground, and the dream of the conservative tycoons faded away before simple publishing economics. The *Times* folded in 1927, and most of its good staff went back to the *Plain Dealer*, including Gordon R. Cobbledick, Spencer Irwin, Warde

Greene, Robert S. Stephan, Dale Cox, and Eleanor Clarage. Robert Seltzer (brother of Louis) worked for the *Plain Dealer* for a year, then returned to the Press. Editor Earle Martin got a job with the Chamber of Commerce.

This was the last serious attempt to unhorse the *Plain Dealer* in the morning daily field. Two years later, the *PD* bought out the Sunday *News-Leader* and incorporated many of its good features into its own Sunday paper. Soon afterward came the stock market crash and the depression. Meanwhile, the *Plain Dealer* and the Press had been fighting off the political attempts to dump the manager plan, and somehow they had found themselves on the same side as the big shots of the business community.

The two papers lost the fight to keep the manager plan, and when the depression closed in on them, they had to cut expenses. In a few years, because of this need for economy, and the growing impact of a new communications medium, radio, the two papers cooked up between them one of the strangest undercover deals in the history of big city journalism. It was not disclosed at the time; in fact, the entire story did not come to the surface until thirty years later, and only then in bits and pieces. It has never been publicly told before. Yet it had a profound effect on the staffs' relation with management, with future labor contracts, and with the development of radio (and later television) as an entertainment medium in Cleveland.

It was a truly astonishing agreement, especially viewed through the eyes of the 1970s, one that the United States

Department of Justice would surely have put the kibosh on. It had an important effect on the growth and policies of both the Press and the Forest City Publishing Company, which controlled both the *Plain Dealer* and the News, which it had rescued in 1934. Naturally it affected the political and economic life of the volatile community, in which the newspapers were unusually powerful.

Radio had started to be a big thing in the late twenties; ten years later it was the number one entertainment for millions. Ed Wynn, Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Jack Pearl, Joe Penner and others took the minds of people off the depression as far as possible. National networks carried the popular shows from coast to coast, and they were eagerly sponsored by advertisers. Big dance bands -- Paul Whiteman, Glenn Miller, Ben Bernie, Tommy Dorsey -- had their followings; and so did the crooners - - Rudy Vallee, Frank Sinatra, Russ Columbo -- who sang with them.

It was natural that this big new industry would add news programs to its entertainment, and that newspapers would tie into it by owning radio stations. Papers in New York, Chicago, Washington, and Los Angeles did this almost at once. City editors furnished news bulletins for the announcers, and some reporters and columnists went on the air themselves (Walter Winchell became a hot attraction). The national news services, AP, UP and INS, were forced reluctantly by lawsuits to set up special services to offer news to radio as well as the papers. Eventually, wiser heads realized there was no basic competition -- radio could send out flashes faster than newspapers could print them but radio could not offer the long, detailed background required in complicated news reports. (The onset of radio, however, doomed newspaper extras hawked through the streets, giving the results of prize fights, murder trial verdicts, elections, and so forth.)

The *Plain Dealer* was the only Cleveland newspaper to buy a radio station. In 1934, it acquired station WHK, but it developed no cooperative news programs. None of the *Plain Dealer* reporters or columnists was asked, or even permitted,

to broadcast over the *PD*'s own station. This seemed strange, for in New York and Chicago, in addition to periodic news summaries, columnists, sports writers, theater critics, and movie critics were broadcasting and, in some cases, being sponsored, which added to their income. In the depression, any additional income was mighty welcome. Why not in Cleveland, too?

Reporters and editors kept expecting some hookup to be established between the *PD* city desk and WHK, but it didn't happen. The other Cleveland stations were broadcasting national news several times a day, but made no attempt to cover local news. It seemed an ideal competitive situation for the *Plain Dealer* to broadcast local flashes from WHK, and the staff could not understand why the management didn't move in on this. There was a good reason, an amazing story of connivery between newspaper competitors, which involved newsprint supply as well as the cooperative use of radio.

John S. McCarrens, general manager of the *PD* for ten years, and John G. Meilink, business manager of the Press, were close personal friends, though business competitors. Both were hardnosed watchers of the cash register, both having trouble keeping their properties in the black during the depression. When the *PD* took over WHK, it automatically gained a distinct advantage over the Press, since the Press had no radio station and none in Cleveland was available. If the *PD* should use its station to promote itself and the newly acquired News, the Press would be at a big disadvantage. But the Press had an asset that the *PD* and News did not. It could rely on the Scripps-Howard national chain for newsprint, since the chain purchased it for a half dozen newspapers. The Sunday paper was the big money maker for Forest City.

So friend Meilink and friend McCarrens made a deal. If McCarrens would refrain from using WHK to tie in with the *PD* and News, and prohibit their columnists, reporters, and editors from broadcasting, Meilink would guarantee Forest

City Publishing Company an adequate supply of cheap newsprint through Scripps-Howard. Meilink offered twenty-two thousand tons a year, at a 5-percent discount. This deal, of course, was not made public, but it was approved by W. W. Chandler, the top Scripps-Howard business executive in New York, and by Freiburger of Forest City.

Thus began the big radio blackout for editorial employees in Cleveland, which lasted for twenty-five years. In all that time, no

editorial star had a radio program and no newspaperman broadcast local news flashes. The radio stations began to make passes at the columnists and reporters, who naturally asked their bosses if they could broadcast. The answer was always a firm no. This made no sense to me. The *Plain Dealer* had recognized stars -- Bill McDermott on the theater, Ward Marsh on movies, Eleanor Clarage, Claire MacMurray, Ted Robinson, Helen Robertson, Grace Goulder, Herbert Elwell, Roelif Loveland, Dale Cox, Gordon Cobbledick, Jim Doyle. I thought of myself, too, for I had a growing political column. The by-line writers of the News and Press, too, would have attracted listeners: on the News, Arthur Spaeth on entertainment, Jack Cleary on finance, Ed Bang and Ed McAuley on sports; on the Press, David Dietz on science, Norman Siegel and Milt Widder, the gossip columnists and Stu Bell and Whitey Lewis on sports. None of these by-liners was allowed to broadcast. Since the *Plain Dealer* and News employees were forbidden to tie into WHK, the Press staff had to be forbidden to go on the air for other stations WTAM and WGAR.

Staff members asked Bellamy about this repeatedly, but his answer was always no. The inference was that if they wanted to quit the paper, and take a chance on radio, they could do so, but could not broadcast and still remain on the newspaper payroll. Since radio was still somewhat experimental, none of them wanted to take the chance in the depression. This peculiar situation continued through the thirties. WHK's programs were pretty dull, and it wasn't getting much business either. The *PD* did nothing to promote

the station except to send one of its advertising specialists to WHK to try to get more business. Then came the war, and everyone had other things to think about.

It didn't occur to the staffs that the radio blackout and the newsprint supply had any relationship to each other (naturally, since the newsprint supply deal was under cover). Newsprint had been closely rationed during the war, and was still rationed in 1946. By that time, the pressure of big advertisers for more space on Sunday was becoming

terrific. As long as goods were in short supply during the war, and the big stores maintained the same lineage ratio toward each other, they submitted to the inevitable. Now, however, twelve million men, released from the service, were rejoining their families and eager to spend accumulated back pay. All sorts of previously scarce goods were becoming available -- clothes, household furnishings, automobiles. The small wartime papers had already increased somewhat in size, and it was obvious that when rationing was lifted, the dam would really burst.

During this period, of course, Scripps-Howard had been furnishing Forest City the twenty-two thousand tons a year that Chandler had promised. (McCarrens was now dead, but Sterling Graham, who had succeeded him, had inherited the deal, and was enforcing the radio blackout the same as McCarrens had.) Graham, however, was becoming restless about his newsprint supply being insufficient. He had contracted for another five thousand tons from another supplier, and he had also refused to accept for the *PD* a lighter weight of newsprint (twenty-eight pound stock) that Scripps-Howard had bought for their whole chain. He said this would permit too much "show-through" on ads, which would look messy and debase the quality.

At this point, the egg hit the fan. The Scripps high command in New York complained to Chairman Freiburger, the top decision-maker of Forest City, that Graham was "not cooperating," so Graham and Freiburger went to New York for a high level meeting, with attorneys present. At this meeting Graham realized he was up the famous creek without a pad-

dle, completely at the mercy of his competitor. The meeting was acrimonious, but Scripps-Howard had Graham over a barrel. They told him they would deduct from the promised twenty-two thousand tons the five thousand tons he had bought elsewhere, and if he could buy any more paper outside, they'd deduct that, too. They did not propose to increase the promised amount and he would have to accept the kind of sleazy paper they were sending. They would continue to furnish paper for the time being, but Graham had better start hunting a new supply and

after he found it, he was on his own. Since the market was completely tight at this time, with all newspapers pressuring the Canadian mills for more, there was little chance that he could get any additional paper, except on the black market at outrageous prices.

For the next year, Graham spent week after week flying to Montreal, Toronto, Boston, and New York trying to sign up new supplies. Since rationing was still on, he got nowhere, except for one agreement to furnish fifteen hundred tons of half-size rolls (which required awkward press combinations). Finally he hit upon the idea of getting contracts for future delivery whenever rationing would end, and lined up sixty-five thousand tons in promises. This helped, but did not solve the problem, because the Sunday paper by now had so mushroomed in size that it was gobbling up newsprint at a prodigious rate. At one time, the *PD* had only seven days' supply (a safe normal was considered thirty days) and the News had only one-and-one-half days. For several winter months, George Hall, the building superintendent, was assigned to keep track of freight cars carrying paper as they made their way slowly from mills in Canada through Montreal, Toronto, Buffalo, and Erie. A big snow, or a railroad wreck would produce a five-star emergency. The situation was so critical that Graham bought considerable tonnage on the black market for \$200 to \$250 a ton (the legal price then was \$88). To provide insurance for the future, Graham negotiated a deal with some papers in Oklahoma and Texas to join in buying a small paper mill in International Falls, Minnesota. This lasted about five years, until the news-

print crisis leveled off, then Forest City sold its interest in the mill.

Nevertheless, despite the brush-off Graham got from Scripps-Howard, and the agony he went through in finding a new supply, the *Plain Dealer* did not retaliate against the Press by using its editorial staff on WHK. This seemed more ridiculous than before, for by now all the big papers in other cities were doing the cooperative news bit, and what's more, were starting to buy TV stations, and use them, too. In the early fifties, TV was becoming as big a thing as radio had been twenty-

five years before. Also, the *PD* had acquired several other radio stations. It had taken on WCLE, which WHK had owned, and had stations in Akron, Columbus, Cincinnati and Youngstown. The radio and TV stations were making more frequent offers to the editorial stars in Cleveland.

Restless staff members (including me) tackled the bosses about it again, for it seemed irrational, and unjust. They got nowhere with Bellamy, who suggested that they argue it out with Graham. Graham wouldn't argue; he simply said no. He said the editorial staff should use all its creativity on the paper and not share it with electronic media. It was pointed out that one of the media was the *PD*'s baby, WHK, but he was adamant. WHK obviously needed improvement in its programming, and the radio-TV editors, Bob Stephan and George Condon, who knew the entertainment field, could offer excellent advice on better programming. The pleas got nowhere. It was like colliding with a stone wall.

One of the reasons why the situation remained at the same impasse was that Scripps-Howard about this time had bought a TV station in Cleveland, Channel 5, which it named WEWS after the founder, E. W. Scripps. Channel 5 was not using Press personnel on its programs. (James Hanrahan, the station manager, did not get along well with Louis Seltzer, and had enough clout to keep WEWS independent from the Press.) So the *PD* and News continued to keep aloof from WHK and the Press from WEWS. The peculiar embargo, the blackout, was still on.

The *Plain Dealer* had a chance to buy a TV station for itself at that time, too. Channel 8, which later became WJW, had been started on a shoestring by an out-of-town company, the Empire Coil Company of New York state, which had obviously applied for the license as an investment. It had no Cleveland connections, but after it began broadcasting in a small way, it picked up advertising. TV was in its infancy then, did not have transcontinental coaxial cable yet, and the national advertisers hadn't yet realized its astounding potential. George Condon, the radio-TV editor, found that the Channel 8 station could

probably be bought for \$250,000, and this news was relayed to Graham. A couple of years later, the price had gone up to \$600,000, but it still could be bought. The Storer Broadcasting Company eventually bought it, and still operates it.

Graham, who was promotion-minded, realized that long-range potential of TV and wanted to buy the station, but he couldn't get the OK from Freiburger, who was always cautious. Graham also wanted to fight the Press after the bad time Scripps-Howard had given him over newsprint. He believed that aggressive circulation practices were necessary, and he was ready to fight, if he could get the trustees to give him the money. He did not get it, nor did the News. (It had been obvious for several years that there was an urgent need for an aggressive promotion department, but it never materialized until 1963, after Tom Vail became publisher and I was executive editor.)

Between 1947 and 1952, the Sunday paper was expanding at an unbelievable rate. Soon eighty pages were going to press in an early run every Friday, the maximum the presses could handle. This was larger than the entire black-and-white run, news, ads and all, had been during the war. In 1948, the *PD* on Sunday ran as many as 218 pages pre-Easter and 256 pages pre-Thanksgiving. The department stores were now buying full-page ads in both the women's and news sections, plus special sections for promotions. Additional syndicated features had to be bought for the Sunday paper, and the society editors printed every wedding and engagement announcement, with pictures,

that was sent in. The circulation began to rise and between 1946 and 1948, the daily jumped from 230,000 to 249,000 and the Sunday paper from 403,000 to 433,000.

The full story of how the Press had the *Plain Dealer* by the balls through the Meilink-McCarrens deal was told privately to me by Graham, after he had retired. (He died in 1971.) McCarrens had been dead twenty years, but his error lived on. Not only were all the *PD* and News editorial employees penalized, but the *PD* management had one

hand tied behind its back while its competitor controlled its lifeblood of production, the newsprint supply.

The antitrust lawyers of 1970-73 would have had a field day with it, for they have moved into many newspaper agreements that seemed less like obvious connivery. A still unsolved mystery is why the Guild didn't make a big squawk about the long radio-TV blackout. It was definitely a restriction of the rights of workers to sell their talents. Perhaps it was because only the higher-salaried editorial employees, who were never very enthusiastic about the Guild, were the ones deprived. At any rate, it did not become a matter for serious contract discussion until the sixties. By that time, as if by mutual consent, editorial employees had already begun to appear fairly often on TV and radio, and the *PD* and Press were both buying time on the air to promote their circulation and contests. But still there was no regular tie-in between either Cleveland newspaper or a radio-TV station except on election night.

Radio and TV still do not cover the local news adequately but they are trying. All three TV stations have expanded their 6 P.M. and 11 P.M. programs to take in more local news. One radio station, WERE, went from talk show to all news in 1975, and the other radio stations are gradually increasing their news broadcasts, particularly at morning and evening rush-hour times.

Some newspaper staff members now have regular spots on TV programs, and there is no longer a built-in hostility; but the print and electronic media people don't really understand each other, and are uneasy about it.

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CHAPTER NINE:

Erievue, the Big Mistake: 1953-1962

Sweeping changes in the American way of life were beginning in the 1950s, and nowhere more so than in Cleveland. The mobility of the population with autos once more available, and the desire for new homes with lawns, away from factories, a place to raise the bigger families that were growing fast, was accelerating the movement to the suburbs.

Merchandising of foodstuffs was changing fast, too. In the past twenty years, the old-style mom-and-pop type of meat market had just about disappeared because of competition of the big new supermarkets. In the 1920s grocery stores would deliver to the door, after housewives phoned in their orders. Bread wagons rolled up and down the residential streets, selling all sorts of pastries. Ice wagons delivered twenty-five- or fifty-pound chunks to homes, to fill old-style iceboxes. But the thirties just about finished the ice wagons, as iceless refrigerators, run by electricity or gas, became universally popular, and all new homes were equipped with them. Only the milk wagons have survived this transition. Not only was there rapid movement out to the suburbs, but there was increasing movement from city to city. Two years after World War II ended, when the cold war was waxing hot and there was widespread fear

of communism, Congress had passed, by almost unanimous vote, one of the most important bills of the century. It created a nationwide system of inter-

state highways, completely new in four lanes, apart from the main state routes, to be financed by a federal four-cent gasoline tax, on top of gas taxes the states had levied. The federal government agreed to pay 90 percent of the cost, with the states paying the rest and having a big role in selecting the routes. The highway lobby drooled with delight, and citizens generally believed it was great, for they could see themselves traveling soon on these wide concrete ribbons from coast to coast, seldom seeing a stoplight.

The legislation whipped through Congress like a strong breeze. It had been recommended by the Defense Department as a way to provide fast military roads, similar to the German autobahns that Hitler had used so effectively when mobilizing for his conquests. These new highways could be used to move long convoys swiftly from base areas, and if necessary, to evacuate civilian populations. The war was still on everyone's mind, particularly since Stalin was acting tough in Europe and had isolated Berlin from West Germany, which required President Truman to authorize an airlift to bring supplies of all sorts to the surrounded city, something never done before. Then came the sudden outbreak of the Korean war in 1950, the remobilization of reserves, the calling up of draftees again, and the air of crisis once more. Meanwhile, the superhighways were being built. They changed the lifestyle of the whole country. The only people who complained loudly were the small shopkeepers and gas station operators along the main state highways, who were being by-passed. They never did fully recover.

Big supermarkets, where everything was self-serve and pay-as-you-leave, came into being swiftly. They sold fresh meat and vegetables, and soon were selling frozen foods, which became more and more popular as storage freezers were bought. Not only were the supermarkets cheaper and accessible, but their food advertising soon became one of the most important sources of revenue for the newspapers. Not long after

that, the Cleveland department stores scrapped their *Shopping News*, and did all their advertising in the papers.

Tom Burke was still mayor of Cleveland as the fifties began, and Frank Lausche was governor, and both were following their usual pattern of keeping the budget under control, not doing anything drastic. Nationally, a big upheaval was taking place. The Republican party was on the verge of a comeback after twenty years of Roosevelt and Truman. Senator Robert A. Taft was coming on strong, and seemed headed for the nomination. There was however another towering figure coming up reluctantly over the horizon, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme commander of World War II in Europe, and a man universally respected by men of both parties. The eastern wing of the Republicans felt certain that if they could get General Ike nominated, he would win in a walk. They weren't so sure about Taft, who was able but not very glamorous. So they began a drive in 1951 to get him to return from Europe, where Truman had sent him to command the military forces of NATO, the anticommunist alliance. After much pressure, he did return, declared himself a Republican, and snatched the nomination from Taft. He won the election, in a landslide, over Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, an able man who never had a chance.

The Taft faction closed ranks after the nomination, and Eisenhower, in fact, practically accepted Taft's platform. After the election, he brought into the cabinet some Taft supporters, one of whom was George M. Humphrey, the Cleveland millionaire industrialist, who became secretary of the treasury. Humphrey had long been the money-raiser and unofficial backstairs patron of George Bender and Sonny DeMaioribus in Cleveland, but he had never held public office or made any public statements about anything except his business, the M. A. Hanna Company. Humphrey became Ike's principal advisor, as well as social companion in hunting season. He brought in his personal lawyer, H. Chapman Rose, as undersecretary, and Rose's brother, Nelson, as counsel for the treasury. Thus Cleveland had a high standing in

Washington that it had not enjoyed since Newton D. Baker was secretary of war forty years previously.

The Cleveland city hall, however, was something else again.

Only Democrats held sway there and in county offices. When Burke was appointed to the senate vacancy left by Taft's death from cancer in 1953, a big change took place. A new mayor had to be elected in 1953, and Louis Seltzer, editor of the Press, decided he was going to elect him. Ray Miller, still Democratic boss, had other ideas. The resulting clash proved clearly who had the real political clout in Cleveland. It was Seltzer. His man, Anthony J. Celebrezze, remained as mayor for ten years.

It was during the Celebrezze administration that Cleveland became practically a one-party city. It was also the time that one of the most sweeping changes in the downtown was hatched, the creation of Erievuew.

On the surface, it seemed to be one of the up periods for Cleveland. Erievuew was created under the new concept of urban renewal. But what happened, concomitant with Erievuew, was the outright neglect of other parts of the city, so that they turned into new slums and produced violent social upheavals ten years later.

The five terms of Tony Celebrezze as mayor were among the most tranquil in the political history of Cleveland. After his first election, he had no important opposition, either from the official Democratic party or the Republicans. He was Seltzer's creation, elected mayor after two terms as state senator, where he had made a good but not spectacular reputation. The Celebrezze name was excellent in Cleveland; Tony's older brother, Frank, had been a municipal judge before he died suddenly; prior to that he had been safety director and assistant county prosecutor. Tony had grown up as a poor boy in the Central Market area, had sold newspapers, put himself through law school, and was used to hard work. By the time he ran for mayor, the second-generation Italians had spread all over the city from their original bases, the Mayfield Road

"Little Italy" district and the West Side. Tony had learned to speak well and had a quiet personality that generated confidence.

An important factor, however, in perpetuating Celebrezze as mayor was the almost complete disappearance of the Republicans as a major force in Cleveland politics. They had a brief flurry in the state in 1947-49 when Tom Herbert was governor and John Bricker and Bob Taft were senators, and they came to life nationally during the eight years of President Eisenhower. But locally they were dead. The Republicans had a few seats in the city council and legislature but the party was a hollow shell, consisting only of precinct election officials. There were times when they had trouble even putting up a candidate for mayor, and several men they chose to be victims were almost laughable. They had lost the black vote during the depression, and now were gradually losing the suburbs. The city of Cleveland was practically a one-party domain.

It was a surprise to most Cleveland voters when Seltzer began to beat the drum for Celebrezze for mayor in 1953, since Ray Miller had already decided to back Albert S. Porter, who had been elected county engineer several times by big majorities and had an excellent record as a builder and administrator. Bert Porter is my younger brother. He worked his way through Ohio State University by playing the banjo and saxophone in a dance band while he studied civil engineering. He was asked to come to Cleveland in 1930 to join Dr. J. Gordon McKay's Highway Research Bureau, and later, when the bureau folded in the depression, he joined John O. McWilliams, then county engineer, and soon became his chief deputy. When McWilliams resigned after the war, Bert succeeded him and then was elected on his own. Miller was extremely high on him.

The *Plain Dealer* supported him in the primary. He was warned that he would probably be defeated, for a couple of reasons: (1) he was a Protestant in a predominantly Catholic city and; (2) Seltzer, having urged Tony Celebrezze to run, would move heaven and earth to prevent Bert's nomination, and he could expect all sorts of personal attacks, both

public and private. Bert was confident, however. Miller was supporting him strongly, almost all the ward leaders had urged

him to run, and he was certain Mayor Tom Burke would endorse him.

At that time (as in 1975), the election for mayor was nonpartisan. It began with a primary in September. If there were more than two candidates, the two top survivors would run it off in November. Theoretically it was possible for two Democrats or two Republicans to reach the final, but actually it did not work that way. A Democrat had to run first if he was still to be on the ballot in November.

The ward leaders did endorse Porter. Miller did support him. But Mayor Burke chickened out, obviously fearing the Press. Celebrezze ran first, Judge William J. McDermott (Republican) second, and Porter third.

Bert remained as county engineer for the next twenty years, and ultimately became Democratic chairman, after Miller retired. He also was national committeeman for Ohio for eight years. He took a dim view of most newspapermen and editorial comment, and was a frequent and vivid writer of letters to the editor. He was often involved in public controversy, particularly over the location of freeways, but was never known to back off from his original position.

Tony Celebrezze became Cleveland's first and only five-term mayor. He was easily elected in November 1953 over Judge McDermott, then reelected in 1955, 1957, 1959, and 1961, against candidates who were beaten before they started. The city was obviously pro-Celebrezze.

After Tony beat Porter, Miller had no choice but to support Celebrezze. Miller had little to say about important city hall appointments. These still had a strong Lausche flavor, for the Celebrezze mayoralty was an extension of the Lausche-Burke dynasty. Tony's law director, Ralph S. Locher, had been executive secretary to Governor Lausche. Lausche's brother, Harold, was appointed park director. The

cosmopolitan groups, Lausche's great strength, heartily supported Celebrezze, who was also one of them.

After Celebrezze became mayor, and in all his campaigns for reelection, all three newspapers supported him. They rarely criticized him about anything important. It was an era of abnormal goodwill, of coasting along, not doing anything very big at first, but maintaining municipal services while keeping expenses down.

Industry seemed to be growing healthily and the city began to feel proud of itself again with the slogan "The Best Location in the Nation," first dreamed up by the Illuminating Company but adopted enthusiastically by the newspapers and the Chamber of Commerce.

All this was before Erievue, which was Mayor Celebrezze's big achievement -- and one of the city's biggest mistakes. It was powered and promoted by the Press, which obviously stood to benefit by it. Yet strangely it was not opposed, openly at least, by the Euclid Avenue department stores, or the *Plain Dealer* and News, which stood to be hurt by it.

Urban renewal by then had become the fashionable thing in American big cities, a chance to remake large areas with the assistance of munificent federal funds. Practically all of Cleveland's urban renewal effort was channeled into Erievue, a downtown square-mile area south of Lake Erie, bounded roughly by East Sixth Street, East Eighteenth Street and Chester Avenue. The concept of urban renewal was simple: the city government, using its power of eminent domain, was authorized to acquire land in certain designated areas (usually run-down), clear it of buildings, and then sell it at a fraction of the cost to private developers, who would put up new office buildings, hotels, apartments, and so forth. The objective was to improve the looks of the city, eliminate slums, and provide better housing for the former slum residents. Many cities developed plans to open large park-like areas for civic centers, surrounded by new buildings that, when erected, would generate enough

tax revenue to make up for the tax money originally spent to buy the land and loss of the taxes from demolished buildings.

Urban renewal in Cleveland soon came to mean only Erieview. Mayor Celebrezze got I. M. Pei, the New York city

planner, to prepare a dream plan, which was announced with much fanfare in the newspapers. At once, the elaborate legal machinery necessary to put it into effect began to move speedily through the city council, the city planning commission, and finally, the courts. It had the green light all the way.

At the same time, another urban renewal plan was planned, in a much larger area to the east, called University-Euclid. It included a large section in the Hough and Wade Park areas to the west of East 105th Street and also some areas around Western Reserve University. The Hough-Wade Park area, once a fashionable residential section full of big apartments and fine single homes, had been deteriorating rapidly. Large numbers of uneducated blacks, whose jobs as cotton pickers in the South had been eliminated by automation, had moved into Hough-Wade Park, doubling up with relatives; and by the mid-fifties, this whole section was fast becoming a slum, and badly needed urban renewal.

The Erieview area, however, was no slum. Some ratty shops and small dilapidated apartments existed along East Ninth Street, but to the east there were modest homes, kept up in pretty good shape by working-class families, plus a few small factory buildings, and even a couple of brand-new small office buildings put up by Addressograph Multigraph Company and the *Wall Street Journal*. And a lot of open space. The fulcrum of Erieview, however, was the *Cleveland Press*'s new building at the corner of East Ninth and Lakeside. Erieview was immediately next door to it, to the south and east, and it would become practically a part of Erieview. This was where the real steam was generated for Erieview.

When completed, Erieview would shift the center of commercial gravity in downtown Cleveland away from Euclid Avenue, toward the

lakefront. The office workers in Erieview would be compelled to walk, or find special transportation, a half mile or more to the stores on Euclid and the good restaurants near them. This would be difficult and uncomfortable in winter. The new buildings in Erieview would tend to pull office occupants out of older ones along Euclid and accelerate

the degeneration of Euclid, which was already under way. Lower Euclid was already filling up with schlock shops, and many vacancies existed after the William Taylor Son & Company department store folded. A block to the south, Prospect Avenue had already deteriorated into a dirty, junky street to avoid. Halle's on upper Euclid had already suffered from the intense competition of May Company and Higbee's at the Public Square, which had increased when the Union Terminal hooked into rapid transit. Sterling-Lindner-Davis, already a conglomerate of three Euclid Avenue stores, was in an even worse situation, since the back part of its building, on East Twelfth Street, was included in the official Erieview tract.

It would have been natural for these big stores, with large economic clout, to strongly oppose Erieview, for obviously it would hurt them. Strangely, they did not go openly on the warpath about it. The owners and managers did a lot of grumbling privately and feared the worst. The worst was already coming on strong, in the form of suburban super-shopping centers. Housewives were getting the habit of staying in the suburbs, seldom even coming downtown. Making it difficult for workers in far-off Erieview office buildings to get to the Euclid Avenue stores seemed to be adding insult to injury.

The selfish commercial interest of the Press in Erieview was obvious. So was the special political interest of Mayor Celebrezze, the Press's protégé. Yet a strange paralysis about Erieview stymied the *Plain Dealer* and News. It is hard to understand now, in retrospect, why the two papers did not seize this occasion to oppose Erieview outright as a Press project in disguise, rather than real civic betterment or legitimate urban renewal. They had both been losing ground to the Press for ten years. Yet the Forest City management apparently couldn't (or didn't)

see this. They appeared to be too involved in their own problem of integrating the *PD* and News production facilities into a costly new building, selling off their radio stations at bargain rates, and getting

used to a new editor of the *Plain Dealer*, Wright Bryan. They were paralyzed, apparently in no mood for a serious battle with the Press -- something that was deferred until nearly ten years later, when Tom Vail took over as publisher of the *PD*.

The new *Plain Dealer*-News building was outside the official Erieview tract, but it could be sorely affected by the shift of business away from Euclid Avenue. These newspapers' interest in the prosperity of the big stores on Euclid shouldn't have required a blueprint. Erieview was all minuses and no pluses for the Forest City Publishing Company. But they did not fight Erieview. Occasionally some minor questions were raised editorially about the details, but they did not try to puncture the ballyhoo or encourage the handful of property owners who were trying vainly to stop it in court. The project became a real juggernaut, overriding small opposition in the city plan commission, council, and courts. It was thoroughly legal all the way, but whether it was a good thing was doubtful and debatable. The *PD* and News stood aside placidly and let it roll.

Celebrezze had a big council majority, and Jack P. Russell, the council president, was as obedient to the Press as the mayor was. A few negative murmurs in the planning commission were quickly silenced. Councilman Alfred Grisanti, whose family had an old (but good) residence smack in the middle of Erieview, was practically the only opponent, either in council or court. He filed lawsuits and took the fight all the way to the Supreme Court, but was run over by the juggernaut. So the land was acquired and a deal offered to John W. Galbreath of Columbus, to put up a thirty-seven-story office tower, topped by a new Stouffer restaurant and a private club, the *Clevelander*. Eventually, after much delay, it was erected and is now fully occupied, but a lot of arms had to be twisted at first to get it filled. Ohio Bell finally came in to

occupy seven floors, and M. A. Hanna, White Motor, Eaton Corporation, and U.S. Steel took big space.

Galbreath was in no hurry to exercise his option to put up a second building, however. A hotel on the lakefront, contemplated in the original Pei plan, was finally built, and opened by Holiday Inn, in 1974. A tall, spacious new federal office building was built at East Ninth and Lakeside, catty-cornered from the Press (christened, appropriately enough, as the Anthony J. Celebrezze Building). An apartment building, the Chesterfield, was erected at East Twelfth and Chester, and another, more elaborate and with a shopping mall, the Park Centre, across the street. A couple of small buildings have been put up near the Erieview Tower. Today, twenty years later, the original dream of Architect Pei is still far from a reality, and all the disagreeable problems predicted for winter have come to pass -- the hazards of ice and snow, the difficulty of finding transportation and good restaurants, the problem of getting to stores to shop on the lunch hour. (Even employees of the Press now complain about this.) Several of the best and oldest restaurants, Fischer-Rohr, the Tavern, the Hickory Grill, were bulldozed out of business, and the number of good places to eat downtown steadily diminished.

Erieview destroyed Euclid Avenue from East Fourteenth to Public Square, as the main, fashionable, nationally famous shopping center of Cleveland. Of the fine, big stores there, only Halle's is left today, and it had to be rescued and kept going by Marshall-Field of Chicago. Sterling-Lindner-Davis gave up the losing fight and closed; the building was torn down. Bonwit-Teller moved out, and its quarters were taken over by a cheap-goods distributor. Milgrim's, Peck & Peck and Hathaway's also departed, to Shaker Heights. All the ornate movie palaces, opened with such fanfare in the twenties, folded -- the State, Keith's Palace, the Allen (though the lobbies and foyers were later revived by the opening of cabaret dinner-theaters, which did a good business in the early seventies). All along this part of Euclid, more and more empty store fronts and for-rent signs in windows stuck out like

sore thumbs. Herman Pirchner's Alpine Grill, once a popular dine and dance spot, closed. Pierre's restaurant was sold to

new owners. The restaurants within the Hanna building and on the corner of Fourteenth and Euclid changed hands several times, although a half-dozen fast-food counters became available for quick-lunchers. Only the heroic efforts of a new group, the Playhouse Square Association, headed by a young dynamo named Ray Shepardson, and encouraged by the Junior League, saved the Euclid-Fourteenth area from complete decay. They not only got the cabaret theaters rolling (and one, playing Jacques Brel is Alive and Well set local records for continuous performances), but encouraged the establishment of an arts headquarters run by a group called NOVA and the opening of studios in the same building on Huron Road, near the corner. The city government helped by turning Huron Road into a one-way street, with a mall and parklet at the northeast end, where musicians would play free at noon for young folks who brown-bagged their lunches in summer.

Westward along the once-famous avenue, however, the picture was not so bright. Once a pedestrian strolled beyond the Cleveland Trust and Union Commerce bank buildings and brokerage offices and savings and loans around East Ninth Street he encountered more and more bargain shops, discount drug stores, cheap jewelry and footwear outlets, and fast-food joints. Even a MacDonald's was opened where Mills Restaurant had once prospered. Euclid had become a sad, run-down avenue by late 1975.

Business was good at lunchtime at the few good eateries left downtown (and reservations were always advisable), but few people stayed down, or came down, to eat. Even Harvey's Oak Room off the Terminal concourse, which had proudly maintained its quality since its opening around 1930, had to close because dinner-time business had almost vanished. The 5 P.M. homeward exodus of office-workers was almost unanimous.

Naturally all this deterioration of downtown caused much dismay and head-scratching among the civic movers and shakers, who kept coming up with hopeful plans to turn it around and are still doing so.

Although the impact of Erieview on the downtown was disastrous enough, it was worse in the east side of the central city, because all the urban renewal effort was concentrated on Erieview, to the concurrent neglect of the Hough area and the University-Euclid project. These became blind spots, real orphans, for several years, as the engineering and real estate talent at city hall was diverted to Erieview. Development plans for University-Euclid were sketchy and incomplete; there seemed to be no plan for the whole area. Western Reserve and the University Hospitals, faced with a tremendous, privately financed expansion program, had to start moving on their own to clear land for buildings and parking. The Hough and Wade Park areas simply festered, becoming more and more crowded with poor blacks, living without much hope on welfare, as real estate values slipped and crime increased. The black population, which for years had been around 25 percent, climbed rapidly to 35 percent. It simply could not be contained in the older areas around Central, Scovill, Woodland and Cedar avenues, but flowed northward to Superior and St. Clair, into Glenville, past the borders of East Cleveland (which is now 85 percent black) and into Cleveland Heights and the south and southwest parts of Shaker Heights, which are around 25 percent black today.

Had the same major effort that was put into Erieview been channeled into tackling the badly needed urban renewal in Hough and University-Euclid, their collapse into complete slums would not have come so fast, nor the aftermath of problems been so tragic. Obviously this decay was one of the basic causes of the race riots and burnings that broke out in Hough in 1965 and in Glenville in 1968, which resulted in murder and widespread arson. These unhappy confrontations were postponed, however, until after Mayor Celebrezze had left city hall, to become secretary of health, education and welfare under President Kennedy (and after that, was appointed federal court of appeals judge by

President Johnson). His grim legacy was left to his friend and successor, Mayor Ralph Locher, and continued under the man who ultimately beat Locher, Mayor Carl B. Stokes. Urban renewal totally collapsed under Locher and was in worse trouble under Stokes. Public housing, too, has become enmeshed in bitter racial vendettas, for which there seems no happy solution.

The city is much worse off now than before Erieview. For a long time, it was not considered safe to walk the streets downtown at night not only in Erieview, but along Euclid. It need not have happened this way. Erieview could have been stopped if the *Plain Dealer* and News had actively opposed Erieview and encouraged the big department stores to join them in opposition. A referendum could have beaten it, because it had no real grassroots support. Its backing and promotion were political and journalistic.

This was proved later when another big Celebrezze project failed, a hotel on the Mall. This was a proposal to build a new twenty-story Hilton Hotel on a piece of city-owned land on the edge of the downtown Mall. The Mall, a central park area, had been open space since Mayor Johnson dreamed it up in the early 1900s. No one in the fifty years had suggested putting any kind of commercial building on it.

Cleveland badly needed a big new downtown hotel. No really big one had been built since 1914, and the only new small ones, the Auditorium and the Manger, had been put up in 1926-28. The old Hollenden was a firetrap, ripe for demolition. The Statler, Pick-Carter, and Sheraton-Cleveland, though refurbished, were inadequate. No big operator had seemed eager to come in until the Hilton management suddenly offered this proposal for a skyscraper. The only spot Hilton would consider was on the piece of city-owned Mall. It would be practically next door to the Public Hall, where the big conventions are usually held. Architecturally, the plan was attractive, but it would obviously need to rise above the five-story limitation on Mall buildings.

Mayor Celebrezze was strongly in favor of the proposed Hilton. So were a lot of other influential people, including a majority of councilmen. Persuasive arguments were made that it would produce more taxes than the small piece of city

park land was worth, that it would not really harm the configuration of the Mall. A few objections were offered, but none serious enough to prevent the city planning commission or the council from easily approving legislation to permit the sale of the Mall land. No serious opposition came from newspaper editorials, either. It looked as if another Erieview was in the making.

This time the *Plain Dealer* permitted some stiff columns (written by me) to appear in opposition to it. I wrote that it was wrong to start chipping away at Tom Johnson's dream, that it was not ethical to sell city land, even a small piece of it, to a private commercial company, no matter how well known and honorable. A few determined citizens agreed, at once. J. George Mayer, member of the plan commission who had been outvoted, said it was outrageous. Charles Gentsch, a strong-minded lawyer, recommended a referendum, and before long, a referendum did indeed materialize. When the vote was taken, the Hilton-on-the-Mall was defeated. Mayor Celebrezze was unhappy, and so was the Hilton management, which has stayed out of Cleveland ever since.

CHAPTER TEN:

Three-Base Errors

The economic management and editorial direction of newspapers in all big cities has a tremendous effect on the prosperity of the cities, their social welfare, and even their survival. The newspapers go directly into the homes of citizens, and not only keep them informed of the news of the city and the outside world but advertise what to buy. They keep a daily watchful eye on the conduct of government at all levels, often expose and criticize malfeasance or nonfeasance, and at election time, endorse the candidates they consider most capable. It is this capacity to be the perpetual watchdog, the adversary of government, with the ability to elect and defeat, that gives them power. Knowing this, their editors feel a deep responsibility not only to encourage good public officials and keep them honest and on the ball but also to encourage the growth of the city's business and the improvement in its social welfare and living conditions.

In recent years, the electronic media, radio, then television, have come into the picture and today they have an even greater economic impact on what the public buys. They have also the power to influence government and sway elections by the way they report news. Some of late have made direct editorial comment and more are likely to do so in the future. So the officials now think and talk in terms of the "media" rather than of the newspapers.

It is impossible to overestimate the influence of these electronic communications media, but it was not always thus. In the early days of radio and TV, many of the newspaper owners did not readily grasp what a powerhouse or potential gold mine of profits they had. It took a certain genius for management, a sixth sense of what the public would go for, a knack for entertainment as well as how to make money -- and a far-sighted vision of how the communications industry would grow.

Newspaper executives in many big cities instinctively sensed this, and early in the game, bought radio and TV stations and tied them together with the newspapers. So did some magazines, such as *Time*, *Life* and *Newsweek*. In Cleveland, the top decision-makers in the Forest City Publishing Company didn't seem to know how to make the most of what they had. The result was that for over twenty years, they made an incredible series of three-base errors, let a gold mine slip through their hands, and slowly but surely dissipated the assets of what had once been a tremendous fortune, the Holden estate.

To completely understand some of the contemporary economic and political history of Cleveland, it's necessary to put into perspective its newspaper, radio, and TV history, which concerned the *Plain Dealer* and News (Forest City) and the Press. It is only now becoming fairly clear what happened, because no in-depth, informative surveys were written about it during the forties, fifties, and sixties, when the big things happened. Some bits and pieces came out in the form of announcements, but no analytical appraisals; the media are chary of writing about themselves. Yet what did happen had a profound effect later on the community of Greater Cleveland, particularly the economic condition of downtown, the political patterns, and in the seventies the widespread downgrading of the city as a sort of national joke.

It is necessary, first of all, to understand what the Forest City Publishing Company was, how it came about, and who ran the show. In the beginning, it was not something carefully planned, with great benefits for the future, as many mergers

are. It was strictly a fire-alarm rescue job, organized in 1934 by the owners of the *Plain Dealer* to keep the News from going bankrupt or being bought by outsiders during the big depression. It put the burden of keeping the News alive on the owners of the *Plain Dealer*. Then after that, Forest City got into the radio business.

About the time the depression began to ease, something else important happened. The real control of the Forest City properties reverted to the trustees of the Holden estate. For the previous quarter-century, the estate had owned the *Plain Dealer* (and other assets, including the Hollenden Hotel) but had leased the management of it to the *Plain Dealer* Publishing Company, beginning with Elbert H. Baker, which stood to win or lose on its management skill. Mostly it was winning, as it bought the *Leader* from the Hannas, and forged ahead of the Press. (John S. McCarrens, in those days before heavy federal income taxes, was making \$200,000 a year clear. Paul Bellamy was making \$100,000.)

When the lease expired and property came back to the Holden estate, Major Ben P. Bole, a Holden son-in-law, and a lawyer, became president of Forest City, and took an active part in business office decisions. He was able to devote his entire time to it, since he was not involved in much outside practice. He was a close friend of Bellamy and of an old army buddy, Sterling E. Graham, who later became general manager.

Managing and advising the various Holden trusts was a full-time job, for there were several of them, each with different trustees. The rich mining properties (mostly Island Creek and Pond Creek Coal companies) had been separated from the real estate and newspaper, and left largely to Albert, Liberty E. Holden's oldest son and his two daughters, Mrs. R. Henry Norweb and Mrs. Katherine Holden Thayer. The newspaper and real estate property was left in trust for a younger son, Guerdon, and four daughters, Mrs. Ben P. (Roberta) Bole, Mrs. Windsor T. (Delia) White, Mrs. Henry (Emory) Greenough, and Mrs. John R. (Gertrude) McGinley, and their descendants.

Major Bole died suddenly, however, just before World War II commenced, and the burden of management of the trusts fell largely on I. F. Freiburger, vice-president and trust officer of the Cleveland Trust Company. Freiburger was a banker with many other problems, a civic and welfare leader, a director of a dozen corporations. He was not a newspaperman, had no experience in the communications field, yet the final decision on how to get the best return from the property of the Forest City Publishing Company, how to invest, when to buy or sell, and even what to do about executives who might not be up to snuff, fell on his shoulders. Also how to keep the various factions among the Holden descendants satisfied with their incomes and agreeable to his judgments.

Freiburger was one of the most universally loved and respected gentlemen who ever lived and worked in Cleveland. He had been a poor boy, sold newspapers, worked his way through college (Western Reserve) and law school, and rose steadily in the bank. He was even tempered, judicious, cautious, friendly, urbane -- one of the most honored men in Cleveland.

Unfortunately, he had no instinct or talent for the news business or the entertainment business. Yet by having to act as trustee, he was forced to make far-reaching decisions in both fields. It is painful for me to criticize Freiburger or to second-guess him in retrospect, but in the end, he was most responsible for the three-base errors that resulted in the sale or liquidation of two big newspapers, and five radio stations, and the failure to buy a TV station that since has become tremendously profitable. It became almost a classic case of how millions left in trust could shrink in value, how the losers sucked the profits out of winners, and how enterprises that had been dull and comatose suddenly came to life and became bonanzas after they were sold.

Freiburger knew, of course, about the undercover deal that McCarrens of the *Plain Dealer* and Meilink of the Press had made, through which the *PD* agreed not to use its radio station, WHK, to promote the newspaper, and in return Scripps-

Howard agreed to furnish all the newsprint necessary for the *PD* and News, at a discount. (This has been explained in previous chapters.) Although the paper was not tying in with WHK, Forest City still had the problem of trying to make WHK profitable. The principal obstacle to profitability was H. K. Carpenter, who had been owner and manager when Forest City bought the station, and who was retained as manager. (WHK at that time also controlled WCLE, a smaller local station. In ensuing years, Forest City also bought a controlling interest in stations in Akron, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Youngstown. It had the makings of a news network, but none of the stations seemed to be doing exceptionally well.)

Freiberger, a compassionate man, slow to make moves that would cause pain and ever hopeful that events would work themselves out, let Carpenter remain as manager of WHK for twenty years. Yet it was obvious to everyone in the editorial department of the *PD* and News that Carpenter had no instinct for show business, which is what radio was, and still is, to a great extent. He was a fine citizen and devoted churchman, but he had no patience with popular music, which over the years became louder and louder, from jazz to boogie-woogie, to rock-and-roll. Nor was he fast enough on the bases to develop good network connections. While the competing stations began to go heavy on entertainment, WHK continued its old-maidish programming. Carpenter made no effort to find out from the *Plain Dealer* entertainment experts what sort of programs would bring in more listeners. WHK was almost totally inept at gauging the public's appetite.

The Forest City brass was unhappy that WHK was not bringing in more revenue; but instead of unloading Carpenter, they tried another expedient. They put in as sales manager Kenneth Hackathorn, who had been the *PD* classified ad manager. Hackathorn tried hard, but couldn't sell enough commercials to tie in with Carpenter's dull programs. When the other Ohio stations were acquired, nothing was done to coordinate them into a unified network. Each one ran itself. Operations simply drifted along thus through the forties and

fifties, yet Forest City bought a good-sized piece of real estate, at 5300 Euclid, where the old Metropolitan Theater had once operated, as a headquarters and showplace for WHK. Then suddenly and inexplicably, between 1952 and 1954, Forest City started to disengage from the radio business. (About this time the *PD* was reorganizing its production, secretly looking for a new editor, and getting ready to move into the remodeled News building.) The big stock interest in the Youngstown station was sold. The Columbus and Cincinnati stations were sold to local operators. The Akron station was sold to a former *PD* ad salesman, Phil Herbert, and immediately, with more lively and relevant programming, began to make a big profit. All the out of town stations started to make money as soon as they were sold. But WHK still didn't.

At long last, Hackathorn replaced Carpenter as general manager, but by this time it was too late to reverse the long, dull trend, and in June 1958, WHK was sold to Metro-media Inc. The new owners changed the program style at once, went heavily for short news bulletins and rock and roll aimed at the teeny-boppers, and immediately became the most profitable station in town. Listening to the noise was hard on the ears, but the boom-boom and screeching brought in the money.

Forest City could have bought a TV station, WJW, at this time, but Freiburger would not invest in TV. So the *Plain Dealer* never got a TV station to compete with Scripps-Howard's WEWS (Channel 5). Finally WJW (Channel 8) was sold to Storer Broadcasting Company and has continued to be profitable and well managed ever since. Forest City could have bought it for peanuts when it first went on the air.

What seemed to be going on within Forest City was a kind of journalistic schizophrenia, an inability to decide how to fight (or whether to fight at all) the rapidly rising *Press*. This may explain why no serious effort was made to derail the Erievue project, the *Press*'s baby. Forest City had taken over the losing News in the thirties, and for a short while it looked as if the News might become a little sister to the *Plain Dealer*,

with coordinated editorial policies, an interchange of staffs, and an infusion of capital to help the News promote its circulation. This did not materialize. Forest City still was not using its radio station to promote either the News or the *Plain Dealer*, even though the newsprint deal had fizzled out, and Graham was having a devil of a time trying to buy enough paper to print the big Sunday *Plain Dealer*. The company bought out-of-town radio stations, then did nothing to tie them together into a news network, and finally sold them for a price far below what they were actually worth.

After a long period of indecision, the bosses decided to move the *Plain Dealer* to East Eighteenth Street and Superior, and install a new editor, Wright Bryan of the Atlanta Journal, to replace the ailing Bellamy. No sooner had the *Plain Dealer* moved in 1956 than a crippling strike closed the News and the *Plain Dealer* for four weeks, from 1 November to 28 November. For the first time in history, no Cleveland paper published the election results for the county, state, or nation. Nor did they publish the dramatic story of the Suez crisis, in which the British had started to bomb the Egyptians and were forced to stop it by President Eisenhower. Nor did the readers know about the Hungarian revolution and the way Russian tanks barreled in to put it down with much bloodshed.

Freiberger and Graham had been hopeful that moving the *Plain Dealer* into a new plant, which wrapped around the News building, would produce big economies in production. But it didn't happen. The *Plain Dealer* for a long time had the reputation of being the softest touch of all newspapers in the country for the printcrafts, a haven where incompetent itinerant printers could always find refuge, not work very hard, and never be fired. A series of production managers failed to solve the problem, and at the end of the first year, there were actually more printers working for Forest City than had worked separately for the *Plain Dealer* and News before the move.

The hapless News continued to suck out the profits made by the *Plain Dealer*, at the rate of one million a year, and the

beneficiaries of the Holden trusts were beginning to complain that they were not getting the income they should. There was no love lost between some of the younger Holden descendants. One of them, Peter B. Greenough, who had been working on the *Plain Dealer* as a business reporter and editorial writer, was convinced that he was going to move into a top editorial spot when the inevitable replacement of Bellamy would take place. But Freiburger by-passed Greenough, and shortly afterward, Pete departed for Boston, where he held important jobs on the *Globe* and *Herald-Traveler*, and later quit to devote his whole time to managing the career of his wife, the phenomenal opera star, Beverly Sills, whom he had married while on the *Plain Dealer*.

The situation dragged along for a couple more years. Then the *News* was suddenly sold to the *Press*, in January 1960, and ceased publication. A few editorial employees went over to the *Plain Dealer*, and the rest received severance pay. Another part of the big Holden estate had gone down the drain, and Cleveland became a two-newspaper town. The *Press* seemed to have won the circulation battle, and was flying high. With the addition of the *News* circulation, and eliminating duplications, it now claimed 380,000 daily, and seemed likely soon to go over 400,000. Louis Seltzer had really brought it to the top, just as he had produced *Erievue*, next to the *Press*'s new building.

While all the three-base errors were being committed, it is ironic that one of the Holden children was opposing most of the decisions, but was not in a position to throw any weight against them. He was Guerdon S. Holden, the youngest son, a beneficiary of the trusts. He was regularly ignored by Freiburger, as someone whose judgment was not sound. But Guerdon, in retrospect, was more often right than wrong.

Guerdon Holden was a much misunderstood man, who could have been a brilliant researcher or professor, but whose millionaire father forced him into the wrong channel. (His father obviously did not trust him to handle money on his own. He handled Guerdon in exactly the opposite way he handled

Albert, his older son, to whom he passed on full responsibility for the family's extensive mining interests.) Guerdon attended Harvard and became deeply interested in Egyptology. He traveled widely and wanted to study further abroad and at home. But papa insisted that he take up law. He did attend law school unwillingly, passed the Ohio bar exam, but never practiced. He continued to be fascinated with ancient languages and civilizations.

He was given an office in the old *Plain Dealer* building, and he had the title of secretary-treasurer of the corporation. The actual treasurer (a succession of them, in fact) bore the title of assistant treasurer. His corporate duties were strictly routine, but he faithfully attended board meetings and did what the decision-makers decreed.

Guerdon's heart was really in the editorial department. He was a rabid baseball fan in his younger days, and because he was given little to do at the office, attended many games. As the sports staff soon found out, he was a bearcat on statistics. He kept an eagle eye on the box scores of all major league games and if there was a mistake, he let the sports editor know. He knew by heart the batting averages of all the Cleveland players and most of the other teams' leading hitters, and his sizeups of the teams were well-informed and accurate. He spent a lot of time every afternoon watching the Western Union sports ticker and later listening to the radio broadcasts.

Because he had plenty of time for boredom, Guerdon made a regular round of the bars at the Hollenden and Statler, and often finished at the Union Club. (But he really disliked the rich and sons of the rich whom he met there. He was rich himself, but he disliked the idle life. He preferred the company of newspaper men, especially that of Paul Bellamy.)

Guerdon used to make a ceremony of providing a between-editions lunch for the editorial workers on election nights. Every year he would order the Hollenden to send over a great array of sandwiches, coffee, and pie about 10:15 P.M. after the first edition deadline. Guerdon hung

around until the final edition makeover came off the press. Then, about 4 A.M.,

he would allow himself the luxury of a toast to the victor (if the man happened to be backed by the *PD*) or a better-luck-next-time drink (if the *PD* candidate lost).

During the postwar decade, Guerdon's high spot was the daily meeting of the editorial writers, at which Guerdon expressed his opinions freely (but they were usually ignored, as they were by the board of directors, too).

Though Guerdon's views were disregarded, he really had an uncanny common sense. Because of the long-standing legend that he was not to be taken seriously or given any real responsibility, the decision-makers paid him little attention. They would have saved themselves a lot of money if they had. He was strongly opposed, for instance, to moving the entire Forest City operation to the site of the News Building.

"It will cost an abnormal lot of money to wrap a new building around the News building," he predicted. "If we must move from East Sixth and Superior, we ought to buy property on the lakefront, next to the railroad tracks and near the docks, where rolls of paper can be moved just a short distance into the plant. There we should put up an entirely new building. If we move to East Eighteenth Street, it will be too small within ten years."

Guerdon was right. By 1966, the plant was already too small, and plans were under way for a new building. Land was bought near the railroad and docks on the west side, near Edgewater Park, and building plans prepared. They were later scrapped because of high costs and difficulty of getting financing in Cleveland. (The Press avoided such a mistake. When it put up a new building in the fifties, it chose a practical site on the lakefront, at East Ninth and Lakeside.)

Guerdon stubbornly said he would never set foot in the remodeled East Eighteenth Street building, and he didn't. An office was provided

for him on the editorial floor, but he never used it. Several months before the move, Guerdon became seriously ill, and was taken to his summer home near Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, in the Poconos, where he and his second wife, Anne, had spent more and more time in recent years.

His health continued to fail, and he died there 17 December 1959.

Guerdon disliked everything about being a rich man. His clothes were baggy, and his hats looked like discards. For years, he supported a large retinue of servants at the family home on Lake Shore Boulevard, Bratenahl, a lovely old manse surrounded by gardens. Ultimately, however, he decided it was absurd to maintain a staff of sixteen for only himself and Anne, so he gradually pensioned off the maids, chauffeur, cook, gardener, and others, and sold the manse to an Italian family.

Guerdon was a frustrated, lonely man. He knew he had undeveloped talents that would have given him more satisfaction than the routine his father and the trustees had decreed for him. He was a generous man, who overtipped when he considered the service good, and the soul of courtesy. He had the habit of prefacing almost any remark with "May I say. ... " A gentleman of the old school, who deserved a better fate from his family.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Mr. Cleveland

Louis B. Seltzer was editor of the *Cleveland Press* for thirty-eight years. In his last fifteen years he was the single most powerful political force in Cleveland, the man most responsible for diluting the power of both the Democratic and Republican bosses. He became an unofficial, unchosen but actual, boss himself.

He became a kingmaker, a mayor-maker, by combining native shrewdness, cunning, prodigious energy, and a large ego with a phenomenal sense of timing. He did it almost entirely himself, with the constant encouragement of his quiet, charming wife, Marion, who was as serene as Louie was bouncy, flip, and ubiquitous. At the peak of his power, he attracted enough national attention to induce *Life Magazine* to do an extensive profile on him, in which they dubbed him "Mr. Cleveland," an appellation he cherished and did nothing to tone down or repudiate. In his final years as editor, there were signs that he had come to believe in his own legend. He was, as the cracker-barrel philosopher would say, "really somethin'," and in unwilling and restless retirement, still radiates an aura of importance in Cleveland, which comforts his admirers, mystifies politicians, and annoys some of his former associates. Though retired, he is a presence and apparently happy to continue as one.

Louis had fertile ground to plow in as he demolished the party machines. Cleveland has a long history of political independence dating back to Mayor Tom L. Johnson, who defeated the Establishment of his day, then built a strong political machine himself and added a bit of civic idealism to it. The Press was always antiboss and often anti-Establishment, as it struggled to get a foothold in the city. The *Plain Dealer* was antiboss, too, but very much pro-Johnson, and neither the Press nor *Plain Dealer* belabored Johnson as a boss, which he surely was. He was a good boss. And that is what Seltzer aimed to be, when he got to the top of the heap. Whether he was good for the city is still debatable, but he certainly was bad for the political parties, which degenerated into hollow shells with no real clout. Partly it was because federal welfarism had taken away the main tools of the politicians, the small jobs, the Christmas baskets, the personal favors. Partly it was because civil service grew and diminished political patronage.

When Seltzer became editor as a comparative kid of thirty-one, the Press had been through a rough time under a succession of unsuccessful editors. Roy W. Howard, the head man of Scripps-Howard, personally chose Seltzer. From then on the Press had continuity of policy and Seltzer had the personal ear of Howard, whom he admired tremendously (and who was much like Seltzer physically and temperamentally, both of them small, wiry, combative, nervous). He even affected some of Howard's idiosyncrasies of dress, such as the bow tie and large handkerchief flowing out of his breast pocket. Howard gave Seltzer much more freedom than the other chain editors and dealt him in on closely held stock, which made him wealthy. He appointed Louie editor-in-chief of all the Scripps papers in Ohio and was rewarded by seeing the Press grow from a struggling number three to the eminence of being number one in Cleveland for a while. Seltzer retained this enviable special position of favorite until Howard died in 1965. Not long after that, Jack Howard, Roy's son, and his associates in the hierarchy, decided it

was time for Louie to retire. Since then, in many ways, the Press has become more readable under its present editor, Thomas L. Boardman, a one-time protege who succeeded Seltzer. But it does not have the momentum and clout that Seltzer gave it.

Seltzer was a prime example of how a street-smart youngster, with overwhelming ambition, can get ahead on a newspaper despite a lack of formal education. He was fond of telling how he had to go to work when he was barely out of the eighth grade. His father, Charles Alden Seltzer, wrote "western" novels that later became popular, but at that time his income was low, and Louie quit school to become an office boy for the *Leader*. Later, while still in his teens, he worked a year as reporter for the News. At eighteen he married Marion, and began his long career on the Press at twenty. In an amazingly short time, he became city editor.

In the time most young hopefuls were going to high school and college Louie was making friends with politicians and businessmen who later rose to great heights. His small size and the necessity to earn his own living undoubtedly contributed to his brash, porky attitude toward news sources, and he developed a bravado that manifested itself in frequent profanity and assumed toughness. Officials at all levels considered it an amusing term of endearment when Louie, with a smile, called them bastards and sons of bitches to their faces. There is one classic true story about this.

When Louie was on the Press city desk, a secretary or assistant answered incoming phone calls, the usual custom on big city papers. On a particularly hectic day, the phone-answerer yelled to Louie that a Mr. Silbert wanted to talk to him. At least that is what Louie understood; he took it to mean that the caller was Municipal Judge Samuel H. Silbert, who had been police prosecutor during Seltzer's days as a police reporter and was, like Louie, a bantamweight physically (Silbert later became senior judge of common pleas court, an authority on divorce law, and unbeatable in any election.)

With his usual insulting but friendly toughness, Seltzer

picked up the phone and said, "Hello, you little Jewish son of a bitch." There was a long pause, and silence on the other end, and then a deep, resonant, melodious voice said testily, "I beg your pardon!" There was reason for the haughtiness. The caller was the city's leading rabbi, Abba Hillel Silver, famed for his fervent oratory and later to become one of the great Zionist leaders. Seltzer had an unhappy time explaining to the rabbi that he thought he was talking to Sam Silbert. The rabbi was not amused.

That didn't set Louie back on his heels for long. He continued to address friends and enemies in this raffish, belligerent manner, and most of them understood and enjoyed it. By the time he had left the city desk and gone back to reporting he was on close, confidential terms with O. P. and M. J. Van Sweringen; also with Maschke and Gongwer, both of whom liked him personally, though the Press was regularly giving both of them hell. By the late twenties, he had become chief editorial writer, and in 1928, Roy Howard told him, at the Democratic national convention in Houston, that he would shortly be promoted to editor.

As editor, Seltzer came on slowly but surely. He surrounded himself with able subordinates who stayed with him for years. Richard L. Maher succeeded him as political writer and was still at it forty-five years later, until he died. He got Carlton K. Matson, who had been editor of the Toledo News-Bee before it folded, to become his chief editorial writer. Norman Shaw, Tom Boardman, Richard D. Peters, Richard Campbell, Harding Christ, all first-rate journalists, joined him later. He built up a fine staff of investigative reporters, and was vigorous in backing Mayor Burton and Safety Director Ness in ridding the city of racketeers and corrupt policemen. He bemoaned the protected gambling clubs in the suburbs.

Louie was not only the editor; he didn't hesitate to call on big advertisers, to make sure they stayed with the Press during and after the Big Depression. Nathan L. Dauby, head man of the May Company, was constantly wooed by Seltzer, and some of the pieces the Press carried about Dauby were

pretty obvious and a little drippy. At that time Dauby and all the other department store managers were paying plenty to publish the Shopping News, to undercut all the newspapers.

During the depression Louie gave his editorial employees the impression that he encouraged the formation of the Newspaper Guild. Cleveland newsmen did form Local Number One, and Heywood Broun, then a Scripps columnist, helped organize it and became its first national president. Louie regularly maintained a close contact with his staff, spent a lot of time in the news room listening to gripes, and set up a routine of daily early-morning staff meetings, at which everyone participated in discussion of policy and decided which villains to attack next. This kept staff morale high.

Meanwhile Seltzer was involving himself in the community in a big way. With the same air of making himself available to the readers as to the staff, he appeared before every little group, no matter how small or inconspicuous, that wanted a speaker. At first he was not a good speaker, for his voice was high pitched and weak, but he managed, through practice, to expand his vocabulary and improve his elocution until he sounded fairly impressive. He was the Press's best missionary to all the numerous ethnic groups, the PTAs, the luncheon clubs, the lodges, and the churches. He seldom passed up an opportunity to appear before as few as ten people, though it often meant an eighteen-to-twenty-hour day. He was an early riser, usually at work before the rest of the staff at 7 A.M.; yet the previous night he might have been out late, talking to a handful of people twenty miles from home until 11 P.M. This was a murderous schedule, which might have floored a man with less energy and ruined his home life, but Louie took care of that by having wife Marion go to all meetings with him, and her presence added a lot of class to the visit. She could help drive, too, while he napped, if necessary. So Marion also got involved in community projects and eventually became president of the Federation of Women's Clubs. They were a missionary team hard to beat.

Louie watched his health carefully, didn't drink or smoke, ate lightly, and never seemed to gain a pound or look weary.

Adding to his attractiveness as a speaker was the fact that Louie, after he was established as editor, began to write personal editorials, signed simply "L.B.S." in which he added his own touches to the paper's formal editorial positions, commenting on incidents and people he knew, which fairly often oozed with banality. Although they were not literary gems, they were written in plain, simple language, which he used instinctively. A stylist he wasn't, but an effective journalist he was. The L.B.S. editorials often appeared on the front page.

The program of getting around everywhere, often doing two or three meetings a night, and perhaps one or two at lunch, caused Louie by necessity to develop an escape technique, by which he would quickly fade out after he had made his talk, pleading that he had to rush to another engagement. At lunch, he would refuse to eat the blue-plate special and would either eat nothing at all or a special salad that waiters habitually brought him without asking. It gave the lunchers the impression that here indeed was one of the busiest guys in the world and they should be honored to have him even show up.

Louie did not confine himself to making little speeches all over town. He got deeply involved in civic groups. He became president of the Welfare Federation and president of the Convention and Visitors Bureau. He was director and vice-president of the City Club, and served several years as a board member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. (But he did not take an active part in the inner workings of either.)

All the time Louie was thus building himself up as an ever-present personage, his rival, Bellamy of the *Plain Dealer*, was avoiding the tedious chore of speaking to little groups. By the time the depression ended, Seltzer's ubiquitous performance and political savvy began to pay off, and for the first time he emerged as a kingmaker, a major political force,

something that gathered steam as it went along, like a Caribbean hurricane.

He first showed his shrewdness by persuading Frank Lausche to run for mayor in 1941. Lausche boasted of his independence of bosses. (But he checked everything important with Seltzer, who appeared to the public to be an editor, not a boss.) Seltzer had been showing political clout even before this. At a time in the thirties when the sheriff's office was extremely permissive about gambling, and the city was honeycombed with bookie joints, Seltzer had the Press start a write-in campaign for Police Inspector William H. McMaster, known as a clean, determined, honest law enforcer. It seemed like an exercise in futility, for both Republicans and Democrats had nominated candidates and McMaster's name wasn't even on the ballot. Yet the campaign was surprisingly effective. McMaster didn't win, but he did finish a close second to one of the best vote-getters in the county's history, former Councilman John M. Sulzmann.

During the war, Louie devised a massive publicity campaign to raise funds for a war memorial and fountain on the Mall. Plenty of funds were raised, but a hassle later developed over the architect, the design, the delays, and so forth. It was eventually erected and stands there today, in dark green marble. It was considered far-out when finally put up, but not so avant-garde now. It's usually referred to as the Jolly Green Giant.

The power of the *Press* in promoting a write-in was demonstrated again, years later, when a vacancy occurred in common pleas court shortly before election. The usual batch of hopefuls was being discussed when the Press came out suddenly with a plea for voters to write in the name of Thomas J. Parrino, one of the most vigorous, best respected, assistant county prosecutors. It was a bold gamble, but it worked. The Democratic party organization had not yet made a choice, but it could hardly oppose Parrino, who was tops as a trial lawyer and had won notable convictions in newsworthy trials. It was hard to believe a write-in campaign would produce enough votes to win, but it did. Day after day page one editorials urged Parrino. There were also editorials inside

about Parrino, and news coverage about Parrino, and signed editorials by L.B.S. about Parrino. When Seltzer plugged a favorite candidate, he pulled out all the stops. There was none of the cool aloofness, the careful separation of editorial comment from news, that the *Plain Dealer* habitually practiced. The Press was partisan all the way. It's easy to understand that in later years, why Parrino, though an honorable man and able judge, was not going out of his way to antagonize the Press by giving news breaks to the opposition. He knew he owed his job to Seltzer, not the Democratic party.

While Louie was building up his position as the most active editor, he was his own best reporter. He got around town so much and was in conference with so many important people, that invariably he learned of important about-to-break news before his staff did. He'd attend a luncheon with some bigwigs and take part in decisions. It would be agreed at the meeting that all the decisions were to be considered confidential and the news would be released later in a proper, orderly way. But in the late edition of the Press that same day, the news of the decision would appear. The other members of the committee or board would be understandably furious. The top editors of the *Plain Dealer* and News, who also knew of the decision and had promised to keep it confidential, would also be irate, and Seltzer would be accused of breaking release dates -- something unpardonable in the eyes of the other editors.

Seltzer had a regular technique for handling such situations. He simply disappeared from the office, or other telephone contact, until after the story had been printed. When charged with having tipped off his reporters, he invariably said, "I was out of the office and didn't know anything was in the paper, until I saw the final edition. Then I raised hell about the premature publication. Somebody must have tipped off the city desk, and it got in the paper before I could stop it." The other board members and editors had well-founded suspicions about who

tipped off the city desk, but they never could prove it. This sort of suspected double cross went on year after year, and the Press got the

reputation of breaking any kind of release it chose, if it suited the purpose of its editor. It didn't seem to bother Louie, but the ruthlessness of the operation generated a fear and dislike of the little man in many prominent Clevelanders. Important news sources began to fear not to give their stories to the Press, and Louie's power was obviously growing. So was the Press circulation.

In 1953, Seltzer sprang his biggest mayor-making coup, the election of State Senator Celebrezze over Boss Miller's candidate, County Engineer Porter. The new mayor was clearly Seltzer's creation, and he soon began to take advantage of it in the promotion of that civic monstrosity, Erievue, next door to the new Press building. (All of which has been described in detail in previous chapters.)

By now it was perfectly clear which newspaper was dominating the political scene. The *Plain Dealer* had also endorsed Celebrezze in the November election, but the Press had him in its pocket. The new mayor was popular, though not brilliant, and the Republicans simply couldn't get off the ground with candidates to oppose him. The regular Democrats tried to beat Celebrezze in 1955 with State Senator Joe Bartunek, but failed. The Republicans failed miserably in later years with Willard Brown, Tom Ireland, and Albina Cermak. There just wasn't any organized Republican party in the city of Cleveland. The Republicans showed no signs of life in the county and state until Ralph Perk was elected county auditor in 1962, and James A. Rhodes was elected governor. (This was the first year Tom Vail called the shots politically on the *Plain Dealer*. He endorsed both Rhodes and Perk.)

By the mid-fifties, Seltzer's power had become so great in Cleveland that when the Sheppard murder case broke, the most sensational in years, the Press practically demanded on the first page that Dr. Sam Sheppard be brought to trial for the murder of his young wife, though Sheppard at that time hadn't even been taken into custody. It was a positive, un-questioned example of a newspaper taking over after government officials had failed to act. Suspicion pointed to young Dr. Sam, but no specific evidence had been gathered against him. Practically

everyone at the *Plain Dealer* and News, as well as the Press, believed that the finger pointed at Sheppard and that his family and Bay Village officials had been shielding him from questioning, that Cleveland detectives should have been called in at once, but had not been. Seltzer solved the dilemma by urging Dr. Samuel Gerber, the coroner, to hold a public inquest, at which Assistant Prosecutor Saul Danaceau and Gerber questioned Sheppard for the first time. It gave the newspapers the opportunity to print, libel-free, all the various suspicions about Sheppard's dubious story about how he had found his wife bludgeoned to death. It also brought out sensational and sordid details of Sheppard's career as a playboy and lush, and established a motive for murder.

The Sheppard case became big news all over the country and split Cleveland right down the middle, between those who were positive Sheppard was the murderer and those who believed he was an upright handsome young man who was being persecuted. After the coroner's inquest, Sheppard was indicted for murder, and his trial became a cause célèbre. The case was tried every day in all the local papers, as well as the courtroom, and columnists and trained seals from New York and Chicago gave out opinions daily, as if they were covering a world series. The Press continued to maintain an aggressive stance against Dr. Sheppard, but so did the other papers. Sheppard was convicted, sentenced to life imprisonment, began a series of appeals, which were denied, but served only ten years in prison.

Years later, a surprise legal action, in the form of a habeas corpus petition in federal court, claiming Sheppard had been denied his constitutional rights through adverse newspaper stories before and during the trial, was filed by a new lawyer, F. Lee Bailey, who had not appeared in previous appeals. At first little notice was taken of it, but a real bombshell exploded when Federal Judge Carl Weinman of Columbus held

a hearing, and to everyone's astonishment, ordered Sheppard released and a new trial held. He was let out of prison and fled by motor car to Chicago, with a convoy of panting reporters in chase. There he married a

German woman, Mrs. Ariane Tebbenjohanns, who had interested herself in the case before she left Germany, and had been visiting him at the Penitentiary. She was an attractive, but somewhat gaudy, blonde, which pleased the photographers.

The release of Sheppard revived at once the dormant public interest in the sensational case. Sheppard and his new wife, though his lawyer had won his temporary freedom on the ground that newspapers had done him in, tried constantly to get attention from the newspapers and from TV stations. This went on for months. The Cuyahoga county prosecutor appealed Judge Weinman's decision, and won a two-to-one decision from the federal circuit court of appeals. Bailey took it to the United States Supreme Court, and there won the final go round. Sheppard was granted a new trial.

The sudden emergence of Sheppard from prison revived an old threat by Sheppard to sue the Scripps-Howard newspapers, Editor Seltzer personally, and Coroner Gerber for several million dollars charging libel and slander. Nothing eventually came of the suit, which was thrown out, but a lot came out of the Supreme Court's decision that Sheppard had been unfairly treated by the papers. Courts all over the country, urged on by bar associations, began to clamp down on pretrial publicity, refused to allow cameras in courtrooms or witnesses to be interviewed during a trial, and set up a long series of negotiations between bar and press as to what was fair balance between free press and fair trial. It's still far from settled, though newspapers are beginning to be more circumspect about publishing *ex parte* statements by attorneys, and have realized that cameras in courtrooms may influence juries' decisions. One thing is certain -- it is unlikely that any big city newspaper today would again go as far as the Press did in its first-page editorial, with screaming headlines, pointing the finger at Sam Sheppard, saying "Who Speaks for Marilyn?"

Seltzer performed a public service in trying to get the case aired. But the interviewing of witnesses before and after their testimony, the publishing of out-of-court statements by lawyers for both sides went

much too far, and despite the efforts of the trial judge, Edward Blythin, to be fair, the trial was turned by the newspapers and the lawyers into too much of a hippodrome.

Sheppard was acquitted in his second trial in 1966. He was readmitted to the practice of osteopathic medicine, was sued for malpractice, quit as a doctor, and became a professional wrestler. His German wife divorced him after some public quarreling, and he married a third wife, the young daughter of his wrestling partner. His news value rapidly diminished, except as a freak, and in the end he became a pitiful figure. He died of a sudden heart attack in 1970.

The sensational Sheppard case was in the headlines at the same time that Celebrezze was being elected, and Seltzer was flying extremely high in power. The Press was aggressively going after readers in the far suburbs, particularly Parma and Euclid, which had lured many second-generation ethnic families away from the central city, people who had long been Press subscribers.

Within the next year or two, however, some important changes took place in Cleveland. Mayor Celebrezze left Cleveland, tapped by President Kennedy to go to Washington as HEW secretary. (JFK needed an Italian name in his cabinet to help him in the congressional elections in 1962.) Ralph Locher, Tony's law director, became mayor. The construction at Erievue Tower was unusually pokey. The University-Euclid urban renewal was going absolutely nowhere, and Hough and Wade Park were fast degenerating into high-crime slums. Mayor Locher, a well-intentioned man, seemed confused and unable to act. A changing of the guard was taking place at the *Plain Dealer*, too. Tom Vail, young and ambitious, had become publisher and had tapped me as executive editor. In November 1962, the teamsters and the Guild struck both the Cleveland papers, and it lasted till almost Easter 1963. This combination of circumstances

knocked the Press off its pinnacle, and led to Seltzer's retirement two years later.

The marathon strike came about because of an internal struggle within the Guild at the Press. The *Plain Dealer* should not have been involved, but was dragged in. The Guild had organized the Press business office, as well as the editorial staff, but had signed up only slightly more than 50 percent of the business staff as dues-paying members. It desperately wanted the union shop, which would have required laggards to become members within thirty days after hiring. But the *PD* business office was not Guild-organized. Vail objected strongly to the union shop, and most of the *PD* editorial force was not enthusiastic about it, and couldn't have cared less about the Press's internal difficulties. Nevertheless, since the Guild was a city-wide union, the *PD* became stuck with the strike, too.

In all the thirty years of negotiations with the Guild, Seltzer had given the Press representatives the idea that he was somehow trying to help them (though he was on the other side, in management). He was very friendly to Forrest Allen, the long-time aggressive Guild leader, and several times had come up with last-minute concessions that had satisfied Allen, even though Graham of the *Plain Dealer* was reluctant to give them. He had been personally friendly to William M. Davy, the veteran Guild secretary, who was planning to retire soon. This time Davy had determined to make one last big pitch for the union shop. He had been asking for it for years but was regularly turned down. This time, he was confident the papers would not turn him down, if he could engineer a strike just before Christmas, the biggest advertising season of the year. There is reason to believe Davy was convinced that, in the final crunch, Seltzer would again pull a rabbit out of the hat for the Guild. But Davy reckoned without Tom Vail's stubbornness. Though he was new on the job, and young, and with the Press leading in circulation, Vail simply said no and stuck to it. So the strike dragged on far beyond Christmas.

Seltzer did try, through his labor negotiator, Dan Ruthenberg, to sign up business-office members for the Guild, so they'd have at least 55 percent of the employees. This was a clear violation of the spirit

(and probably the letter) of the Taft-Hartley law, which forbids employers to sign up members for unions. But Ruthenberg's effort failed. Despite telephone solicitation of nonmembers and the suggestion it would be all right with the boss, Dan signed up only a handful of new members. (The suspicion that Davy felt he had private assurance from Seltzer that he would achieve a last minute miracle, arose from the fact that the Guild leaders, in TV appearances after the publishers had made their announced final offer, kept on insisting confidently that it was not really a "final offer" and they expected more.)

They didn't get any more. A revolt, led by Joe Saunders, started within the *Plain Dealer* unit, which at first had seemed stunned by the strike, but gradually began to resent being suckered into the Press's troubles. In late January, the *PD* unit voted to tell the negotiators to accept the publishers' offer. This cracked the log jam, and shortly afterward, after a bitter fight and by only a few votes, the Press unit took the same position.

While all the hassling was going on, Vail had wisely refused to argue the publishers' case on TV or radio. He took the position he had to negotiate his way out, not seek sympathy from the public. But Seltzer, after the strike had become an endurance contest, apparently felt a compulsion to defend his position publicly, and made the fatal mistake of debating on TV, with Noel Wical, the Press Guild leader, before the City Club. Seltzer was not convincing; Wical, in a quiet way, was. In the end, Seltzer demolished himself by giving the impression that Wical would be in the doghouse at the Press after the strike ended. The net effect was disastrous for Seltzer, but he didn't find that out until later.

When the strike at last ended, both the Press and *PD* had lost circulation from having been out of print for 129 days, but the Press lost the most. Seltzer discovered that a lot of people, who had bought the Press because they feared his

power rather than because they enjoyed reading it, didn't want it any longer, and disliked Seltzer personally because of his TV performance. It took about three years before the *PD* finally passed the Press in

circulation, but it was obvious that this would eventually happen. The *PD* was now an aggressive paper, fighting the Press, rather than trying to ignore it. Vail had determined that the only way to overtake the Press was to beat Seltzer at his own game, to criticize the Press openly, to oppose the Press's favorite candidates, to bring up the *Plain Dealer's* own candidates, to pull no punches, either in promotion or in editorials. For the first time, the *PD* became aggressive in investigative reporting. Wright Bryan, who had been ineffective as a competitor of Seltzer, had resigned as editor, and Vail took over complete charge as editor as well as publisher. He surprisingly got the backing of the Holden estate trustees to battle the Press thus, something unheard of previously. The whole *PD* staff suddenly became gung-ho in a way not seen in forty years. For the first time, the *Plain Dealer* was now fighting Seltzer head on, and loving it. The staff thought it was high time someone knocked him off his self-constructed pedestal.

The combination of continuing editorial improvement, circulation and advertising gain at the *Plain Dealer*, the unexpected revival of the Sheppard case, and the death of Roy Howard finally unhorsed Seltzer as editor. He had continued three years beyond the usual cutoff age of sixty-five, and in late 1965, was told it was time for him to retire. It was apparently a surprise to Louie, as well as a shock. His world had really fallen apart suddenly, for at this same time, his beloved wife, Marion, after a long battle, had succumbed to cancer. Louie was offered a round-the-world trip to cushion the shock, but he refused to take it, and determined to stay in Cleveland. He moved into specially built quarters next to his daughter, Shirley (Mrs. Arthur Cooper), who had many of Marion's endearing qualities. He is still a presence here, but without power. He and his former compatriots at the Press continued a chilly fraternalism, and though a plaque was put up in the

outer hall attesting to his valiant long service as editor, he was seldom seen at the office and obviously not called on much, if at all, for advice. Boardman began to edit the Press in his own way, which was different

from Seltzer's, more like that of other editors in the chain, and attentive to smoke signals from headquarters in New York.

Norman Shaw, who, as associate editor, had ably run the paper during Seltzer's absences, retired to Sarasota, Florida, obviously unhappy. It was no secret that Shaw for years had taken a dim view of many of Louie's decisions and promises. Shaw had the ability to be top editor of any of the Scripps papers, but he stayed in Cleveland, possibly because his roots were in northern Ohio (he had attended Oberlin College, and his father had been chief editorial writer for the *Plain Dealer* till he retired). After settling in Sarasota, Shaw got knee-deep in civic activities there, and was seldom seen again in Cleveland.

Seltzer, too, could have gone elsewhere to big jobs in the Scripps chain. He had been asked to take a big part in the build-up of the *New York World Telegram* after Howard bought it, and Howard made him other offers that would have taken him elsewhere. He declined, probably wisely, for he knew Cleveland thoroughly, knew his assets and limitations. He decided to stay here and mine the journalistic ore in his own town, which he knew so well.

His impact on Cleveland will be felt for many a year.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Long Strike: 1962-1963

Cleveland's characteristic volatility seemed suspended in the late fifties and early sixties. There had been a brief business recession in 1958, people tightened their belts some, quit living so high on credit, bought more used cars than new ones. It didn't last long, but it continued long enough to help John F. Kennedy get elected president over Richard M. Nixon. Cleveland went for Kennedy, though Nixon carried Ohio. Tony Celebrezze was still coasting along as the people's choice for mayor; Louie Seltzer was still the boss, and Tony was reelected for his fifth term in 1961. In the summer of 1962, things began to change.

On the surface the Yo-Yo seemed to be still going up. Business was better, although the effects of the William Taylor and Bailey stores closing were being felt on lower Euclid Avenue. They hadn't been getting their share of the retail business for some time, so their closing was accepted as inevitable. But it had ominous connotations; no new department stores moved into their buildings. The Taylor store was cut up into several shops, and the Taylor Arcade was closed as a walk-through to Prospect. The Bailey quarters were turned into a garage for the May Company. The newspaper advertising managers wondered how long Sterling-Lindner-Davis could hold out.

In May 1962 an important changing of the guard took place at the *Plain Dealer*. Sterling Graham, having reached the age of seventy, was required to retire, and Thomas V. H. Vail, great-grandson of the old millionaire, L. E. Holden, took over Graham's office as publisher, with the title of vice-president. Previously F. William Dugan had been promoted to general manager. Knowledgeable insiders at the *Plain Dealer* could see this coming for some time, because Vail for the previous year had been Graham's executive assistant, and Dugan had been leap-frogged over John A. Van Buren, the business manager for the last twenty years, who was usually at odds with Graham. (Graham was promotion-minded, and Van Buren extremely conservative with a nickel. They maintained a surface cordiality, but the friction was evident.) Changes in the editorial department were also anticipated, and they began in September, when Everest P. Derthick retired as managing editor and went to Ohio State University School of Journalism to teach for a year. Philip W. Porter (myself), who had been Sunday and Feature editor for nine years, was appointed managing editor, but with full jurisdiction over both the Sunday and news departments. Both divisions had been operated for forty years as separate baronies, and there was even a Chinese wall of lockers between the two. This came down at once.

It was the beginning of a long series of changes and a complete reorientation of policy at the *Plain Dealer* vis-a-vis the Press. Vail was the only one of the Holden descendants who had consciously prepared himself for bigger things by working in all departments of the paper. (Peter Greenough, his cousin, had worked in the *PD* editorial department but not the business office.) After navy service during World War II and graduation from Princeton, Tom began as a police reporter on the News, covered suburbs and courts and at a very early age became political writer and legislative correspondent. That was his last editorial experience. Before he had a chance to work on an editorial desk, he switched to the business office, became an ad salesman inclassified and display, and put in some time in accounting and labor relations.

It was obvious while Vail was going through this training that he was being groomed for the top job, and that the Vail branch of the Holden family was now in the saddle. Tom's father, Herman L. Vail, had become president of Forrest City Publishing when Graham retired (Freiberger remained chairman of the board). It was now going to be possible to go to only one top executive for decisions, rather than have them sift down through a board. Things looked bright for a new day at the *Plain Dealer*, and Porter soon reorganized the top editorial positions. William M. Ware became Sunday and feature editor, Russell H. Reeves night managing editor; both had been assistants to Porter previously. Thomas R. Guthrie was named news editor, a new position and because James W. Collins decided to retire as city editor after thirty-eight years, Ted Princiotta was appointed city editor. The new team was raring to go, just in time for the Cuban missile crisis and the November election.

The increasing air of euphoria at the *Plain Dealer* seemed to be spreading to the rest of the community, too. The *Plain Dealer* had made an agreement with NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) to put on a Space-Science Fair at Public Hall, bringing to Cleveland the original space capsule in which John H. Glenn had made the first three-time-around orbit of the earth, in addition to many scientific displays and gimmicks that had been on display at the World's Fair at Seattle. The federal government was anxious to bring school children in from all over Ohio to see this. The *Plain Dealer* arranged for thousands of them to come in buses, and get in free. It was scheduled for the last weekend in November. Joseph F. Guillozet, the promotion manager, had made all the arrangements, after he and Porter had completed the deal with Abe Silverstein, general manager of NASA. A black-tie banquet with many bigwigs present was scheduled for Sunday night.

Then came the blow (in the midst of the Space-Science Show) that set Cleveland back on its heels for the next year, the longest local newspaper strike in history. It began suddenly Thursday, 28 November, and lasted till 8 April 1963. It disrupted the city economically as badly

as a tornado would have, and set the Yo-Yo spinning downward. Its ramifications were much worse than the two previous strikes, 1946 and 1956, which each lasted four weeks, because it came between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the busiest season of the year for department stores, which always scheduled their heaviest advertising of the year then. It is almost impossible to total the losses and the consequences that spread through the community. It gave a clear picture of how many different kinds of businesses depend on newspapers to keep going.

The strike came so suddenly that nobody, either in management or staff, was prepared for it. Negotiations with the Guild had been dragging along as usual, but none of the other ten unions had shown any sign of being unusually tough. The teamsters in particular had given no cause for worry. So when they suddenly put a picket line around the *Plain Dealer* delivery dock just before the first edition was run off, it was believed to be a temporary aberration, which might make trouble for a day or two. But it became all too clear, after several days' fruitless effort to get things going again, that some shrewd boys in the Guild, who really wanted a strike to achieve the Guild shop, had conned Tony DiPalma, business agent of the teamsters, into pulling a quick strike, so that after the two plants were shut down, the Guild could keep them closed until it got the union shop.

The newspaper managements and lawyers did some fancy backstage work with the teamsters' national hierarchy in Washington, who overruled DiPalma, and the teamsters did return to work after ten days. This unmasked the Guild as the real force behind the strike, and bloody fist fights took place between Guild pickets and the returning teamsters. After a week on the payroll, the teamsters walked out again, since there were no papers to deliver. When the strike continued past Christmas, it became an endurance contest, for midwinter is always a poor business season for newspapers, and since they had already lost the big Christmas advertising, the publishers had no incentive to make further concessions to the unions. The *Plain Dealer* and Press had both

been shut since the first night. Notices had been posted in the production departments, saying there was no work for the printcrafts, who were not trying to cross the picket lines anyway.

The business office staff at the *Plain Dealer*, which was not unionized, remained on the payroll, with little to do. A half-dozen top editors, who had quit the Guild, also came to work to keep a news summary up to date against the far-distant date when publication might resume, and to answer the phones (the public continued to call in with silly questions and complaints). The Guild tried to shut the plant down completely by pulling out the telephone operators, but an emergency male nonunion force had prevented that. In January, everyone still on the payroll took a 20-percent pay cut.

The newspaper strike coincided with the worst winter in forty years. Snow, which began to fall 5 December, covered the ground till 15 March. A half dozen times the temperature went below zero for several days in a row, and on 26 January, it sank to nineteen degrees below, the coldest in Cleveland's history.

The daily scene outside the newspaper offices was dismal. The guildsmen were not allowed to draw strike benefits unless they did a daily two-hour stint of picketing some time during the twenty-four hours. In late January, the printers declared themselves officially on strike, and at one time there were five sets of pickets in the snow carrying signs, muffled to the eyeballs in masks, high snow boots, ski pants, and fur gloves.

Some of the guildsmen got jobs with local TV and radio stations, which tried, not very effectively, to step up their coverage of local news. Some went out of town to work on other papers. Quite a few of the most able men went to work for the weekly Heights *Sun Press*, whose editor, Harry Volk, a former News reporter, had hired a half dozen copy editors in 1956, and who expanded his paper to two editions a week. Some worked for the election board or at brokerage offices.

The Cleveland public all this time was not only starved for news, but was affected economically as a result of the blackout. People desperately missed the classified ads. They could not find houses to rent or buy, could not report lost property, could not find out how the market was to buy or sell used cars, could not find out which movies were showing where, could not keep track of plays, concerts, or TV programs. Florists could not learn of weddings, engagements, or deaths. Employment agencies could not advertise job openings. Undertakers and pastors could not notify friends of the times of funerals. Everything normal was disjointed.

In the zero spells or unusually heavy snowfalls, many schools closed, but there was no certain way of notifying parents. Radio and TV stations tried their best, and citizens developed the habit of checking local news and the weather at certain times of day. But there were great gaps in the city's information. Out-of-town newspapers sent in only a few hundred copies a day, and these were always sold early.

No detailed stock market reports, or reports of dividends. No reports of late football, basketball, or hockey games, or baseball spring training. A new governor, James A. Rhodes, had assumed command in Columbus, with a new legislature, but this was unreported. A new sheriff and a new police chief took over in Cleveland. Prominent citizens died, and many of their friends did not know of it until days later. The Associated Press and United Press International teleprinters continued to tap out yards and yards of news from all over the world, but it simply found its way into wastebaskets, thrown there by frustrated editors.

After a couple of months of this, the strikers started putting out their own daily newspaper, splitting the income between the picketing unions. The public was so starved for both news and ads that it sold about one hundred thousand copies a day. Its coverage was sketchy, since it could not begin to cadge enough world and national news, stock market, or sports news to do a good job.

The department stores resumed publication of the weekly Shopping News, and the TV and radio stations printed some flyers to tell about programs.

It was an agonizing, miserable endurance contest. The out-of-work employees borrowed money to eat on, let mortgage payments fall behind, postponed every purchase they could. The perplexed management executives met daily at lunch with their labor negotiators, but the impasse seemed to get worse. The Guild finally in February agreed to settle for the originally offered increase of ten dollars a week without the union shop, and the pressmen also agreed 1 March. It was 31 March before the printers, the last to settle, agreed to terms, and the last picket, a mailer, was removed. The way he finally left reveals something about the fetish of the picket line.

A group of us nervous executives were waiting in the *Plain Dealer* office when the word was flashed about 10:45 P.M. that the printers' union, which was tied in with the mailers, had ratified the agreement. Tony Disantis, the *PD* labor negotiator, went down to the sidewalk and found the lone picket, who hadn't been told the long strike was over. Disantis asked him to phone headquarters from the lobby to verify it. "Huh! You don't think I'm going to cross my own picket line, do yuh?" he asked indignantly. Disantis himself had to phone Noah Henry, the mailers' president, to get him to come down fifteen miles, from his home in Parma, to tell the persistent picket to pack up and go home.

The two newspapers took the padlocks off their composing rooms that night, but it was a week before they could get the staffs called back and machinery rolling to publish again. The first *Plain Dealer* came off the press Monday, 8 April. It was 80 percent advertising. The city of Cleveland felt good again, and the event was even publicized on the NBC "Today" show that morning. The next day's paper, Tuesday, contained a news summary of the entire 129 days, including all the death notices brought in during all that time.

Spring came in quickly and warmly once the strike ended; the weather seemed to coincide with the economic conditions all that winter

and spring. With their ads back in the papers, the downtown stores did a good Easter business, and everyone's spirits perked up. The papers' circulation had taken a beating during the strike -- the *Plain Dealer* lost twelve thousand while the Press lost forty thousand. Many people had found a way to get along without newspapers, and the journals had to begin active promotion to sell themselves again. Soon the big battle between the two papers began and was the talk of the town for the next several years.

During the strike, it was known that Bryan would resign as *PD* editor soon after publication resumed. Vail had been wanting to direct editorial policy as well as the business office, so Dugan and Porter went out to Freiburger's apartment to persuade him that Tom was mature enough to handle the dual job. He needed a deputy to act in his absence, so Porter was made executive editor. Vail also had another old hand to act as grand vizier in charge of editorial page pronouncements -- J. Barry Mullaney, who had been managing editor of the News when it was sold, and was now assistant to Vail. Porter and Mullaney, both twenty-five years older than Vail, encouraged him in his eagerness to fight the Press head on, and Freiburger had now given him the go-ahead, after all the years of carefully avoiding it.

The new aggressiveness at the *Plain Dealer*, which had been interrupted by the long strike, now burst forth with such power that within the next three years its ancient grandma image changed completely. Though the Press was still having friction with the Guild, at the *Plain Dealer* all was soon forgotten, and both editorial and business staffs responded with enthusiasm and glee, like young race horses who had been held back too long and were raring to go. New ideas were encouraged. The typographical appearance of the paper was changed, the city desk began investigative reporting that had so long been the Press's specialty, further shakeups were made in top editorial positions, a new editorial-oriented promotion department was established. Vail held frequent meetings with key men in all departments, to assure them he wanted the fight to go on. A fashion show, a ski school were set up. New

columnists of differing points of view were added, in a Sunday opinion page.

It all began to pay off in advertising as well as circulation. By the end of 1964 the *PD* was carrying more than 50 percent of the total advertising lineage in Cleveland, and was far ahead in classified ads. The circulation gap had narrowed steadily and by the end of 1966, the Press had a lead of only 250 papers, whereas it had been 80,000 ahead after it had bought the News in 1960.

The new competition attracted the attention of national magazines. *Newsweek* referred to the "young tigers" on the *PD*, and *Time* quoted Louie Seltzer as saying he welcomed competition. For the first time since he became editor, he was really getting it. Grandma was no longer the timid conservative, beloved by little old ladies and devotees of the status quo. She was sending staff members all over the world, moving into the governmental scene in Cleveland in a big way, and Tom Vail was starting to become an important political force, just as Seltzer had been for twenty years.

Although everything businesswise seemed to look better within a year after the end of the long strike, under the surface there was big trouble brewing in race relations, which had been getting worse and worse, as the once-plush and prosperous Hough area degenerated into a slum. The area had been designated for urban renewal action, but nothing really had happened. All city hall's energy was concentrated on the Press's Erieview baby (but even that was not moving very fast). The thousands of blacks who had emigrated from the deep south had moved into rented quarters with relatives, and big apartments had been cut up into small furnished suites, with cheap furniture. Many of the newcomers, from poor rural neighborhoods, were unfamiliar with indoor plumbing and used to throwing trash and garbage out the window. They soon went on relief when they found that no more jobs were to be found in Cleveland than in Alabama.

The trouble first broke into the open on school playgrounds that abutted on the black ghetto on one side and on long-established ethnic

neighborhoods on the other. At Sowinski Park, next to a small Polish community, a nasty incident took place in the summer, in which a white girl claimed to have been assaulted by some black boys. There was continual friction, with Poles, Slovenians and Lithuanians, and Italians on one side, and blacks on the other; in the Mayfield Road "Little Italy" section in back of Western Reserve University, blacks did not dare walk through the streets.

Police Chief Richard Wagner, who had been appointed by Mayor Locher during the newspaper strike, was convinced that blacks were organizing teenagers for trouble at a community hangout called JFK House (the manager of the place, Lewis Robinson, said the initials stood for Jomo F. Kenyatta). Chief Wagner was sure the kids were being taught to make Molotov cocktails, and occasionally he would prowl through the Hough area himself with a rifle, convinced there were snipers there ready to kill policemen.

The first trouble, however, was concentrated in the schools, which were really on the spot trying to take care of the influx of black children. The existing grade schools in the Hough, Wade Park, and Collinwood areas were not able to accommodate all the new children, and the school board wisely tried to solve the problem by building new schools in the black neighborhoods. Black activists, who were daily becoming more aggressive (they were led primarily by CORE at that time) contended that this was establishing a pattern of segregation, and started to demonstrate at the site most recently selected for a new school.

A tragic accident occurred there. Some white activists had joined CORE and one of them, Rev. Bruce W. Klunder, an assistant pastor at the Church of the Covenant, had lain down behind a bulldozer in protest. Alas, the driver of the bulldozer did not see him, and backed up, killing him instantly. This triggered violent demonstrations and soon afterward William E. Levenson, superintendent of schools, resigned. The school board asked Paul W. Briggs, superintendent at Parma, to take the job, but Briggs pleaded he had to have racial peace to accomplish anything. So the Interracial Business Men's Committee was formed by John W.

Reavis, a farseeing, wise, corporation lawyer, to try to defuse the emotion. The committee was evenly divided, half blacks, half whites, and included the most reasonable, civic-minded men of both races. Among the whites were Ralph M. Besse, chairman of the Illuminating Company, Carter Kissell, vice-chairman of Midland-Ross Corporation, H. Stuart Harrison, president of Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company, and Frank E. Joseph, Reavis's law partner, who was involved in many foundations and headed the Cleveland Orchestra's financial backers. The blacks included doctors, lawyers and businessmen of real stature. It was agreed that all meetings would be secret and subcommittees would try to really get under the surface of the basic problems, such as poor housing, the difficulty blacks had getting credit and jobs, the high crime rate, hostility between blacks and police, and disintegration of families on welfare.

It was a noble rescue effort and it did defuse the emotional crisis for a while and resulted in the hiring of more blacks by industry and a loosening of loans by the banks. One of the specific improvements came from the creation of a Community Relations Board at city hall (this had been recommended by a postwar planning committee as far back as 1945) and the appointment of Bertram W. Gardner, a highly respected black who had been YMCA secretary in a ghetto area, as its director. (Gardner in 1972 was elected president of the City Club.) The effort did buy crucial time for superintendent Briggs to improve the quality of education in the Cleveland schools, whose pupil percentage now was 60 percent black.

It was obvious that solutions had to be found for this boiling racial trouble. Doris O'Donnell, the *Plain Dealer's* star reporter, spent much time living with families in the ghetto and talking to others, and wrote a perceptive series of articles from page one. Both papers began hiring a few black reporters. This was the situation in 1963, when Mayor Locher came up for election. Mayor Celebrezze, the man who had had ten years of comparative peace at city hall, had left for Washington just in time to escape the coming thunderstorm.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Downhill All the Way: 1963-1973

For the next ten years, it was downhill all the way for the once gung-ho, forward-looking community of Cleveland. As in a Greek tragedy, events moved inevitably from bad to worse, from cause to effect. A few forward-looking citizens could see the disaster coming, and knew that, like the next earthquake along the San Andreas fault in California, it was just a question of when. The basis for the disaster had been laid years before. When it finally came to an end in the early 1970s, Cleveland had already lost its oomph, was the butt of TV jokes and many thoughtful citizens wondered whether it could ever pull out of it and become again the "city on a hill" that Tom Johnson had visualized years before. It was going to be an uphill pull.

The first in the series of disasters was the administration of Mayor Ralph S. Locher, one of the most honorable, well-meaning, personally amiable men ever to hold the office, but a total bust as an administrator and executive. Locher succeeded Tony Celebrezze in 1962, and was in office during the long newspaper strike. He was slow in sensing the far-reaching repercussions, the shock to retail business from having no newspaper advertising in the three weeks before Christmas, the heaviest buying season of the year. He made no move to inject himself into the strike as a possible arbitrator until it had already lasted two months, and even then he was ineffec-

tive in trying to get the hostile groups together. He offered his office as a neutral meeting place, but his impact on the impasse was almost nil.

When spring came and the strike finally ended, Locher had to face an election, to continue his regime that began with his appointment, since he had been Celebrezze's law director. The Democratic organization was no more fascinated with Mayor Locher than they had been with Celebrezze, and they tried to defeat him. The man they endorsed was a political sad sack, who had been around the track several times but had not set the course afire, Mark McElroy, a former councilman and attorney general of Ohio, but only an average performer. Even at that, Ray Miller could not deliver the entire organization to McElroy. County Prosecutor John T. Corrigan, an official with an excellent record, decided the time had come for him to cash in on the electable name of Corrigan, filed to oppose McElroy, and carried part of the organization with him.

Locher had the advantage of being in office, and both newspapers endorsed him. He hadn't done anything wrong -- in fact, hadn't done much of anything -- and the editors believed he deserved another shot at the office. Locher finished first, in a fairly close race.

It was a time when aggressive leadership at city hall, a willingness to join hands with business leaders and the newspapers to get the city moving again might have avoided some of the disaster that came later. The situation was ripe for an active mayor to step in and rev things up. In downtown Cleveland, on the edge of Erieview, a new university, Cleveland State, had been created by Governor Rhodes's administration and was amply supplied with funds. It bought the old Fenn College buildings and started to acquire adjacent real estate. It needed help from city hall, which had urban renewal funds, to get a fast start, but Mayor Locher did not move in on the opportunity.

The Cleveland Development Foundation, which had been created to help grease the machinery for expansion, wanted to help Cleveland State, as well as other good projects, get off

the ground. Its chairman, E. W. (Pike) Sloan, Jr., offered to furnish funds to hire engineers, draftsmen, and lawyers to work with city hall, to get things moving, but he couldn't even get a yes or no answer from Locher. Inertia was in charge.

The entire urban renewal staff had been concentrating on Erieview, but even that project, despite its sacrosanct status, was not moving fast enough. The *Plain Dealer* was finally taking a critical look at it, and ran several articles by Eugene Segal, urban affairs reporter, indicating that there was bungling in the planning of streets to be vacated and others to be opened. In this, the *Plain Dealer* editors were encouraged by Raymond Cragin, big downtown real estate operator, who represented Sterling-Lindner-Davis, whose store was on the edge of Erieview (its warehouse was vulnerable for seizure under eminent domain).

It was comparatively mild criticism, but James Lister, who had been urban renewal director under Celebrezze, resigned. The top office for months remained vacant, despite the fact that practically nothing was being done to expedite the University Euclid area, which included the increasingly restless Hough slum.

The Western Reserve University part of this area couldn't wait any longer to get its part of the project moving, for it had a tremendous expansion of Lakeside Hospital going. So Neil Carothers, an engineer who could make things move, was hired, and WRU began doing things on its own.

After several months of doing nothing to get urban renewal going, Mayor Locher did an incredible thing -- he appointed as urban renewal director a man with no experience whatever in the field, and no particular political or business stature in Cleveland. The man was Bart Clausen, who had been an employee of a Cleveland radio station, had served one year as president of the City Club (during which it had just about gone broke), and then had moved to Washington, holding a job as an obscure assistant in the interior department. He was known as a do-gooder and social uplifter, but he had made no good-sized waves in Cleveland. The newspaper editors were

astounded, to say the least. Clausen occupied the office, but was unable to do anything to straighten out the mess. Perhaps no one could have. At last, things got so bad that the HUD office completely froze Cleveland's previously allotted urban renewal funds.

Urban renewal wasn't the only department at Locher's city hall that was doing nothing or just bumbling along. His finance director, Ed Knuth, seemed unable to give a clear picture of how much money was on hand for city operations or whether a city income tax (now permitted by the state) was necessary. He confused the council and mystified the editors with his arcane explanations. Locher appointed a blue-ribbon "Little Hoover" committee, headed by Carter Kissell, to investigate, and it recommended a small income tax, among other changes. Knuth often talked darkly of deficits, but at the last moment every year he always managed to come up with funds from some cubbyhole.

The other big departments drifted along. Nothing was done about the obvious need to expand the sewage disposal plants, or improve snow removal or street maintenance. It was a continuous mystery why Locher did not get off dead center, and at least accept the offers of the business community to help iron out the mess. Probably the answer was that Bronis Klementowicz, Locher's law director (who had been utilities director under Celebrezze) and principal political adviser, a man who felt he knew the ethnic communities better than anyone, believed that the cosmopolitan groups would resent Locher playing footsie with the business community, whose leaders were regular contributors to Republican campaign funds.

It was a total stalemate, and Locher simply didn't move. Maybe he couldn't, maybe he didn't want to, maybe he didn't have the capacity, maybe he was following in the footsteps of Celebrezze and Frank Lausche (he had been Lausche's secretary when he was governor), who were great at coasting along in the status quo. One big-shot corporate lawyer, who had tried in vain to help Locher, said if Locher had been the proprietor of a drugstore in a small town, he would have been

the most popular man in town, but he didn't have the capacity to run a city the size of Cleveland.

The situation was getting so desperate, in the opinion of *Plain Dealer* editors, that three of them asked Lausche, who was now in the Senate, to get Locher appointed to a federal judgeship, to get him out of city hall. They met Lausche at lunch at the new Hollenden House, which had replaced the ancient hotel that had become a firetrap. He agreed to try, and could have got Locher a judgeship, for one was vacant; but the mayor told Lausche he would refuse to accept appointment if one was offered. He felt he was doing a good job and wanted to run again in 1965 to vindicate his record. He apparently had no comprehension of how the black community was deteriorating or that the failure of urban renewal there had exacerbated the situation. The editors did have this comprehension and so did the Interracial Business Men's Committee. They knew they were trying to cap a volcano.

Locher did run for vindication in 1965. (This time he had the support of the Democratic organization.) This time he had a narrow squeak, and beat out the second-place candidate by only two thousand votes. This man was Carl B. Stokes, a handsome, personable, light-skinned Negro, who had attracted favorable attention as a state legislator. Stokes had been coming up politically for several years. He had been a state liquor inspector, and an assistant police prosecutor, was obviously popular among the blacks, and also had considerable support from white businessmen.

So Locher hung on for another term, and the editors and businessmen continued to bite their nails and wonder if anything could really get him to move. He continued blandly to bumble along, oblivious of the trouble that was ahead. The avalanche had already started to move, but he didn't see it. It finally came in July 1966. The rioting that Police Chief Wagner had long expected finally broke into the open in the Hough area.

The first sign of big trouble came when gangs of black kids began running through the streets, throwing rocks and fire

bombs, stopping cars, and occasionally looting stores run by whites. Chief Wagner was convinced the kids were tutored in the JFK House and then sent out to stir up trouble.

In early June, the police had managed to confine and control the brawls. A nine-year-old boy had been shot during one commotion and another time a mysterious fire broke out in the store of a white man who had been a target for the agitators, and the place burned down. This seemed to be a trial run. In mid-July very hot nights had driven most of the slum residents out into the streets, and the long-feared incident occurred that triggered a full-scale race riot.

A black man, who had been drinking, lurched into a bar run by a white man and asked for a glass of water, presumably to mix with some wine he had. The bartender refused. Soon afterward a sign appeared on the bar, reading "Colored not served here." Much pushing and shoving began, police were called, and before long the whole neighborhood was battling the police. Fire bombs were thrown, shots fired from upper apartment windows by snipers, and police reserves called out. A young black mother standing behind an apartment window was killed by a bullet, and the hysteria turned to chaos. Fires were set wholesale, crowds cut hoses when the firemen came and shot at the firemen. By dawn the riot had quieted some, but fire had destroyed several apartment blocks, and it was obvious that more trouble would break out the next night.

Twelve policemen had been injured. Thirty-eight fires had broken out. Chief Wagner was convinced the signal had been given to pour it on. An armed Negro in a parking lot near Mayfield Road was shot and killed by two whites, and in distant Shaker Heights another black, returning from work, was shot by someone in a passing car. That afternoon, black councilmen and white community leaders urged Mayor Locher to call the Ohio National Guard for help. He did reluctantly, and a guard company came up from Akron.

At nightfall, the rioting broke out again. A black man was shot and killed in a scuffle. The guard put up roadblocks to seal off the area. About 4 A.M. a Negro family fleeing in

a car from a fire in their apartment (next to a recreation center that was burning), tried to crash a roadblock and was fired on by guardsmen. More casualties; a young black mother was shot in the face and her two children also wounded. The police had a helicopter watching the Hough area for snipers and Chief Wagner himself was out there with his rifle. More apartments and stores were burned and looted, more people were homeless and hungry. The rioting continued for three nights, lasting till dawn. Eventually a heavy rain helped cool the furor.

The newspapers covered the nightly riots with teams of reporters and photographers, who worked twelve hours straight through. Hard hats had been furnished the photographers and it was a good thing that Julian Wilson, AP photographer, wore one, for he was hit on the head by a brick. The *PD* photographic coverage was offered to the AP, and for this the *Plain Dealer* was given a distinguished service award by the Associated Press Managing Editors Association at its San Diego convention later that year.

The Hough riots attracted national attention, of a kind that did Cleveland no good, but they did not shake Mayor Locher out of his normal lethargy. They did, however, stir up some voters to turn away from the Democrats, and in November 1966 Ralph J. Perk was elected auditor for a second four-year term; so was Governor Rhodes. A year later, the riots were one of the principal reasons why Locher was finally defeated when he tried for mayor again.

Important changes were taking place on both newspapers at this time. Porter and Mullaney retired at the *Plain Dealer* in December 1966 as Tom Vail's right-hand men, and were replaced respectively by William M. Ware, who had been night managing editor and Sunday editor, and Thomas R. Guthrie, who had been Washington correspondent and before that, news editor. At the Press, Louis Seltzer's long reign had ended in retirement and Thomas L. Boardman had become editor. Vail and Boardman had the final decisions on all endorsements.

Before the next year, 1967, was far under way, another

surprising bombshell exploded in the Cleveland newspaper field. On 1 March, Samuel I. Newhouse, who owned a national chain, bought the *Plain Dealer* from the Holden estate for \$55 million, a price far higher than had ever been offered before. It astonished the community, for practically no one had figured the *Plain Dealer* would ever be sold to interests outside Cleveland. The sale was the final step in the long process of liquidating what had once been a priceless set of trusts, and it finally resolved an intramural, almost fratricidal, tug of war among conflicting Holden descendants.

For many months Tom Vail had been making elaborate plans to build a new *Plain Dealer* building facing the shoreway east of Edgewater Park. Some land had been purchased from the American Shipbuilding Company, which abutted on an arm of the Cuyahoga River and had dock space. It also was close to the New York Central freight tracks, so newsprint could be brought in easily by both water and land. Tom had got the well-known New York architects, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, to make preliminary plans, and had asked all the department heads to prepare estimates of space they'd need in a new building; some of them had made detailed room plans. The *Plain Dealer* building at East Eighteenth- Superior was already too small, as Guerdon Holden had predicted. The press room needed space for an additional press. The plant of the Art Gravure Company next door (in which the *Plain Dealer* owned a controlling interest) needed expansion. The garage was too small for the circulation trucks, and the employees needed a garage to park their cars at night. It was an ambitious project, and plans had even been made to get new access roadways built by the city and state, running off the shoreway.

The rapid inflation that accompanied the escalation of the war in Vietnam overtook the plans. What Vail had originally estimated would cost about \$25 million soon mushroomed to \$40 million, and this would require major financing. He made strong efforts to get this big funding from local banks, but there was no enthusiasm for it. The Cleveland banks

were still ultracautious. The conservative George Gund was still number one at Cleveland Trust, although Freiburger was senior vice-president. If the new building was to be financed, the money would have to come from New York. Even in New York, Vail was discovering that the carrying charges would be almost prohibitive. The other branches of the Holden family who lived in the east (McGinley and Greenough) were complaining that they were still not getting the return from the Forest City Publishing Company they thought they were entitled to. Vail did not want the property to be sold. He wanted to continue to manage it, put up his long-planned new building, and even buy some "farm club" papers in the suburbs and downstate Ohio. But it was not to be. Word got out to Newhouse that the *Plain Dealer* could be bought and he put the necessary big money on the line. It was now worth much more than it would have been three years before, since Vail had been battling the *Press*, and the *Press* had rapidly slipped. Freiburger as trustee obviously believed he got a good price for the renovated Grandma. (The Forest City Publishing Company thus degenerated into a dummy corporation, without power to make decisions.)

The Newhouse management let Vail remain as publisher and editor, and gave him carte blanche to run the editorial department, as they did all their editors. As one of the beneficiaries of the Holden estate, he received a sizeable percentage of the purchase price, but his big dream of empire vanished with the sale. The Newhouse national management began to take a penetrating interest in the business office, made weekly visits to check on advertising and circulation, and soon brought in a troubleshooter from Birmingham, Leo Ring, who was an old hand at solving labor-management problems. To make the purchase pay off, Newhouse had to reduce the number of printers and start to introduce automation in all the production. This he did, fairly soon.

Young Vail was in sole charge of the editorial policy now, with a new team advising him. Boardman was in charge at the *Press*, but without Seltzer's clout. This was the situation

as the election of 1967 approached, a year and a half after the Hough riots had shaken the city. A hard choice had to be made, whether to continue to go along with bumbling Mayor Locher, or to try something new, to take the radical step of endorsing a black man in the hope of bringing peace to the racially troubled city. Locher by now had the full support of the Democratic organization, but Carl Stokes was again a candidate, and this time, he had a considerable number of white liberals and businessmen furnishing him funds.

There was much soul-searching and dissension at the *Plain Dealer* about the endorsement. Joseph F. Saunders, a columnist and editorial writer, a deeply religious man, who had become a powerful protagonist of civil rights, was strong for Stokes. Doris O'Donnell, the star reporter who had many contacts with the police, the FBI, and with lesser black leaders, had no confidence in Stokes and did not believe his past record as a liquor inspector or police prosecutor qualified him to be mayor. Finally Vail took the bull by the horns himself and decided to go all-out for Stokes, in the primary election. (Some of his political friends in Columbus told him he'd be sorry later.) Vail felt the endorsement would unite the restive blacks and the business community, and give the city a chance to move forward again, after the dismal years of Locher. He was in a rush to be first with the endorsement, around Labor Day.

The *Press* was wishy-washy about it at first, and recommended that the voters go for either Stokes or Seth Taft, the unopposed Republican candidate, in the primary. (That year there were party primaries, rather than a nonpartisan primary in which the first two qualified for the final.)

Stokes beat Locher in the primary by twenty thousand votes, an overwhelming margin, and by so doing took over what remained of the Democratic organization. Locher lost a lot of the ethnic voters on the West Side, because of Saunders's editorial appeals to them. Independents and do-gooders were eager to support the charming black candidate.

Then came the confrontation in November with Taft, who

was also a liberal and a do-gooder. Most of the ethnic voters who had supported Locher did go for Taft, and had he conducted even a mildly racist campaign, Taft would have won. Both newspapers' support of Stokes and his own conscience caused Taft to lose by sixteen hundred votes, in a real squeaker.

(Locher ran the next year for common pleas judge, and was unopposed. It was an ideal spot for him. He remained in common pleas until 1972, when he ran unopposed for probate judge. His judicial record has been excellent and few people now remember his days as mayor, because so much worse has happened since then.)

In retrospect, what had happened was crystal clear. Celebrezze's concentration on Erieview had neglected Hough, and the black community resented it. Locher did not sense the depth of this resentment, and did nothing. Riots broke out. This convinced the editors that Locher had to go, and the best way to beat him was to support Stokes, a black man who had white support. Their support convinced just enough voters to let Stokes win in the November final. But, as wise politicians had predicted, the editors came to regret it.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

*Dream Turns into Disaster:
1967-1971*

The election of Carl B. Stokes as mayor of Cleveland in November 1967, attracted more national attention than any municipal election in the lake city in fifty years. He was the first black man to become mayor of a metropolitan city. He had done it in a community of three quarters of a million, only 35 percent of whom were black. He had the active support of both newspapers, some wealthy businessmen, and many political liberals.

Stokes was not the first black American to be elected mayor. Richard Hatcher had also made it in Gary, Indiana, but that was a comparatively small city in which black voters were a large majority. The election of Stokes was regarded as something different, something terribly important. Other big cities had had big welfare problems and race riots -- notably, Los Angeles, Detroit, and New York -- but none of them had yet turned to a Negro to find solutions. It looked like the dawn of a new day in volatile Cleveland, which often tried something new. It looked like the dawn of hope, after five years of floundering under Mayor Locher.

The whites who had joined the newspapers in sending Locher down the drain included some highly prominent and influential people. Cyrus S. Eaton, then board chairman of the C & O Railroad, was best known (his wife was a longtime left-wing liberal, but beyond that,

Eaton, despite his heavy investments, had long opposed the business and political establishment). Lee A. Howley, a former law director under Mayor Tom Burke, and active Democrat, was vice president of the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company; he came out for Stokes. So did John Sherwin, Jr., senior partner of Pickands-Mather, the old and highly respected shipping and iron ore company. Sherwin's father had been a prominent banker and Republican contributor. So did C. B. Maxey, a big shot in the Glidden Company, the paint manufacturer. So did Howard Metzenbaum, millionaire parking lot operator and real estate investor (who later was appointed United States senator). So did Mrs. Lois Hays, long-time social work enthusiast and civil rights advocate.

He had strong backing among the important blacks, too. Dr. Kenneth Clement, a prominent surgeon and former president of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People, became his campaign manager. He also got help from regular Democrats who had been with him in the liquor inspector's and police prosecutor's offices. One of the busiest was Joseph P. McManamon, a former cop and liquor inspector, who was as active as Joe Saunders on the West Side, where both lived. McManamon became Stokes's first safety director.

It truly looked like a new day, and Stokes soon made some good appointments. One was former Municipal Judge Paul White, a highly respected black, as law director. Another was John C. Little, son of a well-known corporation lawyer, as his chief administrative assistant. Another was Richard D. Peters, once editor of the *New York World Telegram* and chief editorial writer of the Press. Another was Richard D. Murway, an experienced journalist, former reporter on the Press. He hired Sidney Spector, formerly with the Federal Housing Administration. He got Richard Greene, a housing expert, and Dr. Edward Martin, a sewage control and pollution expert, to come in from out of town and paid them more salary than he was getting.

The new administration seemed headed for big things. At this same time, other developments in Cleveland added to the return of euphoria and the upward swing of the civic seesaw. William Adams II, who had made quite a reputation in Seattle, had been appointed president of the Cleveland Growth Association, which had absorbed the old Chamber of Commerce, and had ambitious plans to go after new industry. Vernon B. Stouffer, the restaurant and food magnate, had bought the Cleveland Indians from a group headed by Gabe Paul after several years' uncertainty as to whether the baseball team would remain in Cleveland. He announced his intention to keep the team for sure in the city and do some serious planning about building a new domed stadium. The football Browns had been going well, drawing crowds of eighty thousand on Sundays, after their purchase from Paul Brown by Arthur Modell of New York.

Unfortunately, the euphoria and the happy anticipation of good things to come did not last long. The first sour note came while Mayor Stokes was on vacation in the Bahamas immediately after election. One of his principal campaign aides, Geraldine Williams, was reported by the Press to have an active interest in an afterhours cheat spot, which was selling liquor illegally on Sundays. Stokes fired her by long-distance phone.

This was offset at once by an early announcement that the business community had got back of Stokes to raise \$4 million for a new booster project called CLEVELAND NOW, to help community activities that could not be financed by federal money. The Williams incident was soon forgotten. Stokes had already got the big wheels of both races back of him in a way that Locher never did. Stokes was on TV often, full of charm, telling his big plans for the future.

Before many weeks had elapsed, it appeared, however, that all was not peaches and cream. Dr. Clement, his campaign manager, broke with the mayor and left city hall; in the next several years he became one of Stokes's principal enemies. Law Director White also parted company with him and joined the Baker-Hostetler law firm.

One of Stokes's early appointments was that of Inspector Michael Blackwell as police chief. It had raised some eyebrows on the newspapers, since Blackwell was almost ready for retirement. (He had built a big reputation as a tough cop in the days of Eliot Ness.) Blackwell put some notably political policemen in top spots, but the newspapers did not bear down on him, nor did they make too much of the departure of Dr. Clement and Law Director White. Stokes had replaced White with another black lawyer, and had also appointed Negroes as service director, health director, and chairman of the civil service commission. The editors wanted to believe the best of Stokes, and considered it only natural that he would bring qualified blacks into his administration. After all, this was going to be a new day.

Stokes, too, was getting more favors from Washington than Locher had. He had become especially friendly with Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, and had got the urban renewal grant taken out of the deep freeze. He was also getting help from other programs of the so-called Great Society -- the Model Cities, neighborhood job corps, Head Start, and so forth. Had Humphrey been elected in 1968 when he ran against Richard Nixon, Stokes might have been appointed to a high federal office. (In view of what eventually happened, this would have been a lucky break for him.)

This was the situation when the roof started to fall in on Stokes in the summer of 1968, less than a year after he had taken office. It came first in the Glenville race riots, which were rougher in terms of casualties than the Hough riots two years before. This time, a shoot-out between black snipers and police resulted in the killing of three policemen, the wounding of a dozen more, and the death of a couple of black militants. A riot lasted several hours after the shoot-out, as it had in Hough, and produced a real emergency.

Glenville was a part of Cleveland that had not become an irredeemable slum, as Hough and Wade Park already were. Middle-income, responsible, church-going Negroes with good jobs were still living there and keeping their property up. Councilman Leo Jackson, a

black liberal, who had become a thorn in Stokes's side, kept warning that irresponsible, lawless blacks who lived on welfare, gambled, drank heavily, and begat numerous illegitimate children, were moving in and downgrading the neighborhood. It was rapidly collecting Black Panthers and street gangs. He was an exceptionally accurate Cassandra.

The Glenville riots completely shook the confidence of whites who had naively believed that electing Stokes would permanently insure against racial disorder. The riots also completely antagonized the police department. But the worst shock came from the revelation that Fred (Ahmed) Evans, a rather kooky leader of belligerent black nationalists, had bought guns for himself and followers from funds given him by Stokes from the CLEVELAND NOW funds. He had been on the city payroll, ostensibly running a social work club. He made no bones about where his money came from. Evans was arrested, convicted of murder, and sentenced to the electric chair. He is still in the Ohio penitentiary.

The Glenville riots were more deadly than Hough, and the aftermath was worse. Stokes surprisingly ordered police and national guardsmen to stay out of the riot-torn area the next night, and let him and the neighborhood blacks try to control it. Looting had become universal and absence of the police encouraged it. No more shooting or assaulting took place on the second night, but the wholesale looting continued. The police and guard leaders were furious, and newspaper editors seemed confused about whether to applaud or condemn Stokes's action. A deep suspicion was arising that the black mayor, hopefully supported by white liberals, was really a racist. Was the new mayor encouraging the black militants' simply in order to tell the conservatives that he had cooled them down? At any rate, it was the sudden doom of CLEVELAND NOW, and the destruction of confidence.

Obviously after the Glenville shoot-out something drastic had to be done about the police department. Stokes's answer to the Glenville shoot-out was to dump Blackwell as chief. The man the mayor chose to succeed him was Deputy In-

spector Patrick L. Gerity, a career cop, always at the head of the civil service promotion lists, an ex-military policeman in France and Korea, young enough to be vigorous, tough enough to command respect. It seemed like a brilliant move to restore confidence.

Shortly afterward, a civic committee on criminal justice urged several improvements -- the beefing up of the Police Academy; hiring of college-trained police; establishment of a monthly magazine for the police to communicate from the top down and the bottom up (most American cities already had such publications); more modern communications and weapons. To pay for a lot of this, the Greater Cleveland Associated Foundation offered some good sized grants. One was to publish a little police magazine and subsidize it for a year. In January 1969, the first issue came out. I was its paid editorial consultant, and trained Lieutenant James F. Murray to become editor. Chief Gerity and Safety Director McManamon were happy to assist the magazine, which they named the *Guardian*. It was widely applauded by the men on the force, their wives (it was mailed to their homes), politicians, and the Committee on Criminal Justice. Gerity and his able assistant, Deputy Inspector Lloyd F. Garey, gave it the green light, but after the Foundation ended its subsidy in 1970, the *Guardian* faded away. City hall did not produce the small amount of money needed for printing, and it was soon obvious that all was not well between the police and the city hall.

The civil service commission had set an exam for promotions late in December 1968, but ugly reports circulated that copies of the questions had got into the hands of some cops before they took the exams. Chief Gerity angrily ordered the results nullified. Another exam was set for March 1969, and this time a copy of the questions got into the hands of a policeman's wife. This exam was also scrubbed, and a grand jury examination demanded. Civil Service Commission President

Jay B. White and Secretary Charles L. Butts could not account for all copies of the exam and had destroyed records pertaining to them. A mysterious meeting had been held at a

suburban motel, at which exam questions were said to be available. There was suspicion that black candidates were being shown favoritism. Mayor Stokes's driver, a black detective, was at the motel, along with some of Stokes's former law partners and personal friends.

The grand jury indicted White and Butts. Both resigned and pleaded guilty to lesser charges and were replaced on the commission. Meanwhile the whole process of examining and accrediting recruits became tied in a knot. Stokes had promised to appoint several hundred more men to the force, and they were needed. Although the money was appropriated, and the Police Academy geared up to train the new men, nothing happened until August. Several hundred were then appointed, but only a few were blacks. Each prospective policeman, before final appointment, had to be secretly checked out as to character (some men of dubious morals and some with actual criminal records often took the exams; naturally these had to be rejected). To Chief Gerity's disgust, several rejectees were put back on the list by Director McManamon. Some of these were blacks. Gerity refused to attend their swearing in. He also complained that McManamon was trying to mislocate a badly needed new communications center (with computerized control of patrol cars) in the city hall basement or the convention center building across the street. Gerity wanted it at Central Station next to his own office. Relations between the two men were getting really sticky.

Finally on election day, Chief Gerity broke openly with Mayor Stokes. A group of policemen had been sworn in to act as witnesses by a committee supporting a state constitutional amendment. The lawyer for the committee was Paul Walter, who was mainly interested in the Republican candidate for mayor, Ralph Perk, then running against Stokes. (That time Perk lost.) The police witnesses, carrying their guns but not in uniform, went into the black slum areas that had usually been suspected of monkeying with election returns. Mayor Stokes was furious, and ordered Gerity to call off the police. Gerity refused, saying the men as citizens had broken no law

and were entitled to be there. He added that a member of the mayor's cabinet and his driver were also in the booths that day, without legal authority. It was obvious that the mayor would soon be looking for another chief. Someone with the same reputation as Gerity for fearlessness and integrity would have to be found, to satisfy the newspapers. Gerity wasn't going to resign; he'd have to be fired. (Privately he was fed up.)

Director McManamon, who said his health was frail, resigned after election, and this gave Stokes an opportunity to make a big public relations move. Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., highest ranking Negro in the air force, was scheduled to retire in February, and he was suggested to Stokes by *PD* reporters as a replacement for McManamon. Stokes jumped at the chance, and persuaded Davis to take the job as of 1 February. But Stokes couldn't bear to wait till Davis was on the job to get rid of Gerity. Then he made a king-sized blunder, one he was never able to explain away.

On 26 January he bounced Gerity. The next day he appointed William Ellenburg, who had been chief at Grosse Pointe, Michigan, the big, fashionable suburb of Detroit. Stokes's timing couldn't have been worse. Within a few days, the *Plain Dealer* and the Detroit Free Press released an expose that revealed that Ellenburg and his buddy, Frank Cochill (whom Ellenburg was bringing to Cleveland as executive assistant) were accused by a Detroit lawyer of having been on the payroll of the Mafia. The lawyer, who had worked for the teamsters union, said he had been the payoff man.

Ellenburg went back to Detroit to try to persuade the Free Press not to publish the lawyer's statement. The editors refused. It was a major sensation and made Stokes look like either a sucker, a conspirator, or a very poor politician.

This revelation ended at once the entente cordiale between Stokes and the *Plain Dealer*. He hit the roof, and in a TV appearance, denounced his old friend the *Plain Dealer*, said he was sticking by Chief Ellenburg, and would go to Detroit personally to investigate. Ellenburg

denied any wrongdoing and said he was not going to resign. When Stokes got to Detroit, it was discovered by reporters that neither the FBI, the Michigan state police, or the International Association of Police Chiefs had been asked for an evaluation of Ellenburg, and all of them appeared to have qualms about him. Stokes, for the first time, in a TV appearance, lost his cool and snapped back at Detroit reporters. It was obvious that either Stokes's staff had not checked the new man out thoroughly, or there was some mysterious impelling reason for appointing him. After several days of hectic uncertainty, Ellenburg resigned. (He never filed suit against the two papers.) Stokes then appointed Inspector Lewis W. Coffey as chief.

The new commotion did not die down. Stokes refused to talk to Robert McGruder, the intelligent, accurate Negro city hall reporter for the *PD*. Stokes managed to escape the immediate heat by flying to Rome to see the Pope and to Israel, accompanying some Cleveland businessmen on a trip that had been planned for several weeks. After he returned, the *Willoughby News-Herald* published some articles by Doris O'Donnell (who had left the *PD*) and her husband, Howard Beaufait, which indicated that Stokes had close ties to the interests that run the gambling casino and other racket business in Freeport, the Bahamas. Stokes filed a libel suit against them and the paper. (He withdrew it in May 1971 after depositions had started.)

General Davis, the new safety director, was understandably puzzled about the rhubarb over the new police chief, which had happened before he got to Cleveland. Davis's excellent reputation did a lot to quiet things for a while. He made a special point of praising the police and urging them and the black community to cooperate. He made an excellent impression on every group he met -- editors, businessmen, civic clubs. It looked for a while as though General Davis had neutralized the bad effects that came from Stokes's row with Gerity and his fiasco over Ellenburg, but the armistice did not last. Davis privately told editors that he didn't expect to stay long, and publicly described conditions in the city as "horrible," citing

citizens's fears of being attacked or robbed, and urging neighborhood groups to organize to keep police informed about bad actors and unreported lawlessness. He went out personally several times to schools to stop black-white confrontations and he was very suspicious of Black Panther operations.

The egg hit the fan in August when police had a shoot-out with an outfit connected with the Black Panthers, which called itself the Committee to Combat Fascism. Police had gone to a C.C.F. headquarters building to serve an ordinary search warrant, when shots came from the house and a policeman was wounded. They arrested occupants of the house. General Davis was annoyed that pressure seemed to be coming from the administration to ease up on the suspects. Without warning, General Davis announced his resignation, saying Stokes had "sided with the enemies of law enforcement," but naming no specific enemies. This hit the news media like a bombshell and seemed to leave Stokes stunned. He fought back on TV, demanding that Davis name names, and finally released the names of some organizations he had worked with, which included preachers and social workers, as well as those tied in with Black Panthers. He defied Davis to argue with him, but Davis declined to carry on a public debate. He had meanwhile become a member of President Nixon's commission to investigate the Kent State University student riots of May 1970, and was spending most of his time on that. After the commission completed its report, Davis was appointed to take charge of protective measures against airline high-jacking, and later became assistant secretary of transportation, and left town.

Despite the Glenville riots, and the collapse of the big dreams of CLEVELAND NOW, the newspapers had still stuck by Stokes. The editors seemed reluctant to give up on him and admit they picked a lemon. Even when the revelations of monkey business within the civil service commission came out, they apparently still had faith in Stokes, and when the 1969 election came up, they endorsed him again over Ralph Perk, whom the *Plain Dealer* had twice supported for county

auditor. Perk lost by forty-five hundred votes, an even larger margin than Stokes had beat Seth Taft by. Yet the erosion of confidence in Stokes was continuing.

Stokes was not only having trouble with the police, but a big feud between him and Council President James V. Stanton was building up. Stanton had become a big name in city hall since he had led a surprise move to unseat Jack P. Russell as council president in 1963. Russell had been president all during the Celebrezze administration, and had shoved the Erieview legislation along fast. He was a burly, arrogant type, with a big cigar and wide-brimmed hat, the epitome of a professional politician. When Stanton, a young man in his early thirties, moved to unseat him, few thought it would happen. Stanton was even then developing shrewdness in knowing when to move and how to count the votes. He beat Russell and remained as council president for several terms.

One of Stokes's favorite proposals was a plan to build housing projects in two middle-income wards around the Lee-Seville area. The black councilmen who represented those wards resisted, believing the projects would bring in poor, uneducated blacks. Stanton encouraged the two councilmen and Stokes backed candidates to defeat them in 1969, one lost, the other won. The feud became more heated when Stokes tried to put housing projects into west-side wards, in one of which Stanton lived. The council refused to issue the necessary zoning permits.

Nineteen-hundred and seventy was a miserable year for Stokes. It began badly with the fiasco over the new police chief, Ellenburg. It got worse in midsummer when unionized city employees demanded, and got, sizeable wage increases, though there was no money to pay them and it was painfully obvious not enough would be available in 1971. Stokes proposed raising the city income tax by 0.8 percent, which would require approval by the voters, and abolishing reciprocity with the suburbs. The fifty-odd suburban mayors grew apoplectic at this and filed suit to prevent it; a judge upheld them, saying the city would have to give ten months' notice of cancellation of reciprocity. The suburbs also filed suit to prevent sewer- and water-rate increases. They were feeling

their oats more and more, since the 1970 census had revealed that a majority of county voters lived in the suburbs. (That old devil, fragmentation, was back again to curse the metropolitan community.)

The council put the tax increase on the November ballot, but individual councilmen dragged their feet instead of actively supporting it. It was badly defeated. Then a second try to get an increase was made at a special election 2 February 1971, this time for 0.6 percent, and this was supported by the councilmen, who felt Stokes had asked too much previously. Councilman Anthony Garofoli, who had succeeded Stanton as president (Stanton was elected to Congress in 1970) campaigned for it. But this, too, lost by a big vote; it was a clear expression of loss of confidence in Mayor Stokes.

The growing polarization between blacks and whites increased in 1970, when the twenty-first District Caucus, a euphemism for a black political party, was organized by Congressman Louis Stokes, the mayor's brother, who had been easily elected to Congress in 1968. Although the regular Democrats had backed Carl Stokes in 1969, the caucus broke away from the regulars and their new chairman Joseph Bartunek (the previous chairman, County Engineer Porter, had resigned after endless internal hassling), and made some endorsements of its own. The caucus supported Seth Taft, Republican, for county commissioner, and Taft won; and it tried to defeat Leo Jackson, Mayor Stokes's old enemy, when he ran for appellate judge, but Jackson won. It favored the city income tax levy, which lost. The black councilmen who had joined the caucus could not prevent the election of Garofoli as council president after Stanton departed. The political situation was a mixed bag.

There were many indications that Mayor Stokes was going to have even more trouble with Garofoli than he had with Stanton. West-side councilmen, openly resentful about the proposed housing projects, became more and more bitter in their denunciations of Stokes. The Press turned up some hanky-panky in award of city contracts, after which the grand

jury returned several indictments. Stokes reacted to increasing criticism in several ways: (1) he held weekly press conferences on TV, at which he spent most of his thirty minutes denouncing his former friends, the newspapers; (2) he spent a lot of time out of town making speeches for lucrative fees; (3) he refused to attend council meetings or let his directors attend and (4) he let subordinates, usually Finance Director Philip Dearborn and Safety Director George O'Conner, take the heat from councilmen at committee meetings to discuss the financial crisis. About 1,500 service department employees and 150 policemen were laid off for lack of funds. To complicate matters worse, a foulup in traffic and snow removal occurred in the midst of a big snowstorm, and a pump breakdown occurred at the eastern sewage disposal plant, which let millions of gallons of raw sewage flow into the lake for ten days before it could be repaired. On both occasions the mayor was out of town making speeches.

By the time the 1971 political hunting season had come along, it was painfully obvious that the big dream that began with the inauguration of the charming black mayor had dissolved into a disaster. The city had become racially polarized during the four years of Stokes, rather than pulled together. While Stokes was fighting with Stanton, Garofoli, General Davis, and the newspapers, the downtown district was deteriorating faster than ever. More and more good shops, which had once benefited from the crowds that shopped at Halle's, Higbees and May's, were starting to fold. (Bonwit-Teller, Milgrim's, Peck & Peck, were notable casualties.) The big movie palaces around Playhouse Square were still vacant, and the first-run pictures were showing only in the suburbs.

Robbery, pocketpicking, and assault had increased downtown, and adding additional policemen in uniform had not stopped it. Visitors from out of town, here for conventions, had been held up within a few yards of their hotels. Shoplifting was on the rise.

By this time, too, many of the original Stokes supporters had lost confidence in him, and ugly rumors were circulating

that the only way to get contracts at city hall was to become part of an inside group. Bertram Gardner, head of the Community Relations Board, had left to become vice-president of the Cleveland Trust Company. Howard B. Klein, president of Burrows Company, a longtime member of the city planning commission, and a man with a compulsion to help worthwhile civic projects, had been refused reappointment on the commission. So had Thomas C. Westropp, an important Catholic layman. Dr. Clement was openly critical of Stokes, and so was William Seawright, a black businessman. Jobholders at city hall had increased and loafing was rampant.

The situation was oddly similar to that which had existed during the Harry L. Davis administration thirty years before, when the city did not have enough funds to meet payrolls; the police department was demoralized; the welfare problem was unsolved and increasing. As many of the blacks who could had already moved out of the central city to the suburbs. East Cleveland had become 85 percent black, Shaker Heights was about 25 percent black, and Cleveland Heights was fast attracting black residents into the once fashionable Forest Hills section, adjacent to East Cleveland. There was grumbling among the middle-income blacks who resented the increase in crime, and felt that Stokes had let them down, seemingly more interested in improving his own political and personal fortunes than in uplifting blacks as a minority group. He circulated socially among upper-crust whites, and was at all times a fashion-plate, charming, brilliant at repartee, and shrewd, but he had sensed even before the others had, that he was finished as the black messiah in Cleveland.

He had clearly lost the confidence of the newspapers and the business leaders, who had so joyously joined him in CLEVELAND NOW. This is not to say that nothing had happened during his regime to add to the growth of the city. Some brand new buildings had been constructed -- the Central National Bank at East Ninth and Superior, on the site of the old Ellington Hotel; the Investment Plaza in back of the Union Commerce Building; the Chesterfield Apartments on East

Twelfth Street opposite the Statler Hotel; the Cleveland Trust Company tower, in back of the ancient dome. But most of these had been planned for a long time, and there was no evidence that city hall had done anything special to move them along. These new buildings mostly resulted in a shift of office tenants away from older buildings, and along Euclid Avenue, more and more vacant storefronts began to appear.

The newspapers seemed strangely schizophrenic about how to deal with Stokes's failures. They had been hassling with him ever since his unbelievable appointment of Ellenburg and his later confrontation with General Davis. Investigative reporters, who had been on leash during the first years of Stokes, were now busy digging up evidence of misfeasance and malfeasance by city employees, and the grand jury indicted a half dozen of them. The intense rivalry between the Press and *PD* had resumed. It was obvious, from conversation with staff members, that the editors now believed that Stokes as a political power had to be eliminated for the good of the city, but they were chary about appearing to give the impression they were fighting him because he was a black. They had supported him because he was a black whom they hoped could unite the community; but now that he was failing they pulled their punches. (Both papers for several years had been devoting more and more attention to the many problems of the inner city, the welfare clients, the need for jobs, the improvement of schools, the need to diminish racial prejudice.)

In March, Stokes suddenly announced that he would not run again. This set the papers off in opposite directions. *Plain Dealer* executives quietly encouraged Garofoli to run. The Press urged James M. Carney, millionaire owner of the new Hollenden House and Investment Plaza and longtime contributor to organization Democrats, to run. Stokes himself had other ideas. He said he would support Arnold Pinkney, a black who was president of the school board and Stokes's administrative assistant. But Pinkney was not going to run as a Democrat; he would file petitions as an independent, thus making certain at least a three-man race in November, between him-

self, whomever would win in the Democratic primary, and the winner in the Republican primary, who was expected again to be Ralph Perk.

The lines formed quickly. Carney decided to run, the Press endorsed him and some businessmen began to raise funds for him. Garofoli ran, the *Plain Dealer* endorsed him, and businessmen who had once supported Stokes raised funds for him. The Democrats split; Chairman Bartunek tried to get the executive committee to endorse Carney, but the committee overrode him and went for Garofoli. Then Bartunek said he'd back Carney. The Republican front-runner, Perk, got only token opposition from State Representative George Voinovich. The newspapers routinely endorsed Perk, but paid little attention to him, which was strange, since they had supported him in the past for county auditor.

The newspaper polls showed Garofoli had a substantial lead over Jim Carney, because of the ethnic voters on the west side with whom Garofoli had sided in keeping out public housing. At the last minute, Stokes threw a curve that changed the result of the primary. He urged black voters to vote for Carney. By a telephone blitz, a tabloid newspaper, and personal solicitation, Stokes got out the black vote for Carney and beat Garofoli, Stokes's bitter enemy, by seventeen thousand votes. The experts, particularly those on the *Plain Dealer*, were confounded. So was Congressman Stanton, who had backed Garofoli. It looked now as if Stokes, though no longer running himself, had enough clout left to decide the election. He had got nominated a white candidate, Carney. He had announced his support of his personal black candidate, Pinkney. If either one of them made it, he would get the credit for it. The *Plain Dealer* endorsed Pinkney, the Press stuck with Carney.

Stokes felt jubilant on primary election night. Yet he couldn't produce the miracle that would keep him in power. Having turned out the black vote for Carney, he couldn't switch all of it to Pinkney. He had confused too many blacks. This elected Perk in November.

Perk had diagnosed the situation accurately. (So had Louis

Seltzer.) Though he had the support of neither paper, and was a Republican in a Democratic city, he knew he could win if he got the ethnic vote, which was still a majority in Cleveland. He campaigned brilliantly in the cosmopolitan neighborhoods, saying a vote for either Pinkney or Carney was a vote for Stokes. Stokes was in the doghouse with the ethnics. They voted for Republican Perk, who was one of them, and Perk pulled the surprise of the decade, winning by a plurality of sixteen thousand votes. The polls were wrong again, and the disconcerted editors were out in left field. They hadn't figured out the right formula to unhorse Stokes, but Perk had.

Another important thing had happened in this election. A charter amendment eliminating the party primaries, which Perk had supported, had passed, and the situation reverted to that which had existed up to 1958. As many candidates as wished, partisan or independent, could run in October, but only the two top finishers would run it off in November. With one victory under his belt, incumbent Mayor Perk would undoubtedly be one of the top two in 1973. The other might easily be black, though the blacks still had only 35 percent of the total vote, and Perk might remain in office as long as he cared to run.

The surprise election of Ralph Perk finished Stokes. Pinkney ran second, Carney a poor third. Stokes quickly left town, to become a TV broadcaster in New York, and was seldom seen in Cleveland for months afterward. He had left the city hall with a \$13.5 million cash deficit, a polarized population, a demoralized and rapidly deteriorating downtown, and a shattered Democratic party. By this time, Cleveland had become the regular joke town on "Laugh-In," and all the comedians were having a ball about the Mistake on The Lake, the city whose river caught fire. Thus ended the big dream of 1967.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Up from the Depths, Down Again, Then Up: 1971-1975

When Ralph Perk became mayor of Cleveland in November 1971, his first job was to pick up the pieces that Carl Stokes had left, after Stokes blew his big opportunity to pull the city together. It was strictly a rescue job, to overcome a \$13.5 million cash deficit, give a raise to city employees negotiated six months previously without the money to pay it, to get rid of incompetents Stokes had loaded on the payroll, but most of all to start the citizens believing in themselves again. It looked like a Herculean job.

It was, indeed. Perk started to get help backstage from citizens who had advised him during the campaign, who had recognized that he had the formula to win, despite his lack of newspaper support. He wasn't getting any sound advice from the *Plain Dealer* or Press, but he got some from Louis Seltzer, who helped him write his first speeches after election. He got a lot from Harry Volk, who had in 1970 sold his suburban newspapers to ComCorp., a new group blanketing the entire county, and had moved to France. Volk returned suddenly the week after election, and volunteered to serve without pay as Perk's press secretary. Howard B. Klein, who had sold Burrows Brothers Company to Higbee's the year before and had practically retired from business, volunteered, also without pay, to advise the new mayor on civic developments, about

which he knew more than any dozen men in the city. (Klein had helped raise funds for Perk, after Garofoli lost.)

Perk got Richard Hollington, Jr., from the Baker-Hostetler law firm to serve as law director. He appointed Andrew Putka, a savings and loan executive, as finance director (which did not please the *Plain Dealer*). He appointed Inspector Gerald Rademaker as police chief, after Chief Coffey retired. But he had trouble firing many men whom Stokes had appointed to civil service jobs in his last days in office, and with the civil service commission itself, which was loaded with Stokes holdovers.

The city seemed on the verge of bankruptcy, without cash to meet all payrolls, so Perk recommended a 10 percent pay cut for everyone. This naturally met resistance, from the police department and from councilmen. On the whole, however, Perk was getting along well with the council, with Edward J. Turk, the new president, and even with the black councilmen. (There were several new ones, whom the black caucus had helped elect.) There was less of the theatrical grandstanding that had regularly sparked council sessions for the news media in the last few months of Stokes, when he had refused to show up at council meetings and even forbidden his cabinet to appear.

Perk's first big rescue job was to send Law Director Hollington, who had been a state legislator, to Columbus, to persuade the assembly to pass an act that would permit the city to issue \$9.6 million in bonds to restore the 10 percent pay cut and increase the police and fire salaries to the point required by law. Hollington was persuasive; the salary cuts were restored.

His next big pitch was to appeal for help from the Nixon administration, which was delighted at the first Republican victory in Cleveland in thirty-two years (even though it was accomplished largely by the votes of ethnic Democrats). The presidential election was coming up in 1972, and the help from Washington was soon forthcoming, for emergency employment, Model Cities, police equipment, pollution control, and so forth. He soon got about \$3 million, and this helped, too.

Another of his peacemaking administrative jobs was to get the city of Cleveland back to cooperating with NOACA (Northeast Ohio Area Coordinating Agency), a weird creation of bureaucracy, which under federal law had to approve all federally assisted projects. It consisted of two dozen representatives from governmental bodies in seven counties of northeast Ohio. Stokes had been in a continual hassle with NOACA and had refused to let the city contribute funds for its expenses. (He claimed the city ought to have a bigger representation on the NOACA board.) Perk got the council to put up the money and he sent representatives to its meetings. (Klein became the diplomatic agent.)

Perk had a few political conflicts with the county commissioners (who had a Democratic majority) particularly over the newly created Lake Erie Regional Transportation Authority which was to look into the location of a huge new jetport in the lake that had been recommended by a citizens committee headed by Abe Silverstein, the well-respected former director of NASA. This new body was also strongly recommended by the Growth Association president, James C. Davis, and supported by the newspapers. Perk took the position that the city of Cleveland had to have the major voice on it, rather than the county commissioners or suburbs. Eventually peace was established, but it was a sample of the petty quarreling between governmental jurisdictions that had held the community back for more than fifty years.

Two of the ways in which Cleveland had long been at a disadvantage competitively with other cities in attracting big conventions were: (1) no liquor could be sold on Sundays at hotels or restaurants; and (2) existing hotel space was inadequate. The liquor problem had been partially solved by a new law that allowed certain areas to decide via local option whether the sale of liquor should be allowed; most of the downtown area had approved it. The hotel shortage, which had been critical for years, had worsened, now that the old Pick-Carter had been closed since it partially burned down, and the Auditorium Hotel had been torn down to make room for a new Bond Court development. Bond Court hadn't yet de-

veloped; an office building had been put up, but no hotel so far, on the Auditorium site. Mayor Perk got the wheels turning on this, and believe it or not, a hotel developer was found -- Perk's old opponent in the election, James M. Carney, who already was operating the new Hollenden House. The Pick-Carter was being turned into an apartment-residence facility. The new Bond Court would not be open until 1975, but meanwhile a new Holiday Inn was opened at East Twenty-second and Euclid, opposite Cleveland State University, and later another Holiday Inn on the lakefront at East Fourteenth Street in Erieview.

Another reason Cleveland had started to go down hill economically was the slow but steady departure of business of all kinds, but mostly small plants. In the last ten years more than six hundred of them had moved out of the city of Cleveland. About half of them went to the nearby suburbs, but seventy had left the county entirely and had mostly gone south. This had cost hundreds of jobs and a serious loss of income from taxes. It was depressing to morale, too, since few of the displaced employees moved out of town to work at other jobs for their old bosses. There wasn't much any mayor could do about this, because the land for factory space within the city had become less and less available or useful. Perk tried the old political practice of jawboning, to keep other factories from moving.

The Growth Association had not been notably successful in getting new business or keeping old business, so before the year was out, William Adams, who had come in with such high hopes several years before, was ousted as its director. Cynics had been describing it as the "Cleveland Shrinkage Association." There was reason for this. The exodus from downtown Cleveland was continuing. Stouffer's restaurant at Playhouse Square, which had been a fixture there for forty years, first stopped serving at night, and then closed entirely. The owners of the four big movie theaters nearby, which had been vacant for months, had announced plans to raze the buildings for a parking lot, and were only persuaded to defer

them by a group of starry-eyed young enthusiasts, including Junior Leaguers, who hoped something could eventually be done about reopening the theaters. A few one-night stand concerts at the Allen had drawn good crowds several times, but there was no rush of people to come downtown for entertainment.

One of the almost insuperable obstacles to bringing people downtown was that the main east side arteries, Chester, Euclid, and Carnegie avenues, ran through the city's biggest slum, and citizens disliked driving back through them at night. Several motorists had been held up and robbed when they stopped at traffic lights, on their way to and from the Heights. Everyone feared to drive through there without locking car doors.

The proximity to the Hough and Wade Park slums also was a problem for the Play House theaters, three of which were within walking distance of the area where whores paraded nightly near bars and cheap rooming houses. It was an even bigger problem for three big hospitals, University, Mt. Sinai and the Cleveland Clinic. All of them had big, new facilities which could not be moved away, and had to resort to extraordinary security measures. The slum areas, which had been so long neglected by urban renewal, had now spread far beyond their original boundaries, and despite increased vigilance by the police, homicides, robberies, and often rapes were occurring in increasing numbers each year. Uniformed patrols had helped reduce crime downtown, as Perk added more police, but there seemed no permanent remedy for the hospitals' problems. Their emergency rooms and outpatient clinics were always overflowing with welfare patients from the neighborhood. (The clinic had no outpatient department, something the blacks resented.)

The one notable bright spot during Perk's first year was the creation of a Regional Sewer Authority by Common Pleas Judge George J. McMonagle, who for two years had been hearing lawsuits brought by the suburbs against the city, city against suburbs, and suburbs against each other, which dealt

with complicated problems of water rates, sewage disposal plant expansion, interceptor sewers, and so forth, in the whole county. The city of Cleveland owned the facilities, and had extended service throughout the entire county, without requiring the suburbs to annex, as Columbus had. The result was a hodgepodge of varying rates, and an incomplete overview of the entire situation. Early in the Stokes administration, the voters had approved a \$600,000 bond issue for a new sewage disposal plant, but the out-of-town expert, Dr. Edward Martin, whom Stokes had imported, had done little or nothing to get things moving and had even been indicted. Several department heads had come and gone, and the area was having more and more trouble with the Ohio Pollution Control Board, which had often refused to allow sewer and water connections in new buildings. The much-publicized pollution of Lake Erie had not decreased.

It was really an indescribable mess, but Judge McMonagle, partly through court hearings and partly through private, backstage intercession, persuaded the various litigants to agree to the creation of a regional authority. He had the power to order it under state law, and he finally did. The landmark decision required the suburbs pay the city \$35 million for the facilities, that rates be raised to pay for long overdue expansion; and that a seven-member authority be created for administrative purposes. The money was to come back to the city gradually. It made surprising sense, and McMonagle was universally praised for his Solomon-like ruling. The Authority started functioning before the end of 1972. Perk went along with the compromise and his utilities director, Raymond Kudukis, became chairman of the board.

Perk was not having the same kind of luck unscrambling the public transportation mess. He had put in one of his buddies, Nicholas Bucur, as chairman of the Cleveland Transit Board, and by the end of the year had made other appointments that gave him a majority, but CTS was in a continual battle to break even, since it had to finance operations out of the fare box. CTS had been running rapid transit all the way to the

Hopkins Airport for five years, and its busses were in better shape than they had been, service was adequate, and experiments to get more people to ride the loop busses for downtown shopping had been successfully tried. The sad fact remained, however, that public transportation in Cleveland, as in most other big cities, was less and less used, and not breaking even, and strenuous efforts were being made to get the federal government to subsidize it.

It was obvious that eventually all the public transportation in Cuyahoga County would have to be merged under one authority. (This would include the Shaker Heights rapid, which had existed for nearly sixty years.) There was law on the books to accomplish this, too, but nothing was being done, at first, anyway.

The new mayor had been trying to do the best he could to add more new buildings to Erieview. (Though this shift of the center of downtown gravity was one of the reasons for the present mess, he had to live with it.) A few new structures had gone up or were going up. The Park Centre apartments had been given the green light, around the corner from the existing Chesterfield. A new public housing development named for Ernest J. Bohn, the housing pioneer who was then still alive and active in Cleveland, had been opened. The new Holiday Inn on the lakefront in Erieview, was in the planning stage. And Perk had got the council to approve a Gateway Project on the lakefront at East Ninth Street, which would include hotel space, offices, and a sports arena. This was not far from the old stadium, opened in 1932, still used by both the Indians and Browns.

The mayor was trying to persuade Nick Mileti, who had bought control of the Indians from Vernon Stouffer earlier in the year, and who also owned the hockey and basketball teams, to use the Gateway facility, but Mileti had other plans, the main one of which was to put up a new coliseum of his own in Richfield, twenty miles south of Cleveland, near the interstate freeways 1-71 and I-77.

Mileti, a young man famous locally for his mod clothes and

hairstyle, had shot up like a rocket into the sports picture, and showed a surprising ability to attract new money into investing with him. The Indians under his direction had improved somewhat from their dismal state in 1971. He had a new hockey team in the newly organized World Hockey Association, which had become the second "big league," and he had a basketball team in the ABA pro league. He appeared to be stretching his credit to the limit, but his enthusiasm never flagged, and he was acclaimed as the new sports messiah. (Gabe Paul, who had once owned most of the Indians and been general manager for ten years, had sold out and put his money into the New York Yankees, along with some other Clevelanders.)

The main thing that Mayor Perk was doing was creating a good image of himself as a leader, who could draw the quarreling factions of his perpetually fragmented and volatile city together. No private citizen was able to do it. There was no wealthy family, like the Mellons of Pittsburgh, to take charge. The second and third generations of the old families that had built Cleveland seventy-five years ago still had their inherited wealth in trusts. The banks had been reluctant to take the lead in financing new ventures since the Van Sweringens' dream had collapsed forty years ago (although the ice had melted a bit after George Gund died). The banks were now in a period of prosperity, earning well on their stock, and generally expansion-minded; but it had taken them four decades to shake off the spectre of the Vans's collapse.

Perk himself was indefatigable. He was seldom home. Every noon and night he was all over town at meetings, making corny speeches, eating kielbasa, pizza and spaghetti, singing in quartets and choruses, and usually in good humor. He was on TV every day at city hall, even as Stokes had been, giving the impression of himself as a father figure who could not be rattled or hurried, and who was presiding over the city's destiny. He made no major mistakes in his first term. His mop of curly hair, usually uncombed, was his trademark, as Frank Lausche's had been. (Once it caught fire for a second or two

from a spark while he was opening a trade show that involved electrical apparatus, and the picture of this was shown all over the country on TV and in the newspapers.) He got plenty of attention at mayors' meetings, the Republican national convention, and the second Nixon inauguration. After starting \$13.6 million in debt, he was going to end the year with a surplus, and looked like a miracle man.

Perhaps he might, in the end, turn out to be the Moses who would lead the depressed, much-maligned city out of the wilderness. He had already done the first thing necessary. He had caused the citizens to start thinking about how to solve their problems, not just moaning and groaning about them. By the end of Perk's first year, the nationwide laughter and ridicule, which Cleveland had been getting so long, had thinned out. The two television editors, William Hickey of the *Plain Dealer*, and William Barrett of the Press, had suggested to Cleveland viewers that they write the producers in Hollywood complaining about the wisecracks of the standup comedians and the smart-aleck shows. They did write, by the hundreds. The kidding began to diminish, and "Laugh-In" announced it was folding by the summer of 1973. Before it folded, Rowan and Martin awarded themselves the "Fickle Finger of Fate" for having been so tough on Cleveland.

Early in 1973, the Citizens League backed an attempt to reduce the size of the Cleveland council from thirty-three to fifteen through initiative petitions, but it failed in a special election early in May. Incumbent councilmen naturally resisted this, and there was so little support from the forward-looking citizens that only 30 percent of the registered voters took the trouble to cast ballots.

That was not the whole story, however. The motivation for the reduction originated in Mayor Perk's office, and some petitions circulating around the city hall had been seized and destroyed by Council President Turk; this almost resulted in rejection of Turk's appointment to the state Public Utilities Commission. (After much hassling, he was finally confirmed by the Senate, and George Forbes succeeded Turk as council

president.) At this point, the era of no confrontation between mayor and council suddenly ended, and Forbes became increasingly hostile to Mayor Perk. It also appeared that, in order to make sure that the council-reduction plan was defeated, the council leadership had made a deal with the Police Patrolman's Association (an organization that represented some of the rank-and-file cops, but no officers) to increase at once the hospitalization subsidy for police and firemen to that which other city employees had. The police were to urge the voters to see that the council was not reduced and the council would vote to raise the hospitalization allowance.

The council passed an ordinance increasing the hospital subsidy, and Perk vetoed it. The council at first could not muster enough votes to pass it over his veto and an unpleasant incident occurred at the door of the council chamber when an enormous cop, 6 feet 5 inches tall, tried to block Perk's exit and made a sarcastic crack ("Thanks, mayor"). Perk grabbed the giant by his shirt. The cop next day had Perk arrested for assault, which gave Perk an opportunity to get some favorable TV and newspaper coverage. (He was later acquitted in municipal court.) This did not hurt Perk's image with nonpolice voters in the upcoming mayoralty election, but it kept his relations sour with the police and firemen. The increasing confrontation with the council grew worse.

Most Clevelanders, however, in the spring and early summer of 1973 had their eyes focused on the incredible Watergate mess in Washington, rather than their own city hall. What had originally been sized-up as a stupid attempt to burglarize and bug the Democratic national headquarters in the Watergate Building (which had resulted in the arrest of six unknown "burglars"), had suddenly magnified into a national scandal as Federal Judge John Sirica smelled an attempted cover-up and payoff when the men were brought to trial. The Senate created a select committee to hold public hearings, chaired by Senator Sam Ervin, and the hearings on nationwide TV on all three networks kept the country bug-eyed for three months. The revelations threatened to completely negate the unprecedented

landslide that reelected President Nixon in 1972, and had already resulted in the ousting of H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, Nixon's chief assistants. It even threatened Nixon with eventual impeachment, reduced the power of the presidency, and almost completely destroyed Nixon's credibility with the citizens.

The ramifications of Watergate were so tremendous that few Clevelanders gave much attention to what was going on at home. Nevertheless, some important events were taking place here, which caused problems for Mayor Perk. These were related to the Model Cities program, for which the federal government had granted about \$9 million, and which had been a total failure. It was a governmental monstrosity that no one could really administer. It was supposed to give residents of a bounded slum area the power to set up their own mini-government and improve the business and social relations within it. It was one of those woozy dreams of the Great Society, designed to improve the unhappy life of welfare-assisted blacks and great sums were made available for it. But it never got off the ground.

Despite its obvious shortcomings, no one expected the Model Cities program to turn out the way it did -- a mysterious, sordid mess, in which the director of the program, Robert Doggett, was shot in the abdomen by a "hit man" who obviously had been sent to kill him. A few days later, the "hit man" was found dead, floating in the Ohio River near Cincinnati. Doggett survived, and the subsequent investigation by police and federal agents turned up some unpleasant facts about one Ronald Grier Bey, a shadowy figure who had a police record, but who nevertheless had been receiving money to perform some vague services in the Model Cities program on a contract approved by assistants in the mayor's office. The situation was so strange that it motivated County Prosecutor John T. Corrigan to ask common pleas court for a special grand jury to look into it.

This grand jury probe might have had bad effects on Perk's campaign for reelection, for it could have given some ammu-

nition to James M. Carney, the Democrats' candidate for mayor, who had lost to Perk in 1971. But aside from an indictment of Bey for carrying concealed weapons, no indictments materialized until after the election was over. Eventually Michael Rini, one of the mayor's assistants, and Andrew Putka, finance director, were indicted along with Bey himself and his nephew, but the evidence seemed flimsy. (Putka and Bey were later acquitted and the charges against Rini were dropped.)

Perk, meanwhile, was coasting along toward reelection in a situation made to order for him. Though nominally a Republican, he was running against Carney in a nonpartisan election, in which he was appealing to his old constituency, the ethnic Democrats. Carney had the illusion that, being a successful businessman, he could rally financial and editorial support behind him, and being of Irish descent, he could cut into Perk's ethnic strength on the west side, as well as gathering most of the black east eiders who normally supported a Democrat. He misjudged the extent of his support, did not hurt Perk on the west side, and even lost some of the blacks to Perk, who won an easy victory in the primary.

The two might have faced each other in November without the usual minor league candidates, but Carney was ill, disillusioned as well as disappointed, and suddenly withdrew. In an amazingly candid statement, he said that Cleveland is racially polarized, and he couldn't possibly win, since he had been painted as a man who would turn over the city hall to blacks. (Since the blacks were only 37 percent of the total vote, he couldn't have won if he had got all of their votes which he didn't.)

The Democratic troika of chairmen, Anthony Garofoli, Hugh Corrigan, and George Forbes, stunned by Carney's dropout, felt they had to enter a candidate in the November runoff, so they quickly circulated mayoralty petitions for Mercedes Cotner, the longtime city council clerk. Mrs. Cotner never had a real chance, though she campaigned in deadly seriousness for ten days. Nevertheless, she did poll about 33 percent of the total vote.

Despite the fact that the Model Cities mystery could have hurt him, but apparently didn't, and a summer youth-employment program had been loused up by a hassle over whether the city or the school board should hire the young blacks it was supposed to help, Perk seemed to live a charmed life. Perk could not have been defeated unless he had made some three-base error in his first eighteen months in office. These he did not make. He had lifted the city out of bankruptcy. He had skated over the thin ice of the Model Cities mess and had projected a favorable image of himself as a man of the people, by constant appearance on TV and daily press conferences. The newspapers supported him for a second term, and his reelection was easy.

Actually, there were quite a few plusses coming up, not only for Perk but for the revival of the city as a whole. The Higbee Company had announced a \$17 million project to redevelop the lower riverfront from Superior Avenue and West Ninth Street, which would tear down a half dozen ratty old buildings and put up new ones that would house apartments, shops, theaters, and a hotel. A group of businessmen headed by Sheldon B. Guren announced a similar project (Tower City) directly back of the Terminal Tower, which would include a new state office building that had been promised by Governor John J. Gilligan, and also some new apartments. The Gateway project at East Ninth Street and the lakefront, where the passenger ships of the C & B and D & C lines used to dock fifty years ago, had been approved by the council, and an office building and a new hotel of 650 rooms were planned there, as well as shops and stores.

The eager citizens group that had started out to renovize Playhouse Square had made surprising progress, and had opened a cabaret theater in the lobby of the old State Theater, which attracted young couples so well that it broke records for a continuous Cleveland theatrical run, and which sparked another cabaret theater in the lobby of the old Palace Theater. The State and Palace lobbies, replete with marble stairs and colorful decorations had been regarded as something special when they were opened in the late twenties. They formed an

elegant, though small, seating space. On the other side of downtown the Sheraton-Cleveland Hotel opened a cabaret-dinner show, and riverfront restaurants and cafes, such as Pickle Bill's, Diamond Jim's, and Fagan's, had taken on a fresh lease on life with new entertainers. Unfortunately, there was no big movie theater still operating downtown, and the Hanna was open only occasionally. So the nighttime crowds, though enthusiastic, were relatively small. They were nothing like the crowds that regularly swarmed into the downtown restaurants at noon.

This was the situation early in 1974 when Mayor Perk decided to run for the United States senate, for the seat vacated by William B. Saxbe, who had been appointed United States attorney general. Perk had been warned by his most savvy advisers not to do it; he did not listen to them, but did listen to Robert Hughes, the county Republican chairman, who was eager to have a Clevelander on the state ticket. Perk had no trouble being nominated, since no one of consequence filed against him. However, the moment he said he'd run, his troubles at the city hall began to multiply rapidly. Forbes, the council president, now had a stronger majority behind him (since six new councilmen had been elected in 1973) and was able to override any legislation that Perk vetoed. Forbes was openly hostile, determined to block Perk at every turn, and create as much trouble for him as possible. Since one of Perk's problems in running for the Senate, was to get himself known downstate, he had to be absent often from the city hall. The city administration seemed to grind to a halt when he wasn't there. He gave his subordinates little leeway to make decisions, and grew increasingly testy at newspaper criticism.

Perk seemed to have undergone a character change after his easy reelection in 1973. He appeared to have concluded that the big victory was due to his own brilliance and sterling performance as mayor, rather than because Jim Carney had failed to perceive that he couldn't top Perk in the primary, and that the Democrats had made themselves look silly by running Mercedes Cotner against him in the final. He made the

two mistakes that are always fatal to a politician: (1) he began to believe his own baloney (in barrooms it was described by a more obscene word which also begins with a "b") and (2) he started to run for editor. (This was a phrase that I had coined in columns forty years ago, describing a politician who fought continuously with the newspapers, publicly resenting and denouncing not only editorial criticism but also any news article that did not portray him favorably.) He also showed unmistakable signs of a swelled head, and ignored the advice of sincere friends like Howard Klein and Harry Volk, both of whom had warned him that he was cutting his own throat by running for the Senate. (Perk was especially angry at Klein for refusing to raise funds for him; in fact, Klein told Perk that he was supporting John Glenn, the ex-astronaut, who had beaten Senator Howard Metzenbaum in the Democratic primary.) Volk, meanwhile, had quit working for one dollar a year after the first six months and had been put on the city payroll as assistant director of health, but his influence had obviously diminished.

So the euphoria that existed early in 1974, at a time when the city's characteristic volatility and fragmentation seemed to be fading, suddenly disappeared, even when it looked as if Perk's troubles were lessening. (The problems with the cash flow at CTS had been solved temporarily after the council agreed to let the city purchase \$9.5 million of CTS bonds. The Growth Board had come out strongly for a regional transit system, taking in Shaker Heights rapid and several suburban bus lines. The legislature had finally approved the creation of a regional transit authority, with power to offer a tax levy or a sales tax increase to the voters within the jurisdiction of the authority.)

Just as suddenly, the old hassling and bickering were back at city hall, and Perk had become his own worst enemy. He once again vetoed the council's ordinance granting additional hospitalization to the policemen and firemen, but this time the council passed it over his veto. Then he refused, on a legal technicality, to pay out the money, and this brought out a mass

demonstration of three hundred men in uniform in front of the city hall, which blocked all entrances and wouldn't let other employees in. It even stopped municipal court jurors from going inside. The bluecoats were angry, the newspapers and TV were outraged, and Perk's subordinates, including the safety director, were unable to get the uniformed men to disperse for three hours. (Perk himself was ill at home, and no one had the nerve to phone him at first.)

Soon the community was back in the same old rut, with city and county officials bickering, and businessmen and editors deploring. Perk and the county commissioners were in a continuous daily squabble over cost overruns on the new Justice Center; Perk was threatening to withhold the city's share of the funds, and take the new police headquarters out of the complex. The Growth Board wanted a regional transit system and the commissioners favored a county system. Perk was in favor of neither; he wanted the city of Cleveland to control a majority of the regional board, when, as, and if it were agreed upon. Perk was flying around the small towns downstate, trying to shark up some votes for senator, and while he was gone, Forbes was plotting new ways to embarrass him. One of the ways was to get the council to pass a limited gun-control ordinance, figuring that Perk, to appease his ethnic constituents and the downstate small towners, would veto it. The council did pass the ordinance, Perk did veto it. (Forbes didn't have quite enough votes to pass it over his veto, so the question remained hotly controversial, as it had for months.) Meanwhile, some early polls were beginning to show that Perk would get a complete clobbering in the election. Glenn was credited with 60 percent of those polled.

At this point, it suddenly dawned upon everyone that the city of Cleveland was on the verge of being bankrupt. During the previous year, it had begun to receive some of the \$35 million that the suburbs were ordered to pay for taking over the sewer system, and it had also got a large chunk of revenue-sharing funds from the federal and state governments. Much of this had been used to hire about one hundred additional po-

licemen and buy new cars and radio equipment for the police. Not much money could be expected from the sewer buy-out in 1975, and it was by no means certain that the federal funds would be forthcoming, either. (The situation in Washington seemed even more confused than in Cleveland, since Nixon in August 1974 had been forced to resign as president, rather than face impeachment. Gerald Ford had been sworn in as president, and within a month had pardoned Nixon. Nixon's principal aides, Ehrlichman, Haldeman, and John Mitchell had been indicted for the cover-up and Nixon himself named as an unindicted co-conspirator. Several others -- Dean, Magruder, Kalmbach, Krogh, and Colson, notably, had pleaded guilty to lesser offenses, and the trials of the men who had not pleaded guilty were scheduled to come up late in the fall.)

Since the city of Cleveland had to get funds to operate in 1975 from somewhere, the council voted to place a 1-percent additional city income tax on the ballot, and Perk asked for an additional one-half percent to subsidize CTS (part of which would pay to allow senior citizens to ride free). Perk, ever since he had been mayor, had insisted that he would never ask for additional taxes, but he was now forced to do so. Forbes, meanwhile, was chortling to himself. He felt in the catbird's seat, for he knew that the tax was doomed from the start, that the councilmen, though voting to put the issue on the ballot, would do nothing to get it passed, and that the defeat would put Perk behind the eight ball on the same day as he was to get the beating of his life by Glenn.

Things looked so dismal for Perk about this time that he seemed to lose touch with reality and was making three-base errors, which he had previously avoided. He was defending Nixon publicly in his campaign speeches, right up to the time Nixon resigned. He had sent the new president, Ford, a telegram urging him not to appoint Nelson Rockefeller as the new vice-president on the very eve of the day Ford announced Rockefeller's appointment. (Why? Because Rockefeller favored legal abortions. Perk was campaigning against abortion downstate, reportedly on the advice of his pastor.) He was campaigning only at Republican

meetings, even though when he was running for mayor, he had stayed aloof from identifying himself as much of a partisan. Identifying himself as a partisan, in the year when every Republican candidate had the Watergate scandal to carry on his back, was like buying a ticket on the Titanic.

The predicted multiple disaster happened on election day, 5 November. Glenn beat Perk by more than a million votes, carrying every county in Ohio. Perk even lost his own ward. The proposed city 1 1/2-percent income tax increase was slaughtered. (At the same time a proposed library tax levy was beaten; two black library trustees had resigned, claiming the branch libraries in the central city were being neglected.)

In mid-November 1974, after election, the situation in fragmented, divided, polarized Cleveland was about as depressing as it was possible to be. The city would need an additional \$19 million for operations, which it did not have. The mayor announced that he would have to lay off 1,200 employees at once, and cut the budget drastically for 1975. He said 150 policemen and 100 firemen would be among those laid off. Garbage and rubbish could be collected only fortnightly, not every week. He, Perk, would make a valiant effort to get the federal government, Uncle Santa Claus in Washington, to come up with several million bucks, from its emergency unemployment funds, to put all the laid-off policemen and firemen back as well as most of the rubbish collectors, in a few weeks. (He finally got the funds.)

By this time, Cleveland, like the other big industrial cities, was throat-deep in the sudden recession, which had laid low the automobile and appliance industries. Cleveland was nowhere near as badly off as Detroit, since Cleveland made mostly auto and airplane parts, machine tools, paints, and had other diversified industry, but the layoffs hurt badly, and the lines at unemployment offices grew longer. The first week in November, an unexpected new disaster smote the hapless community, another newspaper strike, which put both the *Plain Dealer* and Press out of business all through the busy Thanksgiving and pre-

Christmas season and did not end until 21 December. It put a tremendous crimp in all retail business and entertainment. Coming on top of the big layoffs in factories, it caused everyone to tighten his belt all the more, and worry about what further trouble winter would bring, in shortages of gasoline, oil, natural gas, and electricity.

Actually, the newspaper strike should not have been so unexpected, for the heat had been building up among *Plain Dealer* editorial employees ever since the fall of 1971. It began with the firing of Joe Esterhas, who had been the fair-haired boy of the reportorial staff for five years, but who had finally turned sour against his bosses. After a series of jolting personal disappointments, he had sent to Evergreen Magazine, a rather far-out antiestablishment publication in New York, a long bitter article, in which he largely blamed his employer, the *Plain Dealer*, for the misfortunes which befell him when he and a former GI photographer, Ron Haberle, tried to sell color photos of the massacre of civilians at My Lai, Vietnam. The *Plain Dealer* had first published the pictures as copyrighted exclusives in black-and-white, with the agreement that Esterhas and his friend could personally sell further color prints to magazines, press associations, and so forth. (The Associated Press had been forbidden by the *Plain Dealer* to distribute them, because of the copyright.) Esterhas and Haberle felt sure they could sell the color prints for big dough, perhaps as much as \$100,000, in New York. Unfortunately for them, a London photo-news service stole the pictures by photographing the *PD* first page, and a Japanese photo service also sent them out. So by the time Esterhas and Haberle started to negotiate in New York, the *New York Post* had already printed them on page one, and their value had greatly diminished. After days of frustrated hassling, they finally sold their prize to *Life* magazine for \$20,000. Esterhas was completely browned off.

The Evergreen article not only told about the negotiations with *Life*, which had bid \$90,000 before the Post published the stolen pictures, but made some snide, unflattering remarks about Tom Vail's personality, and went on at some length with egregious inaccuracies

about the way the *PD* had treated copy-reader Robert Manry, who had made history in 1965 by sailing alone across the Atlantic in his thirteen-and-one-half-foot sailboat, "Tinkerbelle." (The inference was that the *PD* had done Manry wrong; actually the exact opposite is true. I know, for I was the executive editor then, and put him back on the payroll after he had taken a leave of absence to depart surreptitiously on his unbelievable adventure.)

Esterhas was fired, mostly for disloyalty, and the Guild filed a grievance procedure, which went to arbitration that lasted three months. The arbitrator ruled that the firing was justified, but that Esterhas should have some back pay. Most of the reporters sympathized with Joe, feeling he had received a bum rap after so many years as the unquestioned trusted star reporter, and that he had a right to disparage his employer. Rebellion was in the air, the kid reporters hated the Vietnam war and felt themselves "new journalists."

Morale on the editorial staff had begun to deteriorate, and many abrupt changes in the editorial high command did nothing to quiet it. Bill Ware, who had increasing problems with his health, took early retirement after the Esterhas incident, and was succeeded as executive editor by Tom Guthrie. (Guthrie was succeeded as assistant to the publisher by Alex Machaskee, who had been the promotion director.) Russell Reeves retired as day managing editor (and died two years later). Ted Princiotto had resigned as night managing editor after a dispute with Vail over his authority, and David Rimmel, who had been Sunday editor, replaced him. A few months later, Rimmel was moved upstairs as assistant to Guthrie, and Wilson Hirschfeld appointed managing editor. The city desk was in a state of flux, too. Russell Kane departed from the desk to become Sunday magazine editor, and William Treon from the Washington Bureau came back as city editor.* Shortly after that, Michael D. Roberts replaced Treon, who became an editorial writer. Then Roberts quit to become editor of *Cleveland Magazine*, and soon took reporter Edward Whalen with him. All these city editors were young men in their thirties, so after Roberts left, William R. Diem, a

middle-ager who had been an editorial writer, was given the hot spot and remained there until after the 1974 strike, when David Hopcraft, who had been state editor and Columbus bureau chief, took over the city desk (he was also a young man).

During Hirschfeld's regime as managing editor another brief strike had occurred for two days, when the Guild contract expired in the fall of 1972. Guild pickets had appeared in front of the building and some scuffling had taken place. Hirschfeld phoned for police to restore order, but when the cops came, they were mounted police. The horses infuriated the Guildsmen (although Hirschfeld hadn't asked for them). From that moment on, there was constant friction between Hirschfeld and the staff, and several months later, he was given an indefinite leave of absence, and Robert Burdock, who had been Columbus correspondent and news editor, was appointed managing editor.

This long period of ill will between the Guild and management continued throughout 1974, until it was time for new contract negotiations. It was exacerbated further when Robert Dolgan, a feature writer, was demoted to the copy desk because of inaccurate reporting of a speech by Paul Walter, a prominent lawyer-politician, for which the *Plain Dealer* had apologized. The Guild called a unit meeting to discuss a grievance over Dolgan, during early evening working hours. At that point J. Stephen Hatch, who had been an irritating Guild activist, stood at the front door and tried to divert the night staff away from the *PD* office to the meeting that was elsewhere. Next morning Hatch was fired, the Guild filed a grievance about that, and that case went to arbitration.

The arbitrator, Harry Dworkin, still hadn't rendered his decision when the old contract expired, and the *PD* Guild walked out 1 November. The Press continued to publish past election day, under a joint masthead with the *PD* (and carried a few *Plain Dealer* features for five days) but on Saturday, 9 November, the Press announced it was shutting down, too.

(The two papers were negotiating jointly on the new contract.) So the situation was reversed from that of the 1962-63 strike; at that time,

the Guild dispute was with the Press, and the *PD* was dragged in unwillingly. This time it was the Press editorial employees who were bitter at being locked out.

From then on, the strike degenerated into an endurance contest. For nearly six weeks the negotiations got nowhere. The Newhouse labor expert, Leo Ring, refused to raise the original wage offer, and most of the debate centered around restoration of Dolgan and Hatch to their jobs. Bitterness increased as time went along, as it had in 1963, and eventually dissident groups in both *PD* and Press circulated petitions to accept the management offer. Finally, after a couple of meetings, a majority in both units ordered the Guild boss, Jack Weir, to accept the wage offer and go back to work (the teamster boss, Tony DiPalma, meanwhile, had been encouraging a back-to-work movement if Weir should not give in).

During the strike, not only were the Cleveland dailies shut, but for a couple of weeks, citizens were unable even to get the *New York Times* and certain magazines that were distributed by the G. R. Klein agency (another branch of the teamsters had struck against Klein). A few hundred copies of the Toledo and Akron papers were sold on the streets downtown. The principal source of news became the Sunpapers, which published three times a week, instead of once, until the strike ended. Jean Gerlach, the editorial vice-president, hired about forty of the out-of-work veterans from the *PD* and Press, and they set up shop in a vacant building near the ComCorp offices in Valleyview. They covered local and state news, and sports, and ran editorial advice, local columnists, and TV logs, but they had only a smattering of national and world news, and no comics or features. Nevertheless the additional issues on Tuesdays and Saturdays sold about one hundred thousand copies from news stands, and provided a welcome meal ticket for some strikers, just as Harry Volk had done in 1956 and 1962. The Sunpapers were run off in Lorain, Mansfield, and Dover, on the presses of publisher Harry Horvitz, and their size was limited only by press capacity and newsprint availability. During November and December, Cleveland stores were

practically beating down doors to buy ad space to dispose of their large stocks of Christmas goods.

In the late sixties and early seventies, the Press, too, made some big changes in the executive suite, but mostly in the business office. The *Plain Dealer* had gone far ahead of them in total advertising, and before the strike had a lead of about forty-five thousand in daily circulation. Herbert Kamm had been sent over from New York to be associate editor, next to Tom Boardman; Kamm had been named as the editor of the merged Sunday World-Journal-Telegram, but it never got off the ground because of union trouble. George Carter retired as business manager of the Press, after long service, and James Couey, who had worked in Honolulu, Tampa, and Birmingham, was announced as his successor; but a couple of days later, Couey sent word he would not take the job, so Arthur W. Ardizzone, who was about to retire as assistant business manager, was reactivated and became business manager for several months. After that, Robert Hartman was appointed business manager.

At the *Plain Dealer* business office, F. William Dugan retired as vice-president and general manager, and was succeeded by Roy O. Kopp with the title of business manager.

Shortly after the 1974 strike ended, Arbitrator Harry Dworkin ruled that Steve Hatch, the principal bone of contention between Guild and management, deserved to be disciplined but that firing him for performing Guild business was going too far, and that he was entitled to back pay and should be reinstated. He was put back on the police beat and Dolgan was reassigned to the local writing staff.

In the midst of this glum newspaperless November, the transit crisis surfaced again. Some action had to be taken to create a regional authority before 31 December, the date the enabling legislation (which had passed the legislature in a surprising burst of cooperation between legislators, Growth Board, city, and county) was due to expire. At once, the usual

bickering began. Perk wanted the city to have a majority on the nine-man board. The county commissioners thought it more sensible to have three for the city, three for the county, and three for the suburbs. The suburban mayors objected to the city controlling the board. Much backstairs negotiation took place. Perk agreed not to insist on the city having a majority and Councilman Dennis Kucinich agreed. Forbes (who had returned from out of town) proclaimed that the city had to have a majority or the council would not agree to sell CTS to a regional authority. The situation was unusually chaotic, since the newspapers were not publishing and radio and TV seemed unable to make the public understand the complexity, and it continued so until almost Christmas. Finally, with the editorialists back in business 21 December, a compromise was reached. The commissioners agreed to choose as one of their appointees a person who had a residence within the Cleveland city limits. The council agreed, right on the deadline, to join the regional board, and so did the commissioners. Thus ended the characteristic nitpicking. The specific details were left for lawyers to iron out by 16 February, when a "memorandum of agreement" would become effective.

The proposed layoffs of city employees did proceed, and there was much grumbling in the city when the rubbish piled up because the shortened work force could not collect it at the usual time. Police and firemen's fraternal organizations filed suit to stop their layoffs, and the courts were awash with restraining orders and appeals. Finally, Perk got the laid-off bluecoats back after two weeks. However, the situation in general was far from encouraging, since the municipality was depending on Uncle Sam and the state of Ohio to furnish 33 percent of its funds for operations.

In this sort of climate, it appeared at first that Perk might be heading for another defeat in the upcoming municipal election. The Democrats seemed to be counting on it. But following his humiliation by Glenn, another character change seemed to come over Perk. His swelled head shrank. He listened again to Klein, Volk, and his other nonpolitical ad-

visors. He came down off his high horse, was more subdued in his daily press conferences (standing beside the American flag), and began to tidy up his administration, which had been neglected all fall. He appointed Andrew Putka ports director, with instructions to modernize the Cleveland-Hopkins airport (funds were available, but the planning had been poor, the baggage handling and traffic control were a mess, the concourses needed some form of kiddie-kart transport to avoid a quarter-mile walk to the terminal center). He appointed Warren Riebe, who had been his chief assistant when Perk was county auditor, as finance director, and Vincent Campanella as budget director. He named James B. Davis law director to succeed Herbert Whiting, who had been elected domestic relations judge. He prepared to campaign for the one-half percent additional county sales tax that would be necessary to get the merged transit system going. He said he was going to run for mayor again, and not take a federal job.

* Mr. Treon reports (April, 2002) "I was city editor (1969-1971) before I went to the *Plain Dealer's* Washington Bureau (1971-1973), not the other way round, as Porter wrote. I returned to Cleveland from Washington in 1973 to become an editorial writer. I resigned from the *Plain Dealer* in 1983 and moved to Phoenix, Arizona." We thank him for the correction.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Miracle

A miracle took place 22 July 1975 -- the regional transit miracle, the most unbelievable piece of forward progress in the Cleveland community in the last fifty years. Considered against the familiar background of the two-bit parochial viewpoint, and the suicidal tendency of Greater Cleveland to fly apart into five dozen fragments at the mere suggestion of county-wide cooperation, it was hard to realize it had actually happened. In the final months of 1974, city of Cleveland officials, county officials, and suburban mayors were still at each other's throats in the familiar scenario of petty squabbling. Yet, when agreement was finally reached after Christmas, and everyone realized that there simply had to be unanimity to get the proposed 1-percent countywide additional sales tax approved, to finance regional transit, unanimity appeared as if by divine magic. It simply had to appear, to get Cleveland back on the track (no pun intended).

The final legal details, to enable the newly created Regional Transit Authority to purchase the Cleveland Transit System, the Shaker Rapid Transit and several suburban bus lines, were agreed on by the signing of several memoranda of agreement beginning in February, and the decks were cleared for a county-wide campaign to get the voters to approve the 1-percent sales tax in July. For a while, it seemed as if the familiar

bickering might hang things up again over the amount and duration of reduced fare to be charged by RTA, but the bickerers finally got together on a hot day in Council President George Forbes's office, and agreed on the following: (1) a base fare of twenty-five cents would be guaranteed for three years, instead of the fifty cents base charged by CTS and the seventy-five cents base by Shaker Rapid; (2) free interchangeable transfers would be issued on all the lines (3) all senior citizens (over sixty-five) and handicapped persons could ride free at all times except the two-hour morning and evening rush hours, and even then need pay only twelve-and-a-half cents a ride (eight tickets for one dollar); (4) no extra zone fares would be charged on the suburban lines; (5) additional new routes and more frequent service on old ones would be added; (6) improved security would be provided at parking lots and inside rapid transit stations; (7) the reduced fare would begin 5 October and the 1 percent sales tax collected beginning 1 October.

With this package to sell the voters, and all the members of the new RTA appointed, the miracle began to happen, pointing toward the special election 22 July. It was understood that, if the tax passed, the federal government would chip in with a handsome subsidy -- for every five dollars raised locally, Uncle Sugar would add four dollars for capital improvements; and for every one dollar raised locally for operating costs, one dollar would be added by Uncle Sugar. It was also understood that a series of public meetings would be held in every section of the county, at which citizens could tell RTA members their own ideas on what new routes, crosstown lines, and other improvements were needed. The suburban bus lines to be absorbed by RTA, either through outright purchase or contract agreement, included Euclid, North Olmsted, Maple Heights, Garfield Heights, and Brecksville. Agreements to continue cooperative service were to be made with Cleveland-Lorain, Greyhound, Trailways, Orwell, and B.I.C. bus lines.

The big selling job began at once, sparked especially by three members chosen to represent the suburbs -- Richard S.

Stoddart, who was elected president of RTA, Mayor Walter C. Kelley of Shaker Heights, and Frederick J. Lynch. A large citizens campaign committee, chaired by Jay L. Hanna of Ohio Bell Telephone Company, was formed and began to raise funds for advertising and promotion; \$237,000 was contributed, largely from Cleveland-based corporations and law firms, but also from members of the transit union. Then the miraculous unanimity began to appear. Strong editorial support came at once from the *Plain Dealer*, the Press and the suburban Sunpapers, and from the TV and radio stations. The Growth Association backed it enthusiastically. Speakers began to fan out to explain the transit needs to Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, church groups of all faiths, PTAs, union meetings, Republicans, Democrats, independents, mugwumps, blacks, whites, chicanos, ethnics, who were all asked to help, and did. Only one faint murmur of disapproval came from a local of the United Auto Workers. The effort was 99.48 percent affirmative and done efficiently: it had touched base with everyone. Nothing like it had happened in the last fifty years. It was truly a miracle in volatile, fragmented, seesaw Cleveland.

The miracle's final phase came 22 July when 156,000 Cuyahoga citizens voted yes and 66,000 voted no, an affirmative margin of more than two-to-one. It was not a total victory over parochialism, since seventeen small suburbs voted against it, but in the larger suburbs and the inner city of Cleveland the vote was strongly favorable.

(Yet in spite of the unprecedented ballyhoo and cooperation and no real opposition, only 32 percent of the county's eligible voters had participated. Despite the continuous drumfire of publicity, 466,000 registered voters had stayed home. The *Cleveland Press*, in particular, had campaigned persistently, usually on page one, for regional transit for the last eighteen months. Cynics suggested that it would be well to cool the euphoria, for it would not last.)

The RTA proceeded at once to fulfill its promises, and held four public meetings in August and six in September. It re-

ceived dozens of suggestions, mostly for route extensions. It announced that ninety more busses would be put in service on 5 October; and over the next five years, sixty new rapid transit cars and three hundred new air-conditioned busses would be added. The objective was to give the community an attractive, comfortable, reasonably priced, clean public transit system that would attract citizens who had been driving their cars to work, paying high parking fees, and using gasoline at increasingly higher prices. The month of October began with high enthusiasm and even astonishment that a community miracle of cooperation had finally been achieved. A great idea's time had finally come, and prospects for future good ideas seemed good. The characteristic, perennial Cleveland seesaw had swung upward again, and everyone seemed happy.

It seemed for a while that the community might pull itself together, in another direction, to bring the 1976 Republican national convention to Cleveland. The Republicans had come here in 1924 and 1936 and found the Public Hall highly satisfactory. Since then, a large underground addition to the Hall had created a big, new Convention Center. The Convention and Visitors Bureau was anxious to bring a big political convention here to achieve favorable attention for Cleveland in all the national news media. Mayor Perk was eager to land it, because he had another reelection campaign coming up, and as one of the few Republican mayors in the country, he would be helped by having President Ford nominated here. Governor James A. Rhodes, who had been elected again in November 1974 (he had served eight years, 1963-71, previously) in a surprise photo finish over Governor John J. Gilligan, Democrat, was also eager to have the Republicans meet in Ohio, since he was one of the few governors who was a Republican.

So Perk and the Convention Bureau made a serious bid for the big convention, and found somewhat surprisingly, that Cleveland would get favorable consideration, since it was in the politically important Middle West, right next to President Ford's home state, Michigan. A search group from the GOP national committee reported favorably on the Convention Center's ability to handle the big and complicated technical

facilities necessary for TV, radio, and newspapers, and the seating of hundreds of delegates and alternates.

There was one fatal flaw in Cleveland's bid. The community did not have enough hotel rooms to house all the people who would come. The Convention Bureau and Growth Association officials knew it, Perk knew it, the newspapers and TV knew it. Any way it was added up, Cleveland would be about three thousand rooms short despite the adequacy of the Convention Center. Cleveland would not be in the running unless the mayor could produce another miracle, consisting of three thousand hotel rooms.

Perk tried hard, suggesting that the city could lease three cruise ships that plied the Caribbean. It would cost about \$3 million to bring the ships. At this point, Council President Forbes, Perk's almost perpetual enemy, had another attack of community cooperation and pledged that he would get the council to appropriate it.

Other snags developed, however. It was suddenly realized that the ships' staterooms would not have telephones in each room, and it would be expensive to install them, though technically possible. So Perk switched course, and suggested another substitute. He could have fifteen hundred quick-built modular homes constructed on the big parking lot next to the stadium, north of the Convention Center. (Forbes said the \$3 million could be used for this purpose, instead of the ships.) Each house could have a telephone installed, but there would still be only one bathroom for each two delegates. There just wasn't any good substitute for the three thousand hotel rooms, which were essential since delegates normally spent more time in them, drinking, yakking and love-making, than in the convention hall.

Despite the obvious shortage, the news media encouraged Perk, encouraged Rhodes and the Ohio congressmen to put the heat on for Cleveland, and bore down on the national committee members. But when the final vote was taken, the search committee voted seven-to-zero in favor of Kansas City (which was also in the strategic Middle West) and the full national committee ratified it unanimously.

It was a good try, but obviously doomed from the start. Nevertheless, the fact that George Forbes, Mayor Perk, the Convention Bureau, the Growth Association, and the news media had worked together on something else in addition to regional transit, was regarded by many as a great civic plus. On the other hand some skeptics felt that trying (and failing) without having the necessary hotel rooms was simply another Cleveland flop, trying to play in the big league in a bush league manner, the sort of fall-short technique that had hampered Cleveland so regularly in the past, and made the community a national laughingstock. Coming in second to cow-town Kansas City did not help Cleveland's mediocre image.

There was still present the persistent, nagging question whether Cleveland's familiar ups and downs would produce a revitalized downtown and Cuyahoga River front, or whether the blight that had infected Euclid Avenue would continue to spread.

The biggest plus for rejuvenating downtown came in August 1975 when the imaginative redevelopment plan by Lawrence Halprin & Associates was finally unveiled. It had been evolving for two years, and Halprin and his helpers, a San Francisco group, had been holding "workshops" with all sorts of well-wishers, investors, storekeepers and do-gooders. There were high hopes that this new group of planners would come up with something sparkling as well as practical (they had planned the splendid Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco), although filing cabinets in Cleveland were full of previously produced elaborate plans that had come to nothing and were gathering dust. The Halprin Plan had cost the Cleveland Foundation \$315,000. Herbert Strawbridge, head of the Higbee Company (who had been doing some planning along the Cuyahoga River front on his own) said he was pleased. Mayor Perk and members of the Growth Association, which had devoted its annual "Future of Cleveland" luncheon to the occasion, listened eagerly. (But it was symbolic of the way big things so often backfire in Cleveland that the presentation by Halprin was marred by out-of-focus slides.)

The guts of the Halprin plan were these: (1) block auto traffic on Euclid Avenue from Playhouse Square to Public Square, and transform the street into a pedestrian tree-lined mall, with a trolley running up the middle, and busses in three other lanes; (2) build smaller malls on East Fourth Street between Euclid and Vincent, forbid auto traffic there, too; (3) revamp the Public Square by barring auto traffic from Ontario Street, depressing Superior Avenue (which would still carry traffic) and elevating and terracing the areas surrounding the Soldiers & Sailors Monument; (4) change the traffic flow around the central downtown by creating one-way streets.

The newspapers, as anticipated, were ecstatic. The *Plain Dealer* devoted a full page inside and half of page one to praising and detailing the plan. A page one editorial gushed that it has "color, pizzazz, magnetism, lift. It could make Cleveland one of the most attractive cities of America, make the downtown area crackle with fresh vitality." The Press likewise went into an editorial swoon.

Obviously this crackling and lifting would not occur spontaneously, so it was announced at the luncheon that Francis A. Coy, the May Company chairman who would soon retire from retailing, was to become president of a new group, the Downtown Cleveland Corporation, which would be financed with \$100,000 from the city, the Growth Association, and the Cleveland Foundation. This was a hopeful note, for Coy had been the principal civic mover and shaker among local businessmen for nearly twenty years, a man of great energy and persistence. The perennial optimists among the civic bund, who had been trying to lift the sagging downtown by its bootstraps for years, could see the light twinkling at the end of the tunnel. Obviously all this would take money, millions of dollars, from local and state governments, and private investors. Coy said he wasn't exactly sure yet how much, and he knew the plan would have to be sold to the rest of the community.

At once the fragmentation, skepticism, and doubt so characteristic of Cleveland, the argumentative seesaw city, began. Even in the same

edition of the *Plain Dealer* that gave the plan's details, came sharp criticism from activist neighborhood groups who could not see how it would help them. There was strong doubt from spokesmen in Buckeye-Woodland, Glenville-Collinwood, and from a west side group that calls itself ACT. Council President Forbes had serious doubts. Leonard Ronis, general manager of the new Regional Transit Authority, said flatly the proposed Euclid Avenue trolley, with only three lanes for busses, was impractical, and the redoing of Public Square would pose major problems, because the entire RTA network of busses goes through the Square.

So it was clear that if the new day was going to dawn for downtown, important obstacles would have to be overcome. Some nonbelievers were already saying it was simply a scheme to help the big downtown stores, and that small shopkeepers along Euclid Avenue hadn't even been consulted about the proposed mall. A lot of small storefronts were still vacant from East Seventeenth Street to the Square.

Some developments on the plus side had been occurring before Halprin came. The Playhouse Square Associates, a group of young businessmen sparked by Ray Shepardson, had scored a success in keeping entertainment alive in the block from East Seventeenth to East Fourteenth. Mostly by promoting and encouraging two cabaret-theaters in the lobbies of the State and Palace theaters, which had been dark since first-run movies shifted to the suburbs. The new restaurant, called by the odd name of the Last Moving Picture Company, was doing a fine business in the location that was once Stouffer's, opposite East Fourteenth Street. Another new restaurant, the Rusty Scupper, had been opened across the street. The Associates said they had \$500,000 equity and \$2.1 million in mortgages in the various properties. They were hopeful that Cleveland State University, which had another recent infusion of state tax funds, would take over the big old Ohio Theater, close by the State, Allen and Palace, and use it for a performing arts facility.

To the west of the Square, Strawbridge of the Higbee Company had already begun changing the face of the river front around the old Settlers Landing, by tearing down ancient buildings and replacing them with something new and attractive. They had already opened a new restaurant which called itself the Cleveland Crate and Truckin' (sic) Company.

Some new life had indeed been injected elsewhere into the downtown area. Chester Commons park had been created among buildings in the Chester-East Thirteenth area near Park Centre, and young workers from surrounding offices began to brown-bag their lunches there. The musicians' union furnished gratis small but live combos to play there and at the end of the new Huron Road Mall.

The biggest plus, which had already changed the face of downtown Cleveland, was the new Justice Center, opposite the Lakeside Avenue Courthouse. It was a gigantic piece of construction, which had torn up an entire block, bounded east by Ontario Street, north by Lakeside Avenue, west by West Third Street, and south by St. Clair Avenue, and designed to house not only all the commons pleas, criminal courtrooms but also the county jail, the Central police station and the municipal courtrooms. (These facilities had since the early 1930s been located in two buildings side by side on East Twenty-first Street north of Payne Avenue. They were the perfect proof of how public facilities once considered splendid and modern become totally inadequate in forty years.) When the police station and courts-jail building were erected in the late twenties to replace ancient ones demolished by the Van Sweringens' Terminal project, they were hailed as the finest of their kind in the country. The four-story police headquarters, with a short-wave radio tower on top, and municipal courtrooms in the upper floors, were spic-and-span, efficient, built to order after much study. The courthouse next door, with an "escape-proof" jail occupying the top seven floors in a narrowing tower, had been planned after much cogitation by judges and the bar associations. It provided ample room for the county prosecutor's office and the grand jury and clerk on the ground floor, and four

courtrooms on the second floor; prisoners could be brought down for trial from the third floor via a special stairway. Automobiles could be driven into the basement and prisoners unloaded and whisked upstairs on special elevators, after booking. The police building also had an underground garage and a city jail in the basement.

Both buildings soon ran out of space as the city grew and crime increased. The police administrative offices and the county prosecutor's office had to be cut up into little cubicles to house the additional staff (in 1975 the prosecutor had sixty-five assistants; fifty years before that, when I covered the criminal courts beat, there were ten). Space for additional criminal courtrooms had to be provided in the Lakeside Courthouse and for additional municipal courts in the city hall. The police traffic bureau, the busiest office in the building, had to move across the street, into rented quarters. The underground garage was totally inadequate. Throughout the building, police officers and the citizens who came to do business with them were almost literally tripping over each other; the halls were crowded, the courtrooms were chaotic messes, and the building had acquired the same foul odor so characteristic of the old Champlain Avenue Police station, which had been bulldozed away by the Vans.

Within twenty years it was obvious that the two new buildings were too old and too small, but, as usual in Cleveland, it took years to get cooperative action on behalf of the public. One bond issue after another was proposed for a new courts-and-jail building, and voted down. (The voters had an unbroken record that went all the way back to 1918 for defeating court-and-jail bond issues.) Though the situation became more and more desperate, nothing was done to improve it. Finally, a mammoth plan was conceived to solve the city and county problem in one swoop, a Justice Center that would put all the courts, police and prosecutor's offices, jail, and so forth in one skyscraper twenty stories high, which would cost an estimated \$61 million. It was put on the ballot in the fall of 1970, in a year when there was much unrest over the Vietnam War, law and order, seizure and damaging of

college buildings, and general nervousness about the future; believe it or not, another miracle happened. The newspapers, bar associations, and all the civic cheerleaders were unanimous that it had to be done. It passed, by a sizeable margin.

No sooner had the bond issue been authorized than customary bickering and haggling between public officials began, this time between city and county. It became obvious at once that because of inflation the original \$61 million would nowhere near cover the total bills, and arguments over who would pay for the cost overruns took place daily. (In the end, the big job would cost about \$125 million.)

Nevertheless, demolition of old buildings soon began and the project became the best watched since the Vans built the Terminal Tower. It did not include as much acreage as Erieview, but the tear-up was watched by more people, since it was in an area that people used -- the stadium, the courthouse, the county administrative offices, the auto license bureau and auto title transfer office. (One of the best known buildings demolished was that of the Penton Publishing Company on West Third Street.) Within a year or so, a tremendous hole in the ground was being filled with footings for the huge building; soon the structural steel was going up, and by 1975, it began to look like a skyscraper that the public would be proud of.

While the Justice Center was rising, hitches developed in the Tower City project in back of the Terminal. Almost from the moment it was proposed, an impasse had occurred between city hall and U.S. Realty, Inc., which proposed to develop it on land between West Sixth and West Ninth streets. Because it would have to be built over the bridge-like structure that supported West Sixth and West Ninth, engineers said it would be unsafe unless the bridges were repaired. Since they had been erected fifty years previously, cracks, much rusting, and other deterioration had occurred. The city officials said the developers ought to pay to fix this. The developers said the railroads, which ran underneath the Terminal, were responsible.

(The impasse became even more solid because the Penn-Central, which owned the tracks, had gone into bankruptcy and was not paying out money for anything.)

In spite of this obvious difficulty, the civic cheerleaders were still hopeful that the new state office building, which Sheldon Guren had got his Democratic friend, Governor Gilligan, to promise, would eventually go up. It was badly needed, to absorb all the numerous bureaus and branch offices located in sixty different rented buildings all over the county (the sixty didn't even include liquor stores, highway patrol stations, hospitals, and auto license offices). Then came an unexpected blow. Guren and his law partner, Edward Ginsberg, became big losers in the collapse of Hill Industries, a tax-shelter construction promotion in Texas, which had turned into a disaster for dozens of other well-heeled Clevelanders, including prominent doctors and lawyers, and by mid-1975, was thoroughly bogged down in bankruptcy petitions, insolvencies, and a zillion lawsuits.

U.S. Realty put the brakes on the Tower City project, and because Gilligan had lost the governorship, it was feared that the state office building might become a permanent casualty. Governor Rhodes, however, rushed into the breach with an optimistic promise to put up the building anyway. He had proposed a building for Cleveland years before, so he couldn't easily back off now. The building ought to go up without delay, he said, but there was delay. The State Building Authority, which had erected a state office tower in Columbus and a huge underground parking facility under the State House, dragged their feet on it. The legislature, spurred by Cleveland members, passed resolutions, urging them to get on with it. It was finally approved by the building authority in October 1975.

The Halprin plan had passed lightly over two areas that should have (but hadn't) been splendid areas for development, the lake front and the river front. The Higbee Company plans for Settler's Landing were focusing attention on the winding river, as a fascinating geographical lure for people to eat and drink and enjoy scenery, but the lake front was

a total disaster as a people-puller. Sixty years ago, Edgewater and Gordon Parks and Euclid Beach were clean and safe for swimming and much patronized. Today, except for boat lovers, who used docks at Edgewater and near the Municipal Light plant, and a few fisherman who cast lines out daily, the lake front was unused by people. The Whisky Island area west of the river, was used by the big ore boats, and the West Ninth area next to the stadium, for loading and unloading miscellaneous cargo, largely on foreign ships. All the way east, as far as the harbor breakwater extended, the shore was slowly eroding and useless for recreation. Bathes had to go west to Bay Village and east to Mentor to find clean water. The Halprin plan said vaguely there should be better connection between the downtown and the lake front and river front. Indeed there should.

There were several favorable factors that were improving the seesaw city. The Playhouse was producing more and better shows in its three east side theaters, and becoming economically solvent with the help of foundations and local gifts. A Shakespeare repertory company was producing well-attended shows in Lakewood and had become the beneficiary of a big bequest by a west side millionaire, Kenneth C. Beck. The Blossom Music Center, halfway between Cleveland and Akron, was becoming more and more a delightfully attractive summer-evening rendezvous for hundreds of fans of the Cleveland Orchestra (but the truly enormous crowds only turned out for the blam-bam of rock-and-roll groups with weird names). A new theater, the Front Row, just off the I-271 freeway in Mayfield Heights, opened late in 1974, and suddenly became the in-place, because it furnished top flight entertainers from Las Vegas, Hollywood, and New York. Strawhat theaters were flourishing in Chagrin Falls, Bay Village, Berea, and farther-out places like Canal Fulton, Ravenna, and Warren.

An unhappy result of the Front Row's success, however, was the closing of Musicarnival, the theater-in-the-round, which had been well patronized for twenty years under a tent near the east side race tracks. For the first time, several of its

shows lost heavily, the final few weeks of the season were cancelled, and John Price, the entrepreneur, who had dreamed up the idea, said he was looking for a new location. This was a definite minus for the community.

The cultural activities of the community were well patronized. The Art Museum regularly had big attendance. The Orchestra was sold out during its regular fall and winter season (and got enough additional contributions to make it come close to breaking even). *Cleveland Magazine*, which had a slow start, was now flourishing under Editor Mike Roberts, the ex-city editor of the *Plain Dealer*, and seemed likely to become a permanent moneymaking fixture. Its articles were more and more perceptive and added a new dimension to journalism here. Channel 25, the public broadcasting station, was well supported by public subscription.

Nevertheless, on the side of important minuses, the major crime rate continued to rise. It was up overall 17 percent in Cleveland, and higher in the large suburbs, too. More mindless, senseless killings were taking place, and the homicide total was exceeding 1974 and climbing. Juveniles, uncontrolled by parents and truant from school, were starting at an earlier age to get high on drugs, and to rob to support the habit; they kept graduating to more and more serious crime as they grew older. Two-thirds of the adults indicted for felonies were on parole, probation or bail, and most of them had started to go wrong as kids. Senseless vandalism had almost destroyed many school buildings. Bicycle theft was becoming a new sport, matching auto theft. And people of all ages still hesitated to go downtown at night.

There was no good reason why they should go downtown at night. All the first-run movies were now showing in the suburbs. Aside from the new cabaret theaters around Playhouse Square, occasional shows at the Hanna, and baseball games in the spring and summer, there was nothing to attract more than a few hundred who would come down to eat and be amused. Downtown was almost dead at night and considered dangerous. Euclid Avenue east from East Thirtieth Street to

East 107th Street was a honky-tonk area, patrolled by hookers who used the motels to service their customers in; except for a few used-car lots, east end Euclid was mostly bars, cheap hotels, porn shops, and X-rated movies, and the few little stores that tried to operate put protective screens and bars on their windows at night, and triple-locked their doors.

The police had become accustomed to the increase in weekend homicides, but there was seldom any city-wide news in them. Bombs were exploding more frequently, and a couple of them caused news editors' eyes to pop. One of the blasts killed Shondor Birns, who had spent a lifetime in rackets of one sort or another, and even served a few years in prison. Another explosion, however, failed to hurt Danny Greene, who had been charged with a variety of crimes, but managed to beat most raps and seemed to have a charmed life. The bomb destroyed part of his house, but Greene escaped harm.

Many cities get emotionally involved with their sports teams. Mostly the fans get charged up about the pro sports, but there are notable exceptions where they go wild about first-rate college football teams. (Columbus goes absolutely daft every fall over Ohio State, which draws more than eighty-two thousand to the campus stadium every home game; there is comparable madness at Ann Arbor, East Lansing, South Bend, Indiana, Oklahoma City, and Lincoln, Nebraska.) In Boston, the fans live and die with the Red Sox, in Cincinnati with the Reds, in Pittsburgh with the Pirates. Even as big as New York is, there are some fans as nutty about the Mets and Yankees as there used to be about the Giants and the old Brooklyn Dodgers.

The emotional involvement increases in direct ratio to the games won, and if a team is in a tough fight for first place, enthusiasm for the local braves seems to get out of control. The citizens may find many things to complain about in the way the town is governed, going up or down economically, gaining or losing population, but they all identify with a winning team.

Unfortunately for Cleveland, winning teams in baseball have been rare. The Indians won pennants in 1920, 1948, and

1954, and won the World Series in 1920 and 1948. In the fifties, they finished regularly in second place, and in the sixties the picture became more dismal; only once did they finish as high as third, and usually they were around the bottom. The frustrated fans kept on hoping through several changes in ownership and a half-dozen managers, which never found the right formula for winning or breaking even on gate receipts. In 1974, in a spectacular move to change this, General Manager Phil Seghi made national news by appointing Frank Robinson, the first black manager in the big leagues. (The Indians had seemed to be in contention earlier in 1974, but slumped badly in the final weeks, so naturally, the manager, Ken Aspromonte, had to go; managers don't last when they don't win or come close). Robinson had been a big star in both the American and National leagues. Robinson did well after a shaky start in 1975, and the Indians in the final two months were hot, but they had a struggle to reach a .500 percentage; but 1975 was the best year an Indian team had in a long time.

For ten years the Cleveland fans had gone daft over the football Browns, which had a habit of winning, but their luck turned in 1974, and they had a losing season. Their coach, Nick Skorich, had to be fired, too, and a new coach, Forrest Gregg, was appointed. The 1975 team started with nine consecutive losses, a dismal record.

The other pro teams seemed to be infected by the blight, too. The basketball Cavaliers were just so-so at the start, and the hockey Crusaders had two new managers in succession. There was also a pro tennis team, the Nets, which had a habit of losing, and were drawing a mere handful of spectators.

The over-all picture was not one to cause Cleveland sports fans to cheer and leap in the air, so they remained glum. Even the opening of Nick Mileti's new Coliseum at Richfield, in October 1974, did not make them happy. Something went wrong with the ice machine, which caused postponement of the first two Crusader home games. When a good-sized crowd did show up for any event, parking problems seemed insoluble.

(Mileti, meanwhile, had sold almost all of his stock in the Indians, and the club's financial affairs were in the hands Alva (Ted) Bonda, one of forty-three partners, who was not originally a baseball man. He was a partner of Senator Howard Metzenbaum in the parking-lot business, which they, had sold to IT&T.)

So the sport picture was cloudy at best. There was hope, but no certainty, that the pro teams would turn things around next season. The Cleveland fans have no patience with losers, so they continued to bad-mouth the city as well as the teams. Psychologists say that citizens feel doubly frustrated when their sports heroes let them down after a big build-up. In the case of Cleveland, the seesaw city, the roller-coaster community, the pain was especially acute, because the typical fragmentation and political volatility of the community prevented them from feeling proud of the town as a place to live and work. There was so much daily pulling and hauling that everyone seemed unhappy. The suburbanites worked in Cleveland, but didn't want to live there; and both young and old preferred to dine and seek entertainment in suburban restaurants and theaters. The blacks who had made it economically were moving steadily to the eastern suburbs; the polarization was all too obvious. The old conflicts, political and economic, persisted and rankled.

A report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) said that the community of Cleveland was second in the country among big cities in its social and economic problems -- worse than New York, Detroit, Chicago, and Baltimore. Only Newark, New Jersey, ranked worse than Cleveland. The study used figures on unemployment, education levels, income, crowded housing, and the number of people under eighteen and over sixty-four dependent on government, to make comparisons between the city and suburbs.

So despite the euphoria generated by finally getting Regional Transit under way, and the happy talk about the Halprin plan, Settler's Landing, and the new apartment complexes attracting people to live downtown, there were big

problems to be settled before the city would reach an even keel, grow up politically and economically, and cease to be a Yo-Yo, a seesaw city. Until some way could be found to bring new tenants profitably into the vacant Euclid Avenue store fronts formerly occupied by Bonwit-Teller and Woolworth's and a half dozen other empty shops between East Fourteenth Street and the Public Square, that area would still appear to be dead or dying. The Halle store opposite East Twelfth Street had been vastly improved when Marshall-Field took over; but for the most part, the white suburban matrons still did their regular shopping in the big east and west shopping centers -- Severance, Southgate, Westgate, Parmatown, Richmond Mall, and Great Lakes Mall. No one said it out loud, but there was no question that the presence of large numbers of black shoppers along Euclid Avenue acted as a deterrent to them. Yet there was no other place where the blacks in the central city could shop conveniently. They lived only a short bus ride from Euclid and Prospect avenues, where the stores were, and they came down by bus.

Ralph Perk was easily elected to a third term as mayor in November 1975, defeating Arnold Pinkney, president of the school board, with nearly 55 percent of the vote. The election was again decided on racial lines, though both candidates pretended it wasn't. Perk got 90 percent of the total vote in the heavily ethnic wards, and Pinkney got 90 percent in the completely black wards. The black vote is somewhere between 37 and 42 percent of the total, and even if Pinkney had gotten 100 percent of it, that was not enough to win.

The final result was made certain when Perk, in the September primary, ran only a couple of thousand behind Pinkney, despite the presence then of a half dozen also-rans, including a couple of west side Irishmen. With the also-rans out, Perk was a cinch to beat Pinkney head-to-head, and he did. No new issues were presented in the last month, and the campaigning was moderately clean and gentlemanly.

Once again, however, it proved that the city is polarized racially, as Jim Carney said it was in 1973. (It also proved that Perk was not hurt at all by his overwhelming defeat by John Glenn when he ran for the

United States Senate in 1974.) On his own turf, Cleveland, Perk still got the votes of the ethnic groups, most of whom consider themselves Democrats. They have elected every mayor (except Stokes) for the last thirty-five years, beginning with Frank Lausche in 1941.

The Cleveland voters turned down another charter amendment to permit mayor and council to be elected for four-year terms, rather than two-year. They also defeated several councilmen who had supported President George Forbes in the past, so Forbes might have more of a problem in the future if he should decide to continue as perpetual adversary to Mayor Perk.

The election also turned into a ten-strike for Dennis Kucinich, the "aging enfant terrible" (as described by Robert McGruder of the *Plain Dealer*), who chose to run for clerk of the municipal court instead of another term in council. In a badly split field, Dennis won with a plurality of 37 percent of the total, thus giving him a noncontroversial, administrative public berth for six years, from which he could build a personal organization, confound the regular Democrats, and prepare to run for mayor at the time he chooses (the mayoralty is his admitted ambition). Kucinich has shown himself to be the most adept young politician in years, getting his name in the papers and his face on TV almost every day, and choosing his enemies carefully. At times he has been for Mayor Perk, and against him, and for George Forbes and against him. He seems to land on his feet, like a cat, and merits watching. He wins, no matter what. Kucinich's brother, Gary, ran for council in the ward Dennis had represented for several terms, and won easily.

The election really changed nothing, but at least it provided two more years at city hall of the same thing, and gave Perk and the business community a chance to get together on improving the city, and implement all the new hopes and plans for redevelopment. Indeed, as recession and inflation began to fade late in 1975, it seemed that the seesaw city might be

headed for another upward swing. Though Cleveland's population was still shrinking, the metropolitan area as a whole was holding its own.

The Growth Board was still making its big pitch to keep improvement going with its new slogan, "The best things in life are here." The banks and savings and loans were aggressively seeking new depositors. The news media were as usual making happy talk about the "new downtown" and patting themselves (and the community) on the back. If the opinion-makers and civic cheerleaders could someday be convinced (and content about it) that Cleveland is not a metropolis like New York and Chicago and doesn't wish to be one like Detroit and Los Angeles, but instead is a provincial, pleasant, busy big city with a small town character and homogeneity, everyone would feel better, and the typical bad-mouthing that Clevelanders give their city might cease.

In the twenties, Cleveland seemed to be growing into a metropolis. This changed during the big depression. Every time things began to look a bit brighter, the nit-picking syndrome, the eternal bickering and hassling among officials, the two-bit parochial viewpoint, the inability to agree on any sort of consensus or to follow any leader for long, has prevented it. So Cleveland still remains the Yo-Yo community, upsy-downsy, the city on a seesaw. The TV comedians have laid off somewhat recently, but the citizens, the residents, are still complaining. So the situation is normal, as it has been for over fifty years.

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