

Pd has been found in  
the LF too.

Dishat photos  
in my with story  
(not in 19, B Grade)

~~Heartland  
Chase  
Bridges  
Inman~~

as  
by zantho  
as daniel  
phris.

intra-community negotiations

The next day a story had been leaked to the plain dealer about a "troika--of Hugh Corrigan, Tony Garofoli, and George Forbes". A couple of days later, Arnold Pinckney objected to that arrangement in the papers. "A schism developed between Forbes and Pinckney. They were cutting one another's throats. So I talked to them over the telephone and said we can't have this in our town and asking them to get together with me when I came up to Cleveland." Stokes went up to Cleveland and he sets up a meeting with Pinckney, Forbes, Charlie Carr and himself. He said that Pinckney and Carr came to the meeting but Forbes did not and that he had to call up Forbes to get him to come to the meeting and that Forbes said he didn't want to talk with Pinckney, etc., etc., but finally agreed to come to the meeting. "When George came to the meeting, he got his side of the story off his chest and said that he gotten it off his chest and that was the end of it." So the four of them started in to discuss the terms under which they would take the Caucus back into the Democratic party.

In the meantime, Stokes said he had met with Corrigan and Garofoli and that they had all agreed on certain terms. A black was to be an administrative aide to the City Commissioner. A black was to get the next opening on the Board of Elections. They were to try to persuade a county official to retire early (the name was something like Omaskay). All the patronage was to be split one-third to the black community, two-thirds to the white community. All the decisions were to be made by the three co-chairmen.

This is the agreement that Stokes presents to Forbes, Pinckney and Carr at the meeting and they then okay it. They then call up Garofoli and Corrigan and they come over to the meeting and they all agree "in principle" on the terms. "Corrigan asked me, does this mean that you will endorse all Democrats". I replied, yes--but from time to time you will endorse people that I cannot sell to the black community. For example, Tony Russo, I can't sell him to the black community. Corrigan said something like well, well, that's not going to be any problem, we understand. So I said, okay. But I asked one more question. I began to feel a little hanky panky in the air and the lawyer in me made me ask the question. Do I understand I said that whoever the Caucus names as our co-chairman is okay with you? Corrigan, Garofoli, and Corrigan said that's okay with us. They left the meeting and then I said to the others, what about this chairman thing? Arnold and Charlie Carr said, Lou, you ought to take it. I asked, is that alright with you, George. He said, it's okay with me, I said all that I have to say."

Then Stokes goes to the Executive Committee meeting of the Caucus, he talks about the agreement. Somebody raises the question, who is our co-chairman in the troika? "I said, I am. I'm the highest elected official." Then someone, (Lou can't remember who, he thinks it was Barnes) said "Lou, aren't you very busy, aren't you taking on too much, and so forth. And Ike Thompson made the same comment. But the agreement passed in the Executive Committee.

Stokes then leaves the meeting with Forbes and Pinckney to negotiate with Garofoli and Corrigan. "They asked us, who will be the co-chairman? I said, I'm going to take it. Garofoli says, Lou, to be honest with you, we can sell Forbes to the white community but we can't sell the Stokes name. They won't buy it. I asked Garofoli, do you remember our conversation this afternoon? Do you remember that I asked you whether or not anyone designated by the Caucus would be acceptable to you? And don't you remember that you said yes? I turned to Corrigan and I said do you remember our conversation this afternoon? Do you remember that when I asked you whether or not you would accept anyone agreed upon by the Caucus you said yes? Then I said, I don't deal with people who don't keep their word. The deal is off. You can try to get elected without the black Caucus." Pinckney then takes Garofoli? (who is shaking like a leaf) and Stokes aside and Garofoli says, "Lou, I'm just a messenger boy. George Steinbrenner told me to tell you that he put the deal together and you'd better accept it,--and that Forbes will be the co-chairman." I said, "I didn't think anyone in Cleveland would send me messengers. You tell Steinbrenner to go to hell. You tell him the next time he wants to send a message to come and tell me himself and not send a messenger boy." Then, apparently Hugh Corrigan steps in and says that "We can accept Lou, we can accept Lou, we can work out the details and we'll meet tomorrow to work out the details."

So Stokes prepares to go into the main meeting of the Caucus. He says as he was getting ready to go to the meeting that there was

some former county commissioner (somebody we beat with a name starting with P, I think) says that he is going to ask Lou some questions in the meeting about whether or not he's going to support Republicans. Lou tells somebody that they'd better get this fellow out of the way and make sure that he doesn't get any trouble. "I'm not going to let him embarrass me in front of my people." "In the course of my remarks I said that the Caucus will support Democrats. I saw no sense in elaborating on the exceptions. This was a meeting of cohesiveness. But the people in power knew where I stood and that was all that was important with me." Here, the story stops--I'm not exactly certain when all of this took place--but nothing more occurs until the time comes for the Caucus to make its endorsement of candidates in the 1972 elections. But in the meantime, says Lou, he had learned that Steinbrenner was indeed the man who had put the original deal together and that he had wanted Forbes to be the co-chairman. Stokes says that Steinbrenner had "business deals" with both Forbes and Pinckney, "and he had no such rapport with me". Stokes had also noted or learned that there was schism within the Caucus Executive Committee about him taking the co-chairmanship. Ike Thompson wanted Forbes' council seat, and expected that if Forbes had become part of the troika he would give up his council seat. Forbes' brother had wanted something and he was upset. Arnold Pinckney and Charlie Carr had never wanted Forbes to take the position. So, in any case, some of the guys "started staying away from some of the Caucus meetings and using this as an excuse--that Stokes should not have everything and should share the positions, etc. The reason

why Lou brought this into the narrative at this point I think was to indicate that there was some difficulty following the agreement that he would become one of the co-chairman. In any case when the time comes for endorsement Lou is talking to W. O. Walker (he calls him W.O. and when I use the term W.O.), who says that the Caucus ought to endorse Tyler, a black Republican against Porter, a white Democrat, for the position of County Engineer. "I told the guys what W.O. had said, and a schism developed. Some guys said, Man, we ought not to endorse any Republicans and so forth." So they set up a committee of Stokes, Pinckney, Forbes and Senator Jackson to go talk to Walker about it. Pinckney, Stokes and Jackson went to the meeting but not Forbes. Pinckney argued for consistency "that we should accept the bad apples, that we should be consistent, that we have to be Democrats." "W.O. said that the Caucus had to accept Tyler--that Walker had supported Carl and Lou who were Democrats even though he was a Republican. I put race above party, he said, and the Republicans will understand that we have to advance Tyler over Porter."

At the time the Executive Committee and the Caucus met to make endorsements, Lou was in Washington. The Executive Committee endorses Porter, Corrigan, (a man who was county prosecutor) and some other guy whose name Lou could not remember "the one who does all the racist baiting". Arnold Pinckney, who is still the Executive Director of the Caucus, called Lou in Washington and tells him about this. "I said, I can't go along with that. And so I wrote a letter and asked to have it read at the

Executive Committee meeting. They read the letter, but they voted to go along with their endorsements. Someone raised the question, should we read Lou's letter to the full meeting of the Caucus? Pinckney is reported to have said that he would take the responsibility on himself, and he said that he would not read it." At the meeting, there was a lot of controversy, W.O. "got pretty hot" and apparently someone asked whether or not there wasn't a letter from Lou stating his position. But the upshot was that the Caucus, the full Caucus endorsed the slate recommended by the Executive Committee.

"The real cleavage was between me and Arnold. He betrayed my trust in him, because he had an obligation to read my letter to the meeting. If he read it and then they went along with their endorsements, okay, I could accept that. But my people were denied the opportunity to hear my position. I was entitled to have my position stated and they were entitled to hear it. So we went through the 1972 election with that cleavage. I had to get Arnold Pinckney out of the Executive Director's job. Other than the Caucus, he had no base and he wanted to use the Caucus for his mayoral bid. So I came up with the idea of changing the by-laws to eliminate the job of executive director of the Caucus."

"Then we had the meeting where the whole town was there and there was the big showdown." He said that both Pinckney and Forbes wanted to speak and they were given the chance to speak by Stokes. He said at that time Pinckney called W. O. Walker a liar publicly and

humiliated him in public. And after that Forbes and Pinckney left the Caucus. Senator Jackson left the Caucus and others did and he said that some were off again on again as far as coming to the Executive Committee meeting was concerned. He said Arnold Pinckney went around recruiting other deserters--that he went down to Columbus to try to convince John Thompson and Troy Lee James to leave the Caucus. He said that John Thompson, Madison, McCaul, and Cain

"At that point I had to start restructuring the Caucus, appointing other people in the community." Then, he said that the people who had stayed in the Caucus started running against the people who had left the Caucus. But he pointed out that even though they had come close they only won in one instance and that was Strand. What is interesting here is that whereas Lou Stokes sees the 1974 contests for city council in terms of the Caucus trying to oppose the incumbents, the newspaper accounts seem to emphasize the fact that the incumbents held off the Caucus candidates. In other words, Lou tends to look at it as if the Caucus people were the underdogs, whereas the newspaper tends to look at it as if the incumbents were the underdogs. Actually, what seems very clear is that the power of the Caucus was pretty well smashed.

"Out of that, came my own election this time. I devised a new strategy. There were several races; for example, Bell (who stayed with the Caucus) against Jackson for a Senate seat and the race of Barnes for a Senate seat. The question was, was I going to place my own esteem



behind those races. If I do, they will keep a score card on me. The same thing with the Metzenbaum-Glenn thing. So I decided not to make any endorsements and to concentrate on my own race. I had a couple of primary opponents and I won big. As Walker said, Lou Stokes won big and anyone who thinks his prestige has been damaged had better think twice."

I asked him why Forbes had not run against him for Congress. "He sent word that he was not interested in Congress. He made the quip that I was confined to \$42,500 a year and that he's making too much money to accept that. I think he's satisfied. He's making money through his law firm and through his radio program." Then he said about Pinckney "Pinckney got the election board job that he wanted. That's what he wanted out of the whole thing--a job." "Whether or not they looked at it and decided they couldn't beat me, I couldn't say. Each man has to make that kind of judgement for himself." But the clear implication was that neither one of them thought they could beat him.

I asked him whether or not there wasn't a different philosophy behind his view of the Caucus and their view of the Caucus. "What they were going to do was to make the Caucus an extension of the Democratic party, a ward club of the Democratic party. In order to be effective, the Caucus has to be bipartisan. It has to be able to switch back and forth in its endorsements. It is a community organization that is politically oriented. That's where you get your leverage, in your

independence. You don't need a caucus if you're going to be a ward club. It's no different from the cosmopolitan club or the Alliance of Poles. They are heavily Democratic but they don't always endorse Democrats. They didn't endorse Carl or me. They are selfish and the Caucus should be selfish--looking out for its own interests. Forbes and Pinckney don't have the ability to do that. The party owns them. They have to do what the party wants and what the party tells them to do."

"Cleveland is back now to what it was before Carl<sup>11</sup> was elected mayor. The black politician is not respected. (He here asked me if I had read Carl's book and he contrasted a meeting where the black politicians were beaten up on with a meeting where everybody stood up and cheered the black politicians.) They did what they did for personal gain and black people didn't benefit. What these guys have done now is to weaken the whole political strength of the black community."

"The Democrats didn't endorse me. So, if I didn't have the Caucus I'd be in bad shape in terms of support for me. Now, I've beaten the party again. I won as big as anybody else. I did it by having my own organization. They will be keyed primarily to me. The people in the Caucus will be loyal to Lou Stokes; they will rally around Lou Stokes. Nobody can take that away--whether I call it the Caucus or the Lou Stokes' organization of the 21st district, it will be there. The strength and beauty of it has been strangled by men who

are tired, as they say, of sacrificing in office and want to start to get the spoils and get their hands in more. Their attitude is the public be damned. The black community is the real loser. The beauty of having 25 elected black officials sit around that table and make decisions on the basis of what's best for the black community--that beauty is gone. Obviously, I've got to keep my organization. And people want to organize around me. I have to do it for my own protection every two years. I don't want to have to put an organization together every two years. But whether the organization will keep the philosophy it had--that is doubtful."

When I asked him to give me some sense for the percentage of people who had left the Caucus, he thought of it strictly in terms of elected officials that had left them or members of the Executive Board. He ticked off the names and said about twelve had left and eight or nine were still in. But I could not get him to talk in terms of community attitudes toward the Caucus. At least not in terms of percentages but he then went on to say that most people still believe in the idea of a caucus.

"The community still believes in the caucus concept. They still believe in me. So the question is how much time do I have to devote to that operation? How long do I go on trying to beat my brains out in terms of fighting for the things I've fought for in the past? Some things have come to fruition--there is a black on the election board. Arnold Pinckney has that job and that's okay with me. They've

*Stokes  
Caucus*

reniged on a lot of the patronage however. Do I keep fighting and fighting alone or do I say, I've done my part and shift my gears."

I said to him that it had ~~always~~ seemed to me that he had been ambivalent about how much time he ought to spend in the community and he nodded, "The Caucus needs some day to day direction. It needs somebody to be there and to make the decisions, but not someone who is going to use it to build up his own strength. There's a great temptation for someone to use it for his own benefit. Even the office staff begins to think that they are the congressmen. They say, I do what the congressman does so why not be the congressman." (He laughed.) I asked him whether or not he was looking for another executive director and he laughed even more, with the clear implication that he was not because he couldn't trust anybody.

Of course, the main question that one is left with is why Lou wants to hold so much of the reins in his own hands anyway. Why doesn't he simply resign himself to being the national spokesman for the 21st District Caucus and let the local people have their piece of the action. I guess the answer is that he is afraid they will cut him up back home and that he is under some compulsion to carry on the work that his brother and he began. He would regard it as a weakening of his own position to share the power back there. But the net of it is that he now does have to share power back there and it looks like he is reduced to an organization that supports him personally. How long he can hold that, would seem to me to be an interesting question.

He has  
indicated  
a lot of  
ambivalence  
and seems  
to be  
struggling

He ended by saying that he had given up the chairmanship of the black caucus to Charlie Rangel. "It was a relief when I gave that up. I think I was able to move a few things forward. But there are some things I want to do on the Appropriations Committee. I'm the only black over there and there are some things I'd like to have time to do on the committee." He did not say the latter with any enormous amount of enthusiasm. And my general observation sitting around the office was that it was not a very active office and that, indeed, Lou Stokes runs most of what he does out of his own hat.