Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago Study Guide

Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago by Mike Royko

BOOKRAGS

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Plot Summary

Boss, Richard J. Daley of Chicago by Mike Royko is the life story of Mayor Richard Daley, tracing his modest beginnings on the South Side of Chicago in the Bridgeport neighborhood to his rise as a powerful politician. Daley was born in 1902 and was the only child of Michael and Lillian Daley. It was a quiet household which some attributed later to Richard's difficulty in communicating. He didn't have siblings to talk to early in life. Even after his very public life, he often had a hard time expressing himself. Daley was a shy, retiring child who was not a standout in academics nor in sports. However, even in his early years, some schoolmates saw leadership qualities and an elusive charisma that both proved to be crucial later in his career. Most children from Bridgeport did not wind up in college. For his high school education, Richard's parents sent him to a school run by the Christian Brothers, where he learned office skills and discipline and order. After graduating, he wound up with his first city job. He would stay on the government's payrolls for the next forty-eight years, twenty of those years as Mayor of Chicago.

While one would think the title "Boss" would refer to his mayoral career, it more appropriately was a reference to his long-term control of the powerful Chicago political machine. As head of the machine, he knew everything about everyone in the Democratic party. He had control of the money and the thousands of patronage jobs that he handed out like candy in return for bringing in the vote. The machine presided over the ward bosses, precinct captains and the voters. The Boss controlled the Machine with a selfish fervor. He made the unusual move of maintaining chairmanship of the Illinois Democratic Party (The Machine) even after he became mayor. He was well aware that the Machine held more power that the position of mayor. At one time, he was considered the most powerful man in Illinois and the second most powerful man in the nation, just behind President John F. Kennedy.

The story of Richard J. Daley reveals an undeniable parallel between the man and the city. Daley excelled in the rough politics in the notoriously corrupt Chicago. Would he have been as successful in another city or state? Perhaps not, but Daley was the perfect match for Chicago. He was a man whose less than pure ethics was understood by Chicagoans. Perhaps he wouldn't have been as understood and accepted in another environment. Although he dealt with known corruption, Daley operated within a strange dichotomy, a parallel universe. While he was not known to take a dime, he operated with others who did. As boss, he would just tell them not to get caught. He was a devout Catholic who attended mass every morning yet he allowed the poor to suffer for years in inadequate housing and under brutal police abuse.

Introduction

Introduction Summary and Analysis

The introduction was written one day after Daley died and briefly reflects on the character of the man that so paralleled the character of the city. Richard J. Daley was a rough-tough character, Chicago rough-tough. His grammar and speaking skills did not bring the praise of teachers—far from it. He was hot-tempered, simple, devious and powerful. Many in the country may not have understood him, but Chicagoans did. Daley reflected Chicago. Daley was a product of his neighborhood. He reflected its values—loyalty to family, neighbors, old buddies, the corner grocer. Good neighbors cut their grass and don't have their TVs too loud. He was a pious man—ever faithful to his church, mom and apple pie, disturbed by public displays of immorality. But if somebody in City Hall had a chance to make some money on the sly, Daley wasn't into lecturing except perhaps for a simple one: "Don't get caught."

If Daley sometimes abused his power, it did not offend Chicago. The many immigrants into the city fully understood a man in authority wielding power, a power they had long ago learned to bow to. Not only was Daley not offensive, he became a father figure to many in the city. There was an odd security that he offered. Although Daley has passed away, he has left an indelible legacy for the city that long will survive him. Daley was like Chicago—nothing was better than a good, political brawl. The city he loved will remember and embrace that legacy for years to come.

Chapter I

Chapter I Summary and Analysis

Major Richard J. Daley is picked up in the early morning. A sleek black limousine stops in front of the modest pink ranch house. There are cops in the front and back of the house. They have provided overnight protection. Although a short trip to the office, the journey is historic. They pass houses where Black Panthers had lived and died. There were pre-dawn raids by cops. There were shootouts and orders of shoot to kill. Martin Luther King was hit by a brick in one area. A former Polish neighborhood has been roughed up by attrition, with Puerto Ricans taking the place of the departing children of the old Poles still standing strong. O'Hare, which Daley persists in calling "O'Hara," is not far away, right off another freeway one the Mayor personally named—the John F. Kennedy Expressway. He helped elect that president.

The limo exits near the Loop area and stops in front of St. Peter's. Daley, as is his ritual, attends the Daily Mass. This is an important part of his day—the way he starts all of them off. Afterwards, he stops by a local coffee shop, then on to City Hall. Years before he would be dropped off a mile away on Michigan. He liked to march down the bustling streets and greet the people. But lately other people were "marching" down the street. He never knew who he might meet up with. Better safe than sorry.

Out of courtesy, Daley does not pass through the Cook County building. It's the domain of another politician. Ironically, that politician will call him later and ask him how to run the county. He takes the elevator to the fifth floor in City Hall. He's known as "Man on the Fifth", "hizzoner" and "duh mare." The man enters the inner office through a private, side door. The cops safety-check his three-room office suite before he enters. His phone lines are checked daily for bugs.

Richard J. Daley fits in behind his gleaming mahogany desk, ready to rule another day. The critics say it's impossible to run a large American city. He ignores that kind of talk. He's been running one for sixteen years, with another four in the offing. Daley's large desk is clear of paper. He prefers to conduct business on untapped phones. Historians won't find much written down after he goes.

First up is the visitor list and the press. Daley has more press conferences than any political figure in the country—sometimes two or three per week. The reporters assigned to City Hall are easy on him—they want their jobs. But the TV personalities ask questions not so much to find out something but more to evoke a purple face. Reporters are like experts—what do they know? He tries his best, but it's sometimes difficult to control himself and the purple face and the rant emerges.

Daley attends the Council meeting bestowing a few friendly nods and smiles upon the Council members—except the Independents. They irk him. They accuse him of racism, fascism and of being a dictator. Any good ideas from the Council will be rewritten and

issued through the administration. The council members are happy to see their ideas come and Daley gets the glory. Most of the independents' proposals are sent to a subcommittee whose sole existence is to let these ideas die. After the meetings and a lunch with close friends or relatives, Daley goes to his office at the Democratic headquarters across the street. He deals with patronage and ward bosses and people wanting to be judges or other offices. Daley tries, but it's hard to keep politics out of his job mayoral duties.

Every afternoon he meets with the director of patronage. Daley scans the list, noting the political sponsor of each new employee, from professional to window washer—they will all become part of the political machine. He notes some are related to important people. He also notes that some are ex-cons. He verifies with their sponsor that they are now clean. He's forgives anything short of Republicanism. The Chicago Police Department acts as his spy division. They gather information about political enemies, newsmen and dissenters. If intelligence reveals that one of his men is shacking up with a woman and the man is married and Catholic—that man's career is as good as over. Stealing money was one thing—but adultery is intolerable. He won't have his personal moral standards violated.

When a community group has a complaint he decides if they get help based on how they act. If they are respectful, they will usually get some form of his help. If they are antagonistic and try to blame him for their problems, they will be worse off than when they came in. Next come the "favor seekers." They want something, a favor. He is the only one to decide yes or no. Most days he works until 6 pm or so. His next stop might be a civic meeting where he will deliver a speech. On the way, Daley speed reads the speech in the limo which partly accounts for his uneven delivery, often emphasizing or slurring the wrong words. No matter what the subject, his speech will contain elements of optimism for the future. Everyone at the meeting wants to shake hands and greet him after his speech. Daley might wind up late at a wake. He knows how to act respectfully. As mayor he's been to thousands of them. He leaves there for home, passing Comiskey Park home of his beloved Sox. He passes Wrigley, too, but the Sox are his boys. When he exits the limo, he tells the waiting cops that he'll be leaving earlier than normal the next day. His wife Eleanor has a late supper ready for him.

Chapter II

Chapter II Summary and Analysis

Daley grows up as a "small town boy" in a time when it was still possible to do so in Chicago. It was before the shifting society and suburban sprawl came to pass. The north and west neighborhoods of Chicago are heavy in German, Polish, Irish, Italian and Jewish populations. Southwest Chicago is home to eastern Europeans. In every neighborhood there are ingredients of a small town—the baseball field, the bakery, the neighborhood drunk, main street, the barber shop. There is enough industry within the neighborhoods to support jobs for most of the population. Most people stay within their borders and marry within their ethnicity. One ethnic group has nothing but fear, suspicion and hatred for another. One is safe only in his own neighborhood and with his own kind.

Richard J. Daley was born in 1902 into the politically charged Irish South Side, bordered by blacks and one side and Slavs on the other. Daley is an only child who is shy and reserved. Some attribute his problem with effectively communicating to his lack of siblings with whom to interact. As a boy, Daley always has a job—selling newspapers, working on horse-drawn vegetable wagons. Since college is out of the question for most neighborhood youngsters, they are often sent to technical high schools. Daley's parents enroll him in a commercial school operated by the Christian Brothers. In those days, men became secretaries. The school teaches typing and shorthand along with discipline and order.

A day after Daley graduated from the Christian Brothers school, the worse race war to that time erupts. A black youth, swimming in Lake Michigan, makes the unfortunate mistake of drifting to the white area of the lake. As he tries to come ashore, he is stoned by whites and eventually dies from drowning. The war wages for days, leaving fifteen whites and twenty-three blacks dead with hundreds of injuries on both sides. A thousand homes are torched. Daley never mentions the riot over the years. But it was always suspected that Daley may have been a leader in the fight.

One of Daley's clubs, the Hamburgs, spawns a number of successful politicians. Although Daley has a brief stint herding cattle in the yards after graduating, he soon secures a desk job for the city. At twenty-one, Daley becomes a precinct captain in a tough South Side ward. With the election of a new Democratic Mayor, Daley is given a City Hall position remaining in the City payroll for at least the next forty-eight years. Working for one of his old Hamburg cronies, Joe McDonough, Daley learns the ins and outs of the city's political machine. He learns important skills: help your friends, hurt your enemies, adjust a case through the police and add up the votes until they come out right. Most important rule—don't get caught. He also learns the importance of not repeating what he hears.

Big Bill Thompson's last term as mayor is in 1923. Thompson was corrupt and allowed criminal activity to increase its hold on the city. The citizenry is demanding reform. Mayor Dever is then elected and by Chicago standards is considered to be a decent man. Dever is able to get Al Capone out of town but Capone sets up in nearby Cicero. Capone takes over Cicero, politically winning elections by bullets as much as ballots. Capone runs his illicit operations from Cicero, although Dever manages to shut down hundreds of speakeasies.

Chicagoans like Dever's war against crime but they like their gin more. Thompson is returned to office after Dever's first term. Capone again openly operates in Chicago until his arrest for tax evasion. After serving his prison term, Capone comes out dying from syphilis, but through Thompson's lack of action is able to establish the model American municipal crime syndicate. Capone's survivors never have the hold on Chicago that he had—but they keep a piece of the action. Throughout these Roaring Twenties, Daley maintains his city job during the day and attends DePaul's Law School four nights a week.

McDonough wins election for the post of County Treasurer, bringing Daley along as an aide. McDonough would rather be at the race track and is often absent. Daley picks up the slack and begins taking over many of McDonough's responsibilities. Daley is dating his future wife, Eleanor, and has an incentive to make something of himself. Six years after they meet, Daley and Eleanor marry. In 1934, Daley finally gets his law degree. Instead of going with a law firm, he opts to stay with the government. Daley never practices law; rather, he uses his education as a leverage for advancement in government.

After a series of deaths, Daley is able to advance in city and state politics. When the Democratic candidate for state legislator from the Bridgeport area dies suddenly fifteen days before election, Daley is selected as the write-in candidate. Since only the Republican candidate was listed on the ballot, the voters had to write-in Daley's name on the Republican side. He won his first election, ironically, as a Republican, but he only sat on that side one day before moving to the Democratic side of the legislature. Two years later, another politician's death allows him to run for and capture the position of State Senator, this time officially as a Democrat.

Chapter III

Chapter III Summary and Analysis

Abraham Lincoln Marovitz is a judge and a long-time friend of Daley's. Daley is questioned by a prosecutor named Kuntsler. This potentially foreshadows some future legal problems Daley might be having. Through the years, Marovitz had some shadowy associations with gangsters and Mafia types. As a young lawyer, one of his contacts got him a job as an assistant prosecutor in Cook County. Ultimately, it would be Mayor Daley who appoints him to the federal bench. The two friends meet when Marovitz is a young prosecutor and Daley is a clerk in the City Council.

Marovitz, Daley and another friend Benjamin Adamowski spend a lot of time together. Marovitz and Adamowski share their dreams for the future, but Daley does not. He is humble and quiet and doesn't seem to have much ambition. But Daley, in his own quiet way, was laying the groundwork for his future. He was in the process of pushing out an old friend as ward committeeman. Daley has a rather strange moral code: Thou shalt not steal but though shalt not blow the whistle on anybody who does.

By 1942, Daley is able to finally secure a ward leadership and becomes part of the powerful Democratic Central Committee—the body that runs the Democratic party. He wins praise as one of the biggest vote getters in the machine. In the 1948 election, Democrats are pleasantly surprised by the big wins of state-wide office seekers, Paul Douglas and Adlai Stevenson, helping Harry Truman squeak out a win in Illinois and maintain the presidency. Daley wins praise for his part in the victory and with relish helps weed out the government infested with Republicans.

Daley is slated to become party chairman but a powerful Alderman, Clarence Wager, from the South Side steps in his way. Although Daley was from the South Side, many there feel he is too liberal, connected to the new Democrats. Wagner is one of them—conservative, segregation minded and distrusting of the liberals. Wagner is slated to fight Daley for the chairmanship, but right before the election, Wagner is killed in an auto accident. In July 1953, Daley is elected chairman of the Cook County Democratic Central Committee. He now has his own machine.

Chapter IV

Chapter IV Summary and Analysis

Chicago has many precincts with each having a captain and assistants. They all are entitled to state jobs. Above the precinct captain is the ward committeeman, also know as "the clout", "our beloved leader." Vito Marzullo, a ward boss on the South Side, is known for delivering votes and selecting judges. He is given four hundred patronage jobs to fill. The amount of patronage jobs meted out to ward bosses is based on voter turnout. In earlier times, precinct captains were more powerful. To the fearful immigrants, he was their God. He helped them fill out papers and figure out their taxes and licenses. He helped them, but used fear as well to get their votes: "If you don't vote, you might lose your public housing." In the affluent areas, he provided errand services and made sure the garbage was collected on time and that the streets were cleaned. The payoff was election day. If he didn't produce his ward, he was out.

Only Chairman Daley knows exactly how many patronage jobs exist. Many of the ward bosses hold elective offices such as assessor, county clerk, county recorder. Some are state legislators. Those who aren't elected to office are given prime jobs running city departments. Whether the ward boss was qualified for a job was not much of a factor. They had delivered their ward. Most judges rise through the machine. Not that all cases are rigged, but loyalty is a strong element. The question arises whether Daley has the power to disable the Mafia which has been entrenched in the government for so long. Ward bosses when not busy with their political duties and other professions often are looking for "deals" to invest in, to make money. Many of the deals are involved in large real estate ventures.

As Chairman, Daley sits at top of the machine and his job is to look down and make sure all its parts are functioning. One of Daley's most loyal sources is organized labor. The unions continue to offer Daley their support as well as generous campaign contributions. Daley, in kind, pays at the top of the scale in union wages and provides an unending stream of massive public works projects requiring leagues of union workers. Daley's policy is to appoint a labor representative to every policy-making city board or committee.

Most judges and officeholders rise from the bottom, often like Daley beginning as doorbell ringers. The machine helps its own and has a long memory. One other way to advance is through nepotism. A listing of state officials going back decades, reveals many of the same surnames. Daley is no exception—he appoints cousins and nephews and sons.

Chapter V

Chapter V Summary and Analysis

It is 1955 and time for the latest Democratic Mayor, Martin Kennelly, to go. He was a weak token but had served his purpose. It was is now time for power to return to the office. Kennelly is sure they will change their minds—he can convince them. He makes a personal appeal before the committee. A few days later, word gets around that Daley has been drafted to run for Mayor.

The Republicans decide to run quite a good candidate, Alderman Robert Merriam. He is intelligent, good-looking, a great orator and a progressive Republican. Merriam goes on the attack, hammering away at corruption in the Police Department and the Machine. Merriam exposes signs of voter fraud on the Democratic side even before the election. The Machine-controlled election board finds in favor of Daley. But the newspapers had a field day with the revelation.

Daley is determined and presents himself as a hard-working family man. But most of all he is a neighborhood guy, a protector of the interests of the little people. He promises the sun will shine on all neighborhoods of Chicago, not just State Street. Although Daley boasts that he will not personally attack his opponent, the Machine is up to its old tricks and wages a dirty campaign passing around Merriam's divorce papers in Catholic neighborhoods. A rumor is spread that his second wife is part black. They spread fear based on the lie that Merriam wanted to see black people moved in every neighborhood of Chicago. Daley stayed above the fray and wins in a close election.

Daley makes the unusual move of maintaining the chairmanship of the party while serving as mayor. He offers some weak excuses, but in reality he wanted to maintain power and control. A new chairman might do what he did—replace Daley with himself. That was not going to happen. It was no accident, then, that during the time of his dual role not one rising young politician emerges from the machine.

To prove his value immediately, he seeks and receives increased taxes through the Republican Governor. With this money, he plans to begin new construction—tangible proof to the voters that he is wasting no time in improving the city. Daley took over budget responsibilities and soon changes the council from a legislative body to a rubber stamp. His first years in office, he makes other visible changes—more cops and firemen, improved roads and street lighting.

The Democratic Presidential Convention is held in Chicago. Daley was credited with helping to get Stevenson nominated. The newspapers finally come around and begin to laud Daley as an inspiring leader. He begins to improve the downtown and lake front areas. He upgrades O'Hare from a military airport to one of the nation's state of the art commercial airports. Daley becomes "Dick the Builder" revitalizing the city, bringing new life to the old town. What is lacking is an urban renewal program for the poor areas.

Poor blacks live in slums. There are tales of rats gnawing at the feet of black babies while a sleek new police station is being built around the corner.

Much to the chagrin of his enemies, Daley does not open up the city to criminals as had been predicted. But the Syndicate operates in more sedate ways, under the radar. While the propaganda is pouring out of City Hall about all the renovations and new building, the poor areas are continuing to suffer. Chicago is considered the most segregated major city in the country. The Syndicate is still murdering and grabbing control. Public transportation and public health departments are increasingly corrupt. City inspectors are shaking down citizens. The traffic department's main job is fixing tickets. Chicago is more corrupt than before Daley came into office. But when Daley runs for his second term, he is overwhelmingly re-elected. The biggest wins are in the black neighborhoods.

Chapter VI

Chapter VI Summary and Analysis

Police corruption is pervasive and out of control. Cops are on the take. Suspects are routinely beaten and stolen from. Cops are socially connected with gangsters. There are honest cops working in the lab, communications room, and in desk jobs. These cops don't get promoted and they are isolated. No one wants to work traffic with an honest cop. The number of honest cops is dwarfed by the dishonest ones. When the community complains, a few cursory steps are taken to "clean things up," but conditions return to normal in a matter of days or weeks. Most Chicagoans look at the corrupt state of the police department as a natural part of Chicago.

Police corruption was bad in 1955 when Daley comes into office and worse in 1960 after his first term. He is well aware of the true state of the department but publicly defends them as the finest cops in the nation. Two scandals hit Daley's administration in 1959. The first is the revelation that the Traffic Department's main job is fixing tickets. The other scandal involves a too cozy relationship between police and bail bondsmen. Daley tries to appear innocent of blame but everybody knows who runs things. To counter the bad publicity in the papers, Daley wages a campaign to make Chicago a "fun" city. Big celebrations are held in Chicago, including ones for the visiting Queen Elizabeth, the Pan-American games track meet, and the White Sox pennant win among others. Daley thinks he can blow the bad news off the front pages with big, circus-like events.

A huge scandal breaks out in early 1960 involving the police. A burglar had been arrested. He tells his public defender that he's part of a burglary gang—the other members being cops. Eight cops are arrested. They had literally been hauling away stolen goods while on duty. Daley is distraught over the scandal and begins drinking heavily. He is afraid to face the situation but finally openly vows to end police corruption.

Daley wants to deflect blame from himself. A few days after the scandal breaks, Daley demotes the police chief, Tim O'Connor. O'Connor was hard-working and honest but ineffective against the corruption. Daley announces that he will reform the Department. He decides that only a person from outside the department would be considered credible to the public. He ultimately brings in Orlando Wilson, the nation's brilliant and foremost law enforcement expert and corrupt-free head of the University of California's criminology department. No one will question his professionalism. Daley and Wilson become the reform duo. They are highlighted in articles and interviews about routing out the corruption. It is a real PR boon for Daley, even though there was much whining and complaining from the ward bosses and precinct captains. Daley is able to take a potentially devastating scandal and turn it to his own advantage.

Daley secures Illinois for Kennedy and defeats his nemesis Adamowski for state attorney. There is much talk about voter fraud. The furor about the election goes on for

weeks, but Daley is unfazed. He helped get Kennedy in the White House, he got rid of Adamowski, and the state's got another Democratic governor insuring that thousands of state jobs would be filled by party men. When Daley and his family travel to Washington for the inauguration, he is the single most powerful man in Illinois and second most powerful man in the nation, second only to President Kennedy.

Next Daley moves on to urban renewal, first focusing on eliminating the old Italian neighborhood, known as the Valley, just south of the Loop. The residents in the Valley had been refurbishing their property for years. Once the plans are announced, people in the Valley are angry and stage an uprising. It would not be the last revolt Daley would deal with over his urban renewal efforts. The Valley neighborhood is taken for the University campus. Next followed a scandal involving money-making schemes by the officials running the Sanitary District. Daley had been raising taxes all along. However, when in 1962, he proposes a $66-million public works bond issue referendum, it is soundly defeated.

Fearing that he will be defeated in the upcoming election against his old enemy Ben Adamowski, Daley goes on the offensive. He sees to it that some untruthful but damaging information about Adamowski is leaked to the press. Adamowski does better against Daley than the last opponent, but Daley still wins. Despite a first term of scandals and lingering questions about the Daley's honesty, he is re-elected to his second term as Mayor of Chicago.

Chapter VII

Chapter VII Summary and Analysis

By the early sixties, racial problems loom for Daley. While he insists there is no racism in Chicago neighborhoods, everyone knows there is. Even in his own neighborhood of Bridgeport, blacks do not enter the neighborhood, much less try to live there. Things had not improved for blacks under Daley; in fact, the living conditions of many poor blacks had worsened. To prove that Daley was full of hot air about the lack of segregation in Chicago, several men bought a flat in Bridgeport, where Daley lived, and moved in two black college students. A riot broke out and the men were forced to move out after only a few days.

City planning is set up to segregate the blacks from the white communities. Expressways are designed to serve as racial barriers. No old folks homes are built in white areas because they may attract old black people. Chicago's slums are some of the worst in the country. Slum housing in black neighborhoods is big business for white real estate men. In the fifties, the Mafia had murdered their way into black neighborhoods, taking over black-based gambling and racket activities. While blacks were not allowed to vote in the south, they could vote for any Democrat of their choice in Chicago Blacks were treated with violence and unfairness by the Chicago police. Most whites openly hated blacks. They were not allowed in most white restaurants or shops.

Politically, it is advantageous to keep blacks contained in one area. The black vote is easier to control as a bloc vote. If they are dispersed into other areas, that control is lost. If blacks are allowed to move into white neighborhoods, the whites will be enraged and there goes the white vote and the Machine collapses. By the time of Daley's third run for mayor, the blacks have begun to protest, demanding better schools for their children and better living conditions. Officials start to take notice and complain and the press takes up the issue. Black protesters appear in front of Daley's house causing his white neighbors to come out throwing stones. Violence continues to escalate culminating in Chicago's first major outburst when a firetruck with all white fireman ran over a black woman and killed her.

Daley becomes upset with Chief Wilson, who treat the blacks with a light touch. He is frustrated because, per their agreement, Wilson is one official he cannot boss around. Dr. Martin Luther King calls on Daley to try to solve some of the racial problems in the city. King threatens civil disobedience and Daley resents his interference. A Puerto Rican group speaks up about police brutality and their poor living conditions on the Northwest side. Another major riot breaks out when the city turns off the hydrants in the black areas which are normally allowed to spray the kids in the oppressive heat. Daley blames the violence on King's interference. Daley opens up the hydrants again and brings portable pools into the black neighborhoods. This program was known as the "web black" project. These actions only satisfy King for a few weeks as protests begin

again. King begins staging protest marches in white neighborhoods. The white population is angry with Daley. Finally King and Daley reach an agreement that open housing was "a goal to be reached." It is not a legal document and isn't worth the paper it's written on.

Chapter VIII

Chapter VIII Summary and Analysis

Daley runs for his fourth term in 1966. The Republicans nominated John Waner to oppose him. Waner focuses on issues such as inadequate housing in the city and blacks being kept out of labor unions. The Machine responds by planting stories about a few minor scrapes with the law that Waner had as a kid. Daley wins bigger than ever with seventy-three percent of the vote. Waner even loses his own ward where he had been committeeman. Daley is one of the few people to contact Waner to tell him he ran a good campaign and that he knows how it feels to lose. Daley wins the black vote overwhelmingly, a response to King's interference, he concludes. After the election, Chief Wilson retires and is replaced by a new Chief obedient to the mayor. Once again, police abuse returns to the black neighborhoods.

When Martin Luther King is assassinated, the city braces for trouble. The South Side stays mainly calm, but riots and fires break out in the black areas on the West Side. Daley is upset with his new Chief, who does not issue shoot to kill orders. Daley himself then issues such orders—shoot to kill arsonists and shoot to maim looters. After the troubles abated, Daley is highly criticized for his harsh orders and backs off a bit, back to "minimum force." A commission studying the riots afterward, concludes that the police should treat blacks the same as whites. This recommendation results in an increase of abuse toward whites.

Chapter IX

Chapter IX Summary and Analysis

Daley convinces President Johnson to hold the 1968 Democratic Presidential Convention in Chicago. Before that time arrives, however, Johnson announces he will not be running. Although Daley has city officials try to stop it, a large peace march is held in Chicago in the Loop area in April before the convention. Although the marchers are non-violent and orderly, something unidentified happens that sparks aggressive action from the police. The police tell the marchers to get out of the Loop. Those who do not obey are Maced, beaten, pummeled, chased and arrested. Observers call the incident a police riot. From all reports, the police action was totally uncalled for and was cruel and abusive. The media doesn't pick up on the incident as much as is warranted. Not many reporters are assigned to the peace parade. The press assumes that the liberals in the parade must have caused the fracas or are exaggerating about the action the police took. The police had a bias against the liberal types and the white long-hairs in the parade anyway. When he hears a smattering of complaints, Daley takes no action. The police behavior allowed in this incident sets the stage for their actions in the Democratic Convention a few months later.

In the intervening months before the Convention, rumors are rampant that the anti-war faction is going to cause trouble at the Convention. The peace marchers are resentful about the treatment they received in April. Once again, city officials are instructed to put up deny permits or other requests made by the anti-war groups. Resentment is building on both sides. Daley is not going to be caught off guard. He plans a massive show of force at the convention. Daley refuses to negotiate with any of the liberal groups. Daley is more concerned with an uprising by blacks than a skirmish with anti-war liberals. But Daley misjudges the situation—most of the black leaders make sure they are out of town during the convention. They do not want to be blamed for any violence that may break out.

By the time of the convention Daley had amassed a 25,000 man security detail that includes police and National Guard with only 5,000 anti-war protesters to handle. The night the convention starts, police violence against the war protesters begins—they beat them, chase them, run them out of areas they have every right to be in. Another target of the police are reporters. The cops feel resentful. The press always favors the blacks over them. Cops make no distinction who they abuse—young and hold, men and women even clergymen trying to calm the situation. The cops confiscate cameras and film from reporters.

The famous battle of Michigan Avenue is fought on Wednesday night in front of the Hilton. The brutality was shocking and reported by national TV newsmen. Daley and his insane policemen become a larger focus than the Presidential nominee. Delegates are becoming increasingly upset with the violence outside. Angry words are hurled back and forth between Daley and his delegation and delegations from other states. Things get so

intense inside that a line of Chicago police form a protective wall around the Illinois delegation. Daley finally leaves the convention hall before the nomination is made. At his request, he is interviewed by Walter Cronkite the next day and lies that the police were protecting him as well as three presidential candidates who had all received assassination threats.

After the convention, Daley comes under fire from more criticism about him and his City. He receives a telegram from one delegate telling him how glad he is to be out of Chicago and back in the free world again. Editorials cast him as a neo-fascist. Daley spreads his propaganda in the form of a report, written by his underlings, that finds that the police had acted properly. Daley's popularity grows, appealing to the "bust their heads" mentality and prejudices of a middle America tiring of what they perceived to be favoritism towards black and liberals. The Walker Report is issued, laying the blame for the 1968 convention debacle at the feet of Daley. He never gives an inch. In fact, he says if he had it to do over again he would only with greater effort.

Chapter X

Chapter X Summary and Analysis

By age sixty-eight, Daley is a complete man. He has his health, happy and successful children, an outstanding career in Chicago politics, fame, and control of the Machine. To show the world that he still has not lost his touch after the convention scandal, Daley decides to run Adlai Stevenson III for senator and a rising young Democrat friend, Richard Elrod. Elrod is the son of a classic old ward boss. Although the Republicans are running a former FBI agent for Sheriff, Elrod proves to be an excellent choice. Elrod was hospitalized after having allegedly been injured by a Weatherman activist. In reality, Elrod injured himself, but the story was good. When Elrod slowly limps across the stage at a rally, it is considered a masterstroke in political parlance. Here was a real live hero who had stood up to a crazy activist. Daley's slate of candidates won easily. It is one of Daley's greatest victories.

Daley puts his own men in the Health and Education Departments. Although there is neglect and dereliction of duty by heads of both Departments, Daley defends them and keeps them in until he is ready to replace them. When there are complaints about how the departments are being run, Daley plays the innocent game deferring to the Department heads. Daley gets the credit when a department runs well but not the blame when it does not.

On his sixty-eighth birthday, Daley expects to have a happy birthday with a big cake and celebration at City Hall and hearing many good wishes from old friends. Instead, the grand jury has spoiled the day. It is making public a report dealing with a police raid on a West Side residence where two Black Panther leaders were killed. The police had claimed that they had been hit by a barrage of gunfire. Several reporters looked into their claim and disproved its veracity. The police had done all the shooting. The report traced only one bullet to the Panthers and eighty to one hundred to the police. The grand jury found that the police were lying and that they had not been provoked. Daley was able to transfer a few commanders around and vow to reform the department. He didn't take any real steps beyond that. As he concluded, reform wasn't really necessary. Chicago wasn't ready for reform.

Epilogue

Epilogue Summary and Analysis

In 1971, Daley is elected to his fifth term as Mayor of Chicago by one of his largest margins. He maintains control of the City Council. His lopsided victory will allow him to pick his ultimate successor. When asked by a reporter if he received congratulations from any of the current slate of presidential hopefuls, he answers, "All of them." Daley's power is alive and well.

Characters

Richard J. Daley

Richard J. Daley was the famous Mayor of Chicago who, after one term, was considered in 1960 the most powerful man in Illinois and the second most powerful man in the nation just behind John F. Kennedy. Daley went on to have five terms as mayor. He came from the rough-tough Chicago South Side of Bridgeport, the city where he would live his entire life. Bridgeport was part of the raucous South Side that was the birthplace of many politicians of his day. Daley was an only child who was educated in a school run by the Christian Brothers. In the day when men were secretaries, the school taught shorthand and typing. After school, Daley secured employment with the City. He would be on the government payroll for the next forty-eight years, twenty of those as mayor of Chicago. During his early years as a government worker, he attended law school four nights a week and finally received his law degree many years later. He never practiced law but used his degree as leverage in his political career.

Daley became the "Boss" of the powerful and corrupt Machine. As chairman of the Illinois Democratic Party (The Machine) he was the most powerful man in Illinois. He made the unusual move of maintaining his chairmanship after becoming Mayor. He did not want to give up the power. Money never meant as much to him as power. After JFK's election, Daley was considered the second most powerful person in the United States, right behind the President.

Benjamin Adamowski

Beginning his relationship with Richard Daley as a friend, Benjamin Adamowski would one day become one of Daley's most bitter enemies and opponents. Early in their relationship, Adamowski commented fondly that Daley was on the public payroll almost as soon as he could vote. When Adamowski and Daley worked together for the government in Illinois' capital, Springfield, Adamowski noted how Daley would never talk about what he wanted for his future. He appeared to be a humble, unassuming man, respectful of everyone. Adamowski was impressed with Daley's personal ethics. Unlike most of the men working away from home in Springfield, Daley never cheated on his wife. Never. And there were plenty of young girls hanging around just for that purpose. But Daley was not tempted.

After Daley's first term as mayor, Adamowski was a state's attorney. Adamowski uncovered some scandals in the Daley administration. He found that the main function of the Traffic Department was to fix tickets. Another scandal involved a much too cozy relationship between the Chicago police and bail bondsmen which on its face was illegal. The always savvy Daley figured Adamowski was positioning himself for a future run against him. And Daley was right. Adamowski lost his bid for state office when Kennedy defeated Nixon. Allegations of fraud about that election linger to present day.

Adamowski wanted a recount, but since he could not afford the cost, he had to concede the election.

Adamowski convinced the Republicans to run him for the Chicago Mayorship against Daley in 1960. Although there was plenty to attack Daley's record for, Adamowski was roundly defeated. While Daley boasted about his refusal to attack an opponent on a personal basis, the Machine waged a smear campaign against Daley's former friend and destroyed any dream of winning that Adamowski may have had.

Matt Danaher

A civil servant for the city of Chicago, Danaher ran the 2,000 clerical employees in the Cook County court system. He was a neighbor and good friend of Daley.

Al Capone

Capone established the first American crime syndicate in Chicago. He openly operated his criminal activities under one of Daley's mayoral predecessors.

Abraham Lincoln Marovitz

Marovitz was a close associate of Daley. He was elevated to federal judge through his connection with Daley. There were many questions about Marovitz's ethics.

Adlai Stevenson

Daley was credited with helping to get Stevenson elected to the US Senate. He also got Stevenson on the Presidential ticket. After Stevenson lost to Eisenhower, Daley had little use for him.

John F. Kennedy

Daley is widely credited with getting John F. Kennedy elected to the presidency. Without Illinois, Kennedy would have lost. The lingering questions about voter fraud in Cook County, Illinois, during that election have never died.

Orlando Wilson

Orlando Wilson was the head of the criminology department of the University of California when he was targeted by Daley to become Chicago's Police Chief. Wilson was chosen to reform the corrupt Chicago Police Department. His clean record gave him credibility with the citizenry who could no longer tolerate police corruption.

John Waner

John Waner ran against Daley in his bid for a fourth term as Mayor of Chicago. Daley won by a landslide with seventy-three percent of the vote.

Hubert Humphrey

Humphrey was the 1968 Democratic Presidential candidate. He lost in a close election to Richard Nixon.

Objects/Places

Chicago

Richard J. Daley, the Boss, was the Mayor of Chicago for twenty years.

Chicago's South Side

Richard Daley was born into the Irish section of Chicago's rough South Side. The area had been settled by the Irish beginning in 1840.

Bridgeport

Bridgeport is the modest neighborhood where Daley lived all his life.

Dan Ryan Expressway

The Dan Ryan is the expressway that Daley takes to City Hall. Daley named the expressway after Dan Ryan, another big South Side politician who was named after another big South Side politician, Daley's father.

City Hall

Daley's office, a three-room suite, was located on the fifth floor of City Hall.

The Fifth Floor

Daley's office was on the fifth floor of City Hall. Daley was known as the "Man on the Fifth."

The Machine

Daley's power base was his political machine—The Machine. He was on top of the machine which was was comprised of ward bosses, precinct captains and voters—all beholden to Daley.

The Valley

The Valley was an Italian community that was taken over by Daley in order to build a new campus for the University of Illinois. Daley broke his promise to the Italians. He had promised their neighborhood would never fall to urban renewal.

Cicero

Cicero is the suburb where Al Capone moved after one of Daley's mayoral predecessors threw him out of Chicago. Capone didn't miss a beat and resumed all his criminal activities from his new headquarters in Cicero.

O'Hare International Airport

O'Hare was originally a military airport. Daley upgraded the airport to one of the top airports in the country. He persisted in calling it "O'Hara."

Themes

Political Power - The Machine

Richard J. Daley was born into the tough, politically charged South Side of Chicago. As a young man, Daley joined several neighborhood political clubs. One of these clubs, the Hamburgs, spawned a number of successful politicians. At twenty-one, Daley becomes a precinct captain in a tough South Side ward. Working for one of his old Hamburg cronies, Daley learns the ins and outs of the city's political machine. He learns important skills: Help your friends, hurt your enemies, adjust a case through the police and add up the votes until they come out right. He understands the power of The Machine, which is comprised of precinct captains, ward bosses and Aldermen.

Some years after his entry into Chicago politics, Daley was able to finally secure a ward leadership and became part of the powerful Democratic Central Committee—the body that runs the Democratic party in Cook County. He wins praise as one of the biggest vote getters in the machine. Daley is slated to become party chairman but a powerful Alderman, Clarence Wager, from the South Side steps in his way. Although Daley was from the South Side, many there feel he is too liberal, connected to the new Democrats. Wagner is one of them—conservative, segregation minded and distrusting of the liberals. Wagner is slated to fight Daley for the chairmanship, but right before the election Wagner is killed in an auto accident. In July 1953, Daley is elected chairman of the Cook County Democratic Central Committee. He now has his own machine.

In subsequent years, Daley achieved his most important goal. He became the Chairman of the State Democratic Party. In an unusual move, Daley kept his Chairmanship even after he became mayor. He was well aware that more power was to be had as head of the Machine than in even the lofty position of mayor. He wasn't about to give that up.

Racial Politics

The black areas of Chicago were centered in the South Side and West Side of the city. These areas gain little attention from politicians, including Mayor Daley. The residents live in squalor and decay. There are tales of rats chewing on babies' feet and roofs with holes so large that the people can see the stars at night before they fall asleep. The schools in the neighborhoods are so lacking that their only success is keeping the students in the ghetto the rest of their lives. All this occurs while a sleek new police building is being built around the corner.

A day after Daley graduated from the Christian Brothers school, the worse race war to that time erupted. A black youth, swimming in Lake Michigan, made the unfortunate mistake of drifting to the white area of the lake. As he tried to come ashore, he was stoned by whites and drowned. The war waged for days leaving fifteen whites and twenty-three blacks dead, with hundreds of injuries on both sides. A thousand homes

were torched. Daley never mentions the riot over the years. But it was always suspected that the young Daley may have been a leader in the fight.

By the early sixties, racial problems had become a real concern for Mayor Daley, although he still claims they don't exist. Blacks dare not set foot in Mayor Daley's own neighborhood. If anything, living conditions for blacks under Daley had worsened. To prove that Daley was full of hot air about the lack of segregation in Chicago, several men bought a flat in Bridgeport, where Daley lived, and moved in two black college students. A riot broke out and the men were forced to move out after only a few days.

City planning was designed to segregate the black from the white communities. Expressways served as as racial barriers. No old folks homes were built in white areas because they may attract old black people. Blacks were treated with violence and unfairness by the Chicago police. Most whites openly hated blacks. They were not allowed in most white restaurants or bars.

Nevertheless, each time Daley, or any Democrat, ran for office, they would overwhelmingly win the black vote. These results were mostly due to the fear precinct captains would instill in the black voters. They warned them that things would be worse for them if they didn't vote Democratic.

Police Corruption

Police corruption was pervasive and out of control in Chicago. Cops were paid by bar owners so they could stay open past the curfew. Tavern owners paid cops to charge clients with assault in the event they are beaten up by their bouncers on the premises. The most money was earned from prostitution rings. The cops didn't keep all the money—the precinct captain and ward bosses would get their share as well. The cops shake down prostitutes and pimps who weren't in the system. Other cops got payoffs from speeding motorists. Suspects are routinely beaten and stolen from. Cops were socially connected with known gangsters.

There were honest cops working in the lab, communications room, and in desk jobs. These cops usually didn't get promoted. No one wanted to work traffic with an honest cop. The number of honest cops was dwarfed by the dishonest ones. The police superintendent's office was in city hall. He no more ran the department than the aldermen ran the city. The ward bosses selected the police captains and even the cops in their wards. The Mafia made the same selections in the wards they ran. Not only were the police corrupt, they shirked their duties—especially in the black areas. A black man could lay bleeding in the gutter for hours before the cops arrived. Most Chicagoans looked at the corrupt state of the police department as a natural part of Chicago.

Daley was well aware of the corruption in the police department but publicly defended his policemen as the finest cops in the nation. Two scandals hit Daley's administration in 1959. The first was the revelation that the Traffic Department's main job was fixing

tickets. The other scandal involves bail bondsmen. The relationship between the police and bondsmen was illegal and too cozy.

A huge scandal broke out in early 1960 involving the police. A burglar informed the public defender that he was part of a burglary gang—the other members being cops. Eight cops were arrested. They had literally been hauling away stolen goods while on duty. Daley vowed to end the corruption. He hired a reputable Police Chief who only served three years. After he left, he was replaced by a weak individual who allowed police corruption and abuse to rise again.

Style

Perspective

The story is written by renowned Chicago newsman, Mike Royko. He bases his story on news reports of the day and personal accounts by those involved in politics during Daley's reign as Mayor of Chicago. As a writer, he gleans and assumes some attitudes from the many tales of Daley's power and authority. A portion of the story must be attributed to legend and myth. But when the same stories are told time after time from different sources, one can assume there is more than a measure of truth to the myths and legends. There are episodes in the book in which Royko is repeating conversations Daley had with others. While he depends on the witness of those present or others to whom the conversations were retold to, his research efforts and storytelling have produced a story that is cogent, detailed and complete.

While Mayor Daley is depicted as a man whose major flaw is his hunger for power, he is not portrayed as a villain or a man totally bereft of sympathy. While Royko does not tell Daley's story from Daley's point of view, he does lay out Daley's roots and background for the reader, providing a basis for understanding and insight into the man who started life as a young person who didn't seem to expect much out of life.

Tone

The story is written in a tone that is straightforward, informative, yet spiced with a twist of irony and humor. While Royko writes about the rough-tough politics of Chicago with the honesty of a newsman, the reader cannot fail to notice that the saga is written with a tinge of pride. Although Daley and his beloved political machine was known to be corrupt and unethical, Chicagoans understood both. Royko was born and raised in Chicago, so therefore, by his own words, he held a measure of understanding about the man.

Chicago politics, a unique phenomenon in American history, spawned a unique politician in Richard J. Daley. Daley is like Chicago and Chicago is like Daley. The two are inseparable. Would Richard Daley have become the mayor of another city had he not been born in Illinois? Better yet, would Daley have become the same mayor of another city as the one in Chicago?

The language and style of Royko's writing is necessarily hardboiled and tough. Daley and his league of politicians were little more than street fighters. Their world was one of survival at any cost. Although Daley was corrupt and racist, Royko is careful to underscore that money was never Daley's quest. It was power and power he got. When he beat one political opponent, he told a friend that the losing opponent was too into money. Daley told his friend that if a guy is obsessed with money he can't catch the guy who is only after power.

Structure

An introduction, ten chapters and an epilogue comprise the basic structure of "Boss, Richard J. Daley of Chicago" by Chicago newsman, Mike Royko. The story of the famous Mayor of Chicago is told in a mainly straightforward, chronological style. There are few flashback segments and the story progresses crisply and logically in this simple structure. There are several exceptions—the Introduction and Chapter I. The introduction is actually an article written by Mike Royko, author of "Boss," which appeared in the Chicago Sun-Times the day after the death of Mayor Daley on December 20, 1976. The article presents a picture of the man, his character, weaknesses and strengths. It illustrates how much Chicago is Daley and Daley is Chicago. They were a perfect match. Chapter I presents a day in the life of the Mayor toward the end of his career. Chapter IIs through Chapter X tells the story of Daley's life chronologically. The Epilogue covers his fifth and last election as mayor when he succeeds as usual in winning by a landslide.

Each chapter has a segment of testimony from a civil trial where Daley is being interrogated by a prosecutor. This feature provides a foreshadowing of Daley's shaky relationship with ethical behavior. The exchanges serve to underscore Daley's obvious wiliness and survivor mentality. The questioning was excerpted from the Grand Jury's investigation into the murder of two Black Panther leaders by Chicago police.

Quotes

"And if somebody in City Hall saw a chance to make a fast bundle or two, Daley wasn't given to preaching. His advice amounted to: Don't get caught." p. 7

"This town was built by great men who demanded that drunkards and harlots be arrested, while charging them rent until the copes arrived." p. 7

"Chicago history is full of such oddities. Flip open any page and somebody is making a buck." p. 16

". . .when the subject of ex-cons on the city payroll comes up, 'Are we to deny these men honest employment in a free society. . .are we to deprive them of the right to work. . .to become rehabilitated. . .' He will forgive anything short of Republicanism." p. 23

"He set out to reform City Hall, but there was only so much he could do, since most of the members of his party considered reform to be the redirecting of graft from Republicans to themselves." p. 40

"Who do you think you are? I bring in the votes. I elect you. You are not needed, but the votes are needed. I deliver the votes to you, but you won't talk to me?" p. 63

"The two vice detectives came out of the back and yelled to him, 'We're gonna root around, Sarge,' which meant they were going to look for a few drifting hookers, pimps, or junkies and shake them down. Not everybody was lined up by the captain's bag man." p. 109

"That took care of integration until the following year, when Edwin Berry, the new executive director of the Chicago Urban League, charged that Chicago was the most residentially segregated city in the United States, a place where 'a Negro dare not step outside the environs of his race.'" p. 134

"Daley's housing director once said, 'There is voluntary segregation in Chicago in which members of a minority group live together because of cultural, social and other ties.' Hungry people who slept five in a bed, not counting rats, and saw the sky through the holes in their roof, might not have agreed that it was a 'voluntary' arrangement.'" p. 138

"The nun had once asked him please, Mr. Mayor, come out there and see how the people are suffering. And he had said, Sister, the bootstraps, let them pull harder. Now he had finally gone out to the West Side, in a helicopter, to see what people do when the have no boots." p. 167

"The heights to which Daley and the aldermen rose in praising King moved one observer to write: "It was enough to bring tears to your eyes, if you happened to be a crocodile." p. 182

"We're honored, our city is honored, to have such a fine and outstanding example of the military of our fine country. We're proud of them and everyone should be proud of them and those who are not proud of them should get out of the country if they don't like it." p. 196

Topics for Discussion

Describe the roles of the ward boss and the precinct captains in Chicago politics.

What major position was Daley elected to that positioned him to run for Mayor of Chicago?

What is a political machine?

What was the most important factor in an individual maintaining his politically appointed job?

What are patronage jobs?

What happened in the black neighborhoods on the West Side after Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated?

The Democratic Presidential Convention was held in Chicago in 1968. What happened at this convention?