

for San Luis 12/13/70 WJ

THE 1976 ELECTIONS IN COOK COUNTY DEMONSTRATED THE IMPACT OF THE MOVEMENT FROM THE CITY TO THE SUBURBS. THE DEMOGRAPHICS, WHEN COMBINED WITH THE GROWING INDEPENDENCE OF VOTERS HAS, OF COURSE, ENCOURAGED SPECULATION ABOUT WHO WILL OR WILL NOT HAVE POLITICAL POWER IN THE FUTURE.

WHILE IT MAY BE FUN TO PLAY POLITICAL PREDICTION GAMES, I BELIEVE IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO ASK WHY THE DEMOGRAPHICS HAVE CHANGED, AND WHY THERE IS THE CONTINUING MOVEMENT FROM THE CITY TO THE SUBURBS.

THE NUMBERS TELL US ABOUT CHANGING LIVING PATTERNS, THE REASONS FOR WHICH ARE COMPLEX. BUT ONE IS FUNDAMENTAL: THE FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP, THE FAILURE TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH A CITY OF CHANGING NEEDS.

BEHIND THE ELECTION STATISTICS ARE PEOPLE. PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY FAMILIES, WHO ARE MOVING OUT OF CHICAGO: MOVING IN SEARCH OF JOBS, MOVING IN SEARCH OF AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THEIR CHILDREN IN WHICH THEY HAVE CONFIDENCE. PEOPLE WHO ARE LEAVING BEHIND THEIR

OLD NEIGHBORHOODS WITH THEIR ANTIQUATED HOUSING SUPPLY, LIMITED SERVICES, VACANT INDUSTRIAL PLANTS, AND THE OMNIPRESENCE OF CRIME.

THERE ARE NO MAGIC OR INSTANT REMEDIES FOR URBAN PROBLEMS. BUT THE EXODUS OF PEOPLE AND JOBS HAS ONLY INTENSIFIED WITH ALMOST DEAFENING SILENCE FROM CITY HALL.

HARDLY A DAY PASSES WITHOUT A NEWS STORY CHRONICLING THE MOVEMENT OF ANOTHER INDUSTRIAL OR CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS FROM CHICAGO. APPEALS TO BOOSTERISM, THOUGH TRIED, PROVED INEFFECTIVE, AND ONCE AGAIN MORE JOBS WERE LOST. WHERE IS THE ECONOMIC INCENTIVE PLAN NEEDED TO COMPETE WITH THE SUBURBS AND AREAS BEYOND? WHERE ARE THE NEW INDUSTRIAL PARKS AND OFFICE COMPLEXES IN CHICAGO, SPONSORED AND ASSISTED BY CITY GOVERNMENT?

AND WHERE ARE THE CHANGES IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM CRYING FOR FUNDAMENTAL OVERHALL. BUSINESS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHERS HAVE STATED THE NEED, BUT AGAIN, THERE IS LITTLE MOVEMENT AND NO DIRECTION FROM CITY HALL.

WE ARE ASKED TO SPECULATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE COOK COUNTY

DEMOCRATIC PARTY. THAT THE PARTY NEEDS CANDIDATES ATTRACTIVE TO A NEW GENERATION OF VOTERS AND TO RESIDENTS OF THE CITY AND SUBURBS WHO HAVE DECLARED THEIR INDEPENDENCE BY THEIR REJECTION OF THE CONTROLLED CANDIDATES AND THEIR TICKET-SPLITTING IS OBVIOUS. BUT THE LOSS OF DEMOCRATIC STRENGTH IS ALSO A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF THE FAILURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH CRITICAL PROBLEMS. THE PRECINCT CAPTAIN CANNOT PERSUADE A VOTER THAT ISN'T THERE. NOR CAN A SMALL FAVOR COMPENSATE FOR A DECLINE IN ESSENTIAL LIVING CONDITIONS.

EXPERTS HAVE OFTEN CITED THE INTERLOCKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE IN CHICAGO, AND MOST WOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED THAT THE GOVERNING OF CHICAGO WOULD CHANGE ONLY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF POLITICAL CHANGE. ISN'T IT IRONIC THEN THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL FACT OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN COOK COUNTY IS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT. THE MAYOR HAS OFTEN SAID "GOOD GOVERNMENT IS GOOD POLITICS". WHAT WE ARE WITNESSING IS THAT THE NEGATIVE OF THAT STATEMENT IS EQUALLY TRUE.

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