

# Cleveland ousts a Kennedy kook

The outcome of the Cleveland Mayoralty election and how it occurred demonstrates the strength of an emerging alliance of white ethnic and black urban political machines. It was this alliance in Cleveland that turned out the vote for Republican George Voinovich, who by a 56-44 percent margin decisively defeated radical-liberal Mayor Dennis Kucinich, a figure associated through issues and backers with the hard-core Kennedyite minority of the Democratic Party.

Kucinich had been wholeheartedly endorsed by Kennedyite radical environmentalist mouthpieces Tom Hayden, Jane Fonda, and Ralph Nader, and was backed by the same liberal UAW-centered machine that forms the core of Kennedy organizational support, not only in Cuyahoga County, but other urban "mega-counties."

The outcome represents a crushing defeat-by-implication for Ted Kennedy, by the very same combination of white ethnic and black voters that is commonly—and falsely—referred to as his "base."

Voinovich's decisive margin of victory rested on a strong showing in both the white ethnic West Side, and the predominantly black East Side. He won amidst the largest black voter turnout in the past four elections.

Voinovich, in his election-night victory speech, delivered at Cleveland's Plaza Hotel, hailed that alliance. Before a 1,500-member audience consisting of mostly West Side and suburban whites, he ripped into the racist "balkanization" policies of Kucinich. "This city will not be run as a racist administration, as has been done in the past," he said. Earlier in the day, Voinovich had met with black City Council leader George Forbes, a Democrat, to work out the basis for cooperation in the new administration.

## How Kucinich was crushed

Kucinich's defeat was effected by the combined efforts of the LaRouche Democratic presidential campaign organization, the anti-Kucinich Democratic black machine on Cleveland's east side, and white ethnics principally from Italian-American and Hungarian-American communities. Cleveland has one of the largest Hungarian communities in the nation. These machines, predominantly Democratic, came together as a coalition, catalyzed by the LaRouche organization, called Citizens for Cleveland.

During the month of October, Citizens for Cleveland organizers and volunteers, aided by dozens of

Democratic Party precinct captains, papered the city with hundreds of thousands of leaflets headlined, "Dennis Kook-cinich: Candidate of the Fat Cats," and "Let's Set The Record Straight—Dennis Kook-cinich Has Destroyed Cleveland."

The first of the two leaflets, exposing a fraudulent garbage collection contract let by the corrupt Mayor, exploded like a bombshell on the eve of the Oct. 2 nonpartisan primary. It was delivered door-to-door in many of the white, East European ethnic wards on the west side, focusing on Kucinich's strongest bastions of support. Citizens for Cleveland was directly responsible, according to analysts, for Kucinich losing over 15 percent of what his projected vote totals would otherwise have been in those wards.

In the final phase of the campaign, the mass distribution of the leaflet "Let's Set The Record Straight..." put the final nails in Kucinich's coffin. The message to which Cleveland's voters, both black and white, responded was, "Talk to your neighbors and you'll find unemployment skyrocketing, garbage going uncollected, local taxes increasing, and roads in disrepair...the Kook-cinich record..." Citizens for Cleveland then enumerated a five-point program for the city, under the slogan: "What's Good For Cleveland Is Good for America." Said the leaflet:

"(1) Massive increase in technologies, particularly in the steel producing industry.

"(2) Increase our nuclear capacity.

"(3) Increase jobs and expand industry...

"(4) Increase port facilities...

"(5) New modern homes to be built on vacant Cleveland plots of land."

The effects of this campaign can best be seen by Kucinich's desperation moves after Oct. 2. Right after the primary, Kucinich returned briefly to his old overt racist mode, securing the endorsement of the inconsequential but highly vocal antibusing group, CORK. The ploy flopped. Kucinich's last apparent hope was the black vote, and for this effort, Kucinich acquired former Cleveland mayor Carl Stokes, an NBC employee, to come to Cleveland and campaign for him. Both Kucinich and Stokes thoroughly underestimated the intelligence of black voters.

## Rough times in Hough

The facts surrounding Stokes' reception by the black community underscore this point. Upon arrival, he was greeted by a 500-person black anti-Stokes demonstration in the Hough ghetto. Most black politicians and church leaders boycotted him, turning down the former Mayor's pleas for meetings. On Saturday, Nov. 3, the city's black newspaper *The Call and Post*, ran a banner headline: "Carl Stokes Returns To Divide Black Community" with a second lead, "Voinovich Is Endorsed By Black Officials."