

Labor support only at the top

Detroit anti-drug fighter beats UAW

In a non-partisan primary Aug. 7, Joseph Miller, the incumbent Mayor of Highland Park, Michigan, confounded all the pollsters by finishing second in a three-way race, well ahead of the Kennedy-liberal machine's candidate, School Superintendant Lloyd. In the coming general election, Miller is expected to beat the man who won the primary, Republican Robert Blackwell, who benefited from the Kennedy machine's splitting of the primary's Democratic vote with the Lloyd candidacy.

Lloyd had mounted a powerful effort, with strong backing from Rep. John Conyers, a Kennedy machine spokesman in Congress, and quiet but obvious support from the powerful United Auto Workers union. Miller's victory over Lloyd is the more stunning—and a serious blow to the Kennedy-UAW forces—because Highland Park's all-black population of industrial workmen are predominantly UAW members.

Because of the composition of the electorate as well as the issues between the candidates, Highland Park is considered a bellwether of the political mood in the region. For example, the defeat of the Kennedy-backed candidate, observers say, has confirmed Detroit Mayor Coleman Young in his continued refusal to extend support to Kennedy in the 1980 presidential race.

Miller made drugs the leading issue in the primary, comparing his own strong record of action against drugs to Lloyds' popular identification with Kennedy-led efforts to decriminalize marijuana. The mayor instituted a police crackdown on drugs, pornography and prostitution, and recently, three notorious hangouts for drug dealing were busted as part of the drive. According to the mayor's supporters, but for "civil libertarian" stalling of police action in the courts, Miller would have already completely closed down the "Woodward Avenue strip" where drug-dealing and prostitution are centered.

Miller's opponent in the general election, Robert Blackwell, is a former mayor and associate of Max Fisher, the "Purple Gang" narcotics chief in the Detroit area, and a leading Zionist political kingmaker. With Lloyd's elimination, however, Conyers and the United Auto Workers have also thrown their support to Blackwell, who has received additional endorsement from State Senator Basil Brown, a drug decriminalization advocate, and other elements of the interwoven Kennedy-Zionist machines.

Miller plans to keep the drug issue very much up front, using to his advantage Blackwell's "hands off" policy toward drug-prostitution operations in the city when he was mayor. Miller beat Blackwell in 1975.

"Anyone can call me and give information on what they know about drug dealings," Miller told the voters. "I'll keep the source confidential and give the information to the right people in the police department or FBI, and get the job done."

Miller is a member of the honorary board of the Michigan Anti-Drug Coalition, which hosted a founding convention for the National Anti-Drug Coalition in Detroit Sept. 29. In his speech to that conference the Highland Park mayor said: "My city, like many other cities faces a crisis. Twenty-five percent of Highland Park's tax base is completely dependent on the Chrysler Corporation. If Chrysler goes under and those workers are laid off, demoralization will increase, drug addiction will rise ... I am 100 percent committed to ending drug addiction and drug traffic...."

"Let the word go out to all the mayors of the United States to make drugs a number one priority on the political agenda ... This coalition is the only thing standing between America and bedlam."

Another speaker at the convention was Lyndon LaRouche, a Democratic presidential candidate. Reflecting what happened to Kennedy's candidate in Highland Park, one well-placed black Democrat in Detroit pointed to LaRouche and said: "Carter and Kennedy are known not to be what we want. The black community now knows where to look."

DETROIT

District 17 (partial) | HIGHLAND PARK | District 14 (partial)
 District 1 | HAMTRAMCK | District 13

Highland Park in Detroit's District 1 is the paradigm of a black industrial working class neighborhood, its population of 40,000 overwhelmingly auto workers. Yet, incumbent Democratic mayor Miller finished second in a field of three in the primary, behind a Republican, but defeating a pro-Kennedy liberal Democrat who had the UAW's backing. The loser also had the support of John Conyers, a Kennedy Congressional colleague. Moreover, the UAW had thrown everything into defeating Miller, as a Kennedy test-of-strength.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce