

Lou Stokes - December 10, 1970

[Secy - Brenda Liggins]

Mayor Stokes - Christian Science Monitor, Wednesday, December 9, 1970

fm. 11
"You don't have to do anything but take the fact that Seth Taft will be a county commissioner to know the effects of the caucus." p. 10

Taft won by 29,000

Louis Stokes - re the Vanik episode

"Charlies is wrong. Some of the most experienced political experts of the House--Phil Burton and and others agree with me that if the Ways and Means Committee allows local political situations to enter into the picture in assigning committee memberships here in Washington, they will interject a new and dangerous element into the equation with consequences no one can foresee. If I had failed to support my party's candidate for President, that would be another thing. The members of the Black caucus sent Charlie a letter making three points. One was that local politics ^{or} might not ^{to} interfere with committee assignments. The second was that he made a commitment to Lou Stokes, and around here a politician's word is supposed to be his bond. The third was racial. The fact of the matter is that Lou Stokes is Black and that shouldn't enter into the picture at all. A lot of people will be watching in that contest to see what happens- I know what Charlie wants. He wants me to give up my leadership of the caucus back home and he wants the caucus to disband. He has no right to demand that of me. It's my political organization. It's my political lifeline. He can't ask me to do that. He's thinking that if the caucus goes, it will hurt Carl and he'll be number

one--he's been in a feud with Carl. Charlie has worked with Stanton against Carl. And the relationship between Stanton and Carl is a fireball, it's a blaze. A smart politician doesn't get himself in that situation--in between two people who are each other's greatest enemy. But Charlie is worrying a little now because the other members of the House feel that the time is ripe, that a black man should have the position and that Lou Stokes is the man who should have it. We'll see what happens."

Were you satisfied with the results of caucus activity. "We made our case with Taft. That's all we really needed and all we really wanted. The rest was window dressing. We proved that black people would actually vote Republican--Republican. We wanted to win more but we didn't expect to. Sara Harper was a nice girl, but she hadn't involved herself long enough in the community. With Taft we proved our point--enough anyway so that we can claim success."

He talked about Leo Jackson--how the caucus lost in his case, and how, in some race or other, Leo beat Gorman in all but the black wards. I told him of my study of the primary race.

He gave me the Broder article--said it hit it on the head and commented "The caucus may be ahead of its time."