

Welcome to Chicago



“Anyone who says there’s a ghetto doesn’t know Chicago. . . . I have lived in Chicago all my life and I still say we have no ghettos in Chicago.”

—MAYOR RICHARD J. DALEY



The dignitaries of the Democratic Party will travel by helicopter from their downtown hotels to the International Amphitheater near the stockyards, site of the convention. They will fly back and forth over the shiny new John Hancock skyscraper, the newly erected skeleton of the First National Bank building, the glassy acres of lakefront high-rises. It is a fitting symbol for this convention: the men who choose their Party's nominee will see Chicago only from the top and avoid those urban realities which can only be seen from the bottom up.

The men who run Chicago point proudly to the fact that in 1966 the average household income in the area was \$9478. What they don't mention is that for

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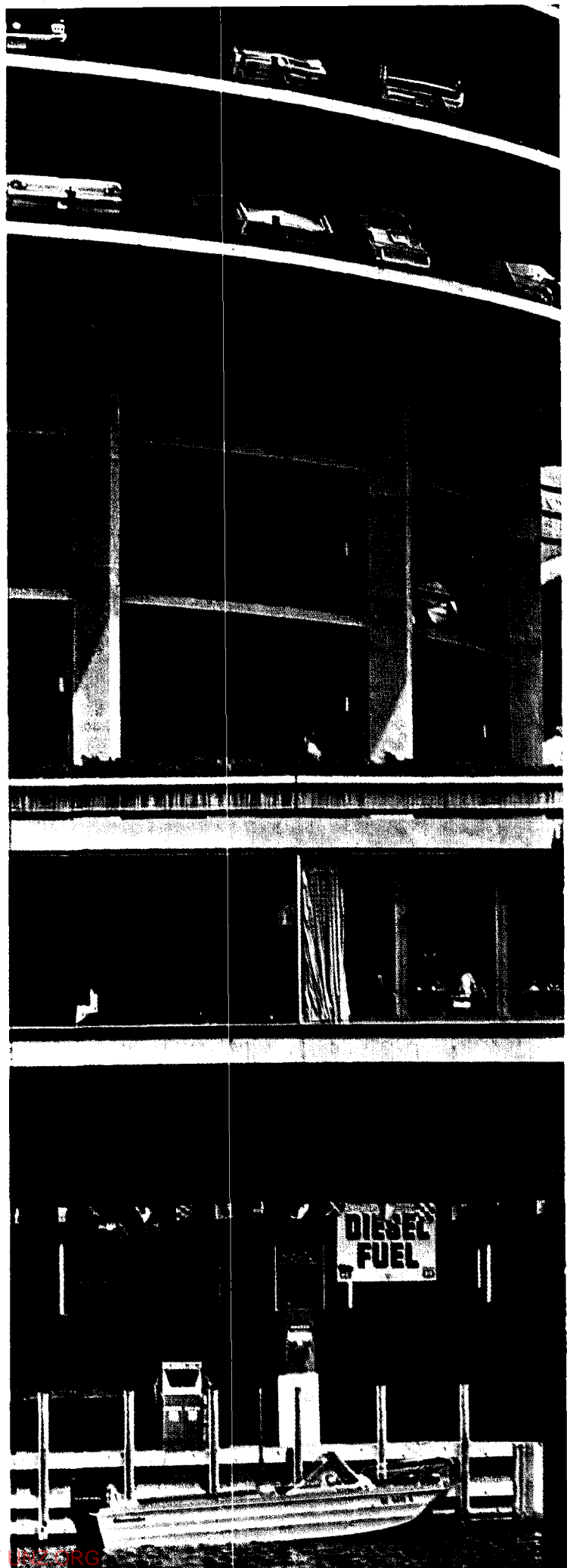
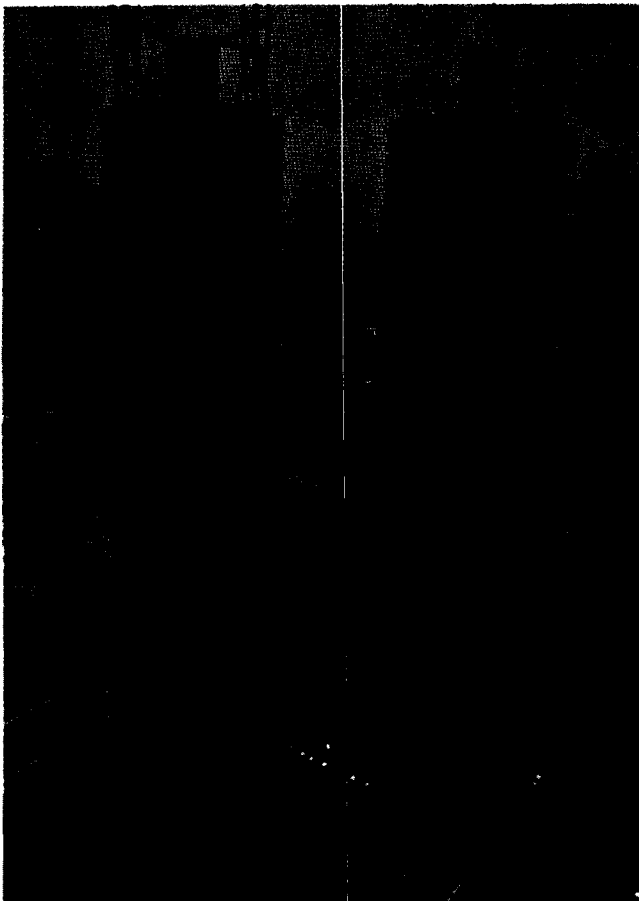


IN 1965, MAYOR DALEY said that all of Chicago's slums would be gone by 1967. This was the same year that Secretary of Defense McNamara said that all the troops in Vietnam would be home for Christmas.

An old Chicago "slum clearance" project was Robert Taylor Homes (above), the world's largest public housing project,

extending for two miles along Chicago's South Side Street. Built in the early '50s, it houses 28,000 persons, all of them black and a majority of them on welfare. The buildings are a self-contained world—"high-rise concentration camps," Dick Gregory has called them—of crime, malfunctioning electricity and plumbing, density without community or public space.

the same year, the Negro American Labor Council estimated that 400,000 Chicago workers were each taking home less than \$3000 in yearly wages; that the yearly wage for thousands of workers in Chicago's large manufacturing businesses is low, even lower than some places in the South. They don't mention how much worse all this is for the residents of Chicago's sprawling ghettos, and that black laborers earn up to







32 cents an hour less than whites of comparable age and education.

The men who run Chicago are not concerned with these facts, but with maintaining the opulence and efficiency over which delegates will be flying in their helicopters. Proving that civic-mindedness and personal greed are not incompatible qualities, these men are trying to make Chicago safe for people like themselves and for the middle class they have trained to work for them. While they have restored Chicago's failing downtown area and made it into a paradise of corporate headquarters, department stores and apartment towers, they have concerned themselves with the ghetto mainly by relocating its people through urban renewal schemes and turning much of its governance over to a coterie of Uncle Tom politicians hand-picked for the job.

The men who run Chicago—working with Mayor Richard Daley, their colleague within city government—have immersed themselves in the affairs of the city and remade its face in their own image. Because their business is, first and foremost, business, they must ride roughshod over the health, justice, equality and self-determination of the rest of the community. But they are not ogres, these men who run Chicago, nor are they faceless. They are real individuals, and it is not accidental that those of them who are not Republicans will be at the International Amphitheater in an Illinois delegation accustomed to no-primary politics.

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Meet the Men Who Own It

[VIGNETTE #1. URBAN RENEWAL:
MAKING CHICAGO SAFE FOR SKYSCRAPERS]

JAMES DOWNS IS A small-time millionaire in real estate, and he is the ideological voice of Chicago's powerful downtown property owners. In the '50s, he was directly involved in city government as housing and development coordinator; now he is indirectly involved as chairman of the board of the Real Estate Research Corporation, which has prepared 15 planning studies of the Loop for the Central Area Committee, private developers and Mayor Daley.

Since the death of Holman Pettibone, a leader in central district planning and head of the Chicago Title and Trust Company, Downs, a board member of Pettibone's bank, has filled the role of spokesman for Chicago's business interests. Some of the more astute aficionados of power-brokerage say that Downs lacks the power of his mentor; yet he is the key link between City Hall and the real estate interests, and his thesis—that urban renewal should serve business, not the urban poor—has been one of Chicago's central assumptions since Downs helped draft the 1958 business manifesto, "Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago." Recently, Downs outlined his views more precisely in a theoretical work called *The Demand for Land in Central Urban Areas*. "Now that many of the very worst rock-bottom slums have largely been eliminated," he wrote, "... there has been a gradual shift from the simple elimination of blight as an overriding public necessity to the use of urban renewal techniques to support and enhance our urban economies. . . . It is our opinion that this shift in primary emphasis . . . is a correct, desirable and needed one."

Basic to Downs' theory of urban renewal is the notion that slums really don't exist anymore. And given Downs' influence with the mayor, it is no accident that this view is echoed by voices within the Daley machine. (Downs' son-in-law, David Stahl, is deputy mayor in charge of, among other things, Chicago's summer counterinsurgency program). As the mayor himself put it, "Anyone who says there's a ghetto doesn't know Chicago . . . I have lived in Chicago all my life and I still say we have no ghettos in Chicago."

"Marketability," Downs says, "should be of increasing importance as a criterion to be explicitly considered in proposing priorities of project selection." Moreover, nothing is so marketable as the prime central areas of the big cities,

especially if they are translated into air-conditioned, aluminum-and-glass office buildings. Not only are these buildings "marketable," they are the key to profits and prosperity for the whole of the city's downtown interests.

Downs' insights, as implemented by the Daley Administration, have made the city quite livable for the middle class. For over 15 years, the face of Chicago has been altered by the nation's most sweeping urban renewal program, by half a billion dollars' worth of expressways, and by an explosion of high-rise residential and office developments in the heart of the city. Every one of these projects has been planned according to an unwritten set of principles agreed upon by the city's leading businessmen and implemented by its government. And in this connection, Richard Daley's role has been no less important than that of James Downs. Daley's predecessor, Mayor Martin Kennelly, got along well with business but very poorly with the political machine; Daley gets along well with business and owns the machine.

Since 1955, when the newly created Central Area Committee was pushing the first of its ambitious plans for situating office buildings and high-priced apartments at the northern end of the Loop, Daley has been a booster of the schemes of the real estate power structure for building a shinier, more painless Chicago. Visitors to the Democratic Convention will see two enormous office buildings nearing completion—the 60-story First National Bank Building and the 100-story John Hancock Center, already fully rented—as well as other towers completed during Daley's tenure: the Prudential and Brunswick buildings, the Continental Plaza, the Civic Center and the Federal Building. Each of these houses thousands of middle-class office workers, an increasing number of whom live in nearby high rises and patronize the leading downtown merchants—Marshall Field, Carson, Pirie Scott and Company. The Loop area, considered doomed in the early '50s because of the flight to the suburbs by the upper middle class, is now substantially revitalized. Its realty managers, merchants and bankers are recording high profits, and no one is happier than Mayor Daley, who is supported for reelection by citizens' committees comprised of nearly every chairman of the board and president of Chicago's largest businesses.

This prosperity does not extend to the outlying neighborhoods or to the three million people who neither own nor control the businesses in these glass towers. In 1966, the Negro American Labor Council estimated that 400,000 Chi-

by Clark Kissinger & Paul Booth