

Eye on Democrats by Anita Gallagher

Chicago Democrats working for Reagan?

A "barroom brawl" has broken out in the same Chicago Democratic machine that stole Illinois from Richard Nixon and Jerry Ford. This time, the Cook County Democrats intend to put Illinois in the Reagan column in 1984! So said the *Chicago Tribune* on Nov. 20, in a front page story reporting that Cook County Democratic Chair Ed Vrdolyak offered to help Reagan last June. Vrdolyak told Reagan staffers Ed Rollins and James Baker that Chuck Manatt's Democratic National Committee and its approved presidential candidates had angered him with their support for Harold Washington's mayoral campaign.

"We're disillusioned with the national party. They're dumping all over me," Vrdolyak was said to have told Reagan's aides. "All of those guys who came in and endorsed Harold Washington are [obscenity]. We may be interested in helping you."

At a follow-up meeting later in the summer, the Cook County Democrats' lawyer Jerome Torshen informed Ed Rollins that the Cook County Democratic Central Committee was prepared to endorse "your preference," according to the *Tribune* account. The Reagan aides said they considered Mondale the "more vulnerable" opponent.

The negotiations were broken off when the Cook County Democrats asked the White House aides for money for the contributions they would be expected to put up for Mondale. "These ain't the days of Watergate," Rollins reportedly told Torshen. "We can't do that."

The *Tribune's* story makes a lot of sense, even though that's not why they ran it. The Cook County Democratic Party did make an unprecedented early endorsement when it announced its

support for Mondale in October. What's more, Ed Vrdolyak supported Kennedy, not Carter-Mondale in 1980, and was denied a delegate seat at the Democratic convention by the Carter-Mondale forces. Cook County's regular Democrats campaigned for Republican Bernard Epton in the racially polarized Chicago mayoral election in April, and Epton swept the traditionally Democratic white ethnic wards.

The Cook County Democratic machine's early endorsement of Mondale has stymied Chicago's greenie Mayor, Harold Washington, who opposed Vrdolyak's early endorsement as "premature," but lost. Now, Washington (for whom Mondale, Glenn, Cranston, and Manatt made personal campaign appearances) can hardly endorse Mondale when his worst enemy, Ed Vrdolyak, already has. Washington may now have to support John Glenn. Ironically, Vrdolyak reportedly prefers Glenn over Mondale. Most interesting of all is the *Tribune's* unelaborated report that Reagan political aides have held private meetings with influential Democrats from other parts of the country.

Jackson's independence exposed

Meanwhile, Chicago's own presidential candidate, Jesse Jackson, was reported to be furious that word of his deal with Walter Mondale to sell black votes is leaking out.

Mondale has long pushed for Jackson to head the Democratic voter registration effort in 1984. Manatt botched that by turning angry tyrant when crossed on the issue of Jackson speaking at the Detroit DNC meeting last summer. Now, Mondale appears to all the world to have worked out his own arrangement with Jackson directly; the only difference is that Jesse's title is now "Democratic presidential candidate." Don't say this to Jesse Jackson; it makes him mad, and be-

sides, *the Mondale-Jackson deal is a secret.*

Mad dog Manatt

Why does Manatt act out these mad-dog episodes that have characterized his reign as DNC chair? These are gangster tactics, the tactics of the Averell Harriman wing of the Democratic Party. Harriman has long taken his orders from Moscow, orders which include destroying the Democrats as the party of the U.S. labor movement, the part of the American population most willing to fight Moscow's drive for world empire.

Manatt used gangster tactics in the dispute with the state chairs in New Hampshire and Iowa over moving up their primary and caucus dates, respectively. When New Hampshire moved its date up to Feb. 28 because of Vermont's beauty-contest only primary in early March, and Iowa moved its caucuses up to Feb. 20, Manatt said these delegations would not be seated, period. The eight candidates of the Manatt-Harriman faction made a little show of running foul of the party line by pledging to help the small states—mainly in hopes of some early showings. Manatt, according to the Nov. 23 *New York Times*, indicated that things could be worked out if the candidates would sign a letter supporting the earlier delegate selection dates.

The Andropov Democratic candidates (except Askew) signed the letter on Oct. 29. But then Manatt reneged, saying that the candidates' support in and of itself didn't warrant an exception to the official delegate selection dates.

Unseated delegations are like chairs in a barroom brawl, and brawls create opportunities for dark horse candidates. Manatt's gangsterism will only fan the flames. People are saying they wouldn't be surprised if everybody's dog except Askew's didn't wind up poisoned—Eddie Vrdolyak's too.

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