

McCarthy in Detroit

Judie Davis

To begin with, I was never much of a McCarthy supporter. I was naturally on his side, signing petitions and stopping friends in the suburbs who thought the Northwest side was too far to go for such things. But to me the man lacked pizzazz: exactly what everyone else liked about him. He sort of reminded me of a professor I once had somewhere, someone whose name of course I couldn't remember.

So McCarthy was coming to town in what all seemed a very last minute, last chance try for the inner city vote. It all happened so quickly. By Saturday afternoon, millions of very clean kids were all over the city with handouts saying John Lee Hooker would entertain and buses would pick up people all over the city. All very free, to see the man who wants to start anew.

Groovie, I sez, we'll drink wine in the bleachers and get us some politics too. Besides, the Revolution should be represented, but I didn't have my proper credentials, so we sat on the side, sans wine.

I kept wondering who came on the buses. Maybe the clean kids. There were so many Volkswagons and Mustangs that I felt funny getting out of my friend's Thunderbird. (no cracks about revolutionaries in Thunderbirds, please). I personally counted 5 black people in the audience, including my friend in the Thunderbird.

Oh how those greys clapped for Cleage! The Reverend Albert Cleage came to set McCarthy up. First impression was how the man has traveled in just the past year.

But Cleage did not commit himself to McCarthy. He said only that he had talked with the man and felt that McCarthy understood the concept of Black Power. Cleage was good; by far the highlight of the evening.

After McCarthy's business manager talked money and the clean kids passed the shopping bags, Phil Ochs sang some nice songs. Why didn't he do "Talking Viet Nam Blues?" Why didn't John Lee do "The Motor City is Burning?" Why didn't McCarthy speak out for the city and its people?

Most of McCarthy's speech centered on party unity. He naturally said the Democratic party is still the best means to reach the people. He managed to mention the need for ending the crisis in our cities but stressed that the Democratic party must commit itself to this; not necessarily just Eugene McCarthy.

He went on to mention how the construction industry must open up more jobs for more people, how the welfare system must be abolished, about new opportunities opening for old people, that starvation must be brought to an end, and that we must also make room for the academic and religious leaders of America (?).

The strongest thing he said about Blacks is that they are poor because they are powerless and powerless because they are poor. "We must seek the transfer of power by making community action funds directly available to communities. This is a key part of the program through which the party of the people can return the people to power."

By the way, Richard Goodwin is McCarthy's speech writer. He also worked for RFK and LBJ. The man has magic with words. Detroit people spoke before the visit and told him what they thought would be necessary for a strong city vote appeal. The sad thing is that McCarthy actually thought what he said was good enough. So the first thing you will say to me is, "McCarthy doesn't need to woo voters. He is a man of honor and integrity." Man, all I'm asking is that he shows he's got some balls. I don't expect him to sock it to me, just show me where it's at. Show me HE knows where it's at.

McCarthy spoke in Detroit during the anniversary of last year's happening. He was set up by a funky blues singer and a militant minister and he talked about party unity and the peaceful political process.

What did McCarthy have to lose by being a little stronger? The people hung on every word he uttered. McCarthy's people would not have been offended by a stronger stand for the city and its people.

For all you conspiracy lovers, here is a good one: Richard Goodwin is the power behind McCarthy and he is in cahoots with Humphrey to keep down McCarthy's following.

Good luck to all you clean kids out there in Mustang land. We don't have any petitions for you to pass out for the Revolution, but if we get some bumperstickers, I'll let you know.

EDITORS' NOTE: One question that should be asked of the supporters of Senator McCarthy is why did they buy a large ad in the *Detroit American* and thus give support to that racist paper while their candidate was at Tiger Stadium bullshitting about Black Power? Campaign managers are professors Otto Feinstein and John Weiss of Wayne State.



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