

not checked

Rep. James Scheuer (D/NY): January 1965, First Week of Congress

- The whole organization concept of the House is "seniority." Your responsibilities are approved on the basis of seniority. If you want to get ahead, you gradually learn what you are expected to do. Keep your eyes open and your mouth shut and when you so make a speech, mimeograph it and make it short and with a quick closing sentence.
- on a monthly basis for good looks..... responsibilities meted out according to seniority. Even with seniority you have to command the respect of your colleagues. If you don't there are ways in which it can be circumvented.
- I wrote Les Keough and listed the committees I wanted and put myself in his hands. (? didn't screw me when he had the chance.) "Adam Powell wanted me and aggressively pushed for me. The AFL CIO let the House leadership ? looked on my application with favor. From leadership ??? I had excellent connections with liberal groups and some background business and banking ? And equal rights, which impressed Adam. I had a little something for everybody. "Veto power of AFL CIO. If a man is negative, they can make six phone calls and knock him right out."
- There are some who are down here and just draw pay check, who are quickly identified. So quickly it makes your head spin.
- Re ? "you can feel it going on." Speak of ? problems-asked for E&L, FMF, PWK, and B&C, list to three fresh and are ? He spoke on floor on it and no one supported him.
- "Seniority system bent a little to reflect the collective judgment of the House on ? Those who work for a fast ? instead of doing serious, anonymous work that is expected of the House. There are proper ties to get publicity in their districts, but that should not take precedence over hard work that needs to be done."
- NY meeting re Albany. ? are up with compromise. Brooklyn delegates vote to ? "We have not had a single meeting of State delegation on a substantive policy question."
- DSG: "Special avenue then which I experience self politically.

Rep. Scheuer (D/NY) 1965 notes-1

Thoughtful and require liberally-oriented group.

- Talk about getting on E&L. Powell tells Scheuer in confidence that he's got lot of union types on his committees and would like man with business experience.
- Conable--family back home--didn't want to take kids out of school. Speaks of them as being jealous of his time--need to do things with them, etc. He lives in one of his own urban housing projects. Wants to be Monday to Friday congressman and a "Saturday and Sunday daddy." Problems there that he's conscious of. Speaks of himself as developer of residential communities under the Federal Urban Program. Member of private group that designed, built and owned housing projects.
- Mike angered by Powell. He voted Green, Perkins and Poverty and got neither.
- He welcomed my participation. "I'm not a member of the Perkins subcommittee, but I ? On ??? And activity like a member. I've asked some questions. The chairman has welcomed my participation and then Scheuer wanted on Education subcommittee. Carey gave up his ? On ? Subcommittee and let--went out of his way to be friendly and helpful. A courtesy that means a lot to me.
- Civil rights committee of DSG went to Selma--he's in that committee. "The DSG can do things the Congress can't. We did have the institutions that you would have if you didn't with these things on the floor. Wd didn't go down there with a chip on our shoulder or a ? ??, but put a? At what was going on. Ford put ? DSG from purely informational point of view they have made the ? Experience of half ? First class members of ??? to me. They couldn't give a half-hour to each freshmen congressman. A very valuable conduit from those of experience to those of us who we motivated to learn from them.
- If I hadn't associated myself with the DSG and if I hadn't known Dick Bill and Bill Philips for many years, I wouldn't know who was going on. Not one piece of paper would have passed my desk in all those hangers that are going on. There's been no meeting of the NY Democrats. I haven't heard a word from any one of them. There's no organization which you know have the Chicago delegation. One hand goes up, they all go up. I don't say thank the ? You don't need to have won ? discipline. But you might at least have a little communication. By ? re whether he should call a meeting of 89th ?

Rep. Scheuer (D/NY) 1965 notes-2

- Very interested in E&L--"Vital to the problem of New York." Saw more in common with ? Than with ? Powell lets ? Go free.??? Brown warned about Powell hurting Scheuer by making demands on him. Since they are in same district, Powell would want him to take a table at a fund-raiser, support him in election, etc.--get into fight with Wagner. Scheuer kept saying very confidentially that he could handle Powell.
- Brown said that re the staff, they didn't prefer people from district but that they got committed to people back home and had no choice re staff. Said he'd much rather have people with hill experience. Brown said he felt that there weren't any mysteries about hill experience--that what it was, was just contacts. Take a long time to build up contacts.
- Brown: "The agencies are very willing to help. But you don't know the short cuts. You don't know exactly what person to call to give it that little extra, and price it through for you. Those contacts take a long time to build up.

Rep. Scheuer (D/NY) 1965 notes-3