

Copy IV

**Ex-Gov. Charles P. Johnson, of Missouri, on
Committee of Seventy.**

(Statement of ex-Gov. Charles P. Johnson of St. Louis, Mo.,
to J. McCan Davis, Dec. 17, 1898. Gov. Johnson, then a member of the
Missouri legislature, was one of the Committee of Seventy, sent to
Washington in 1863 by the mass convention of Radical men. He is
now one of the foremost lawyers of the West.)

Mr. Charles D. Drake formally presented the committee to
the President, with some explanatory remarks. He then read the
formal address which had been prepared by the Committee. || The
President, in the course of his reply, hesitated a great deal, and
was manifestly, as he said, very much troubled over the condition of
affairs in Missouri. He said he was sorry that there should be
such divisions and dissensions; that they were a source of more
anxiety to him than we could imagine. He expressed his appreciation
of the zeal of the Radical men, but sometimes thought they did not
understand the real situation. He besought us not to get out of
humor merely because things were not going as rapidly as we thought
they should. The war, he pointed out, affected a much larger terri-
tory than that embraced within the borders of Missouri, and possibly
he had better opportunities for judging of things than some of us
gentlemen. He spoke with great kindness, but all the way through
showed his profound regret at the condition of affairs in our state.
He regretted especially that some of the men who had founded the
Republican party should now, be arrayed apparently against his
administration.

I had met Mr.Lincoln twice before then. This time he appeared differently from what he had on the two former occasions. There was a perplexed look on his face. When he said he was bothered about this thing he showed it. He spoke kindly, yet now and then there would be a little rasping tone in his voice,that seemed to say: "You men ought to fix this thing up without tormenting me." But he never lost his temper. X\

The Committee called on Mr.Stanton. He received us politely; he bowed and shook hands with us, but his manner plainly said: "I am glad to see you,gentlemen, but I am very busy". But Chase,who was then in high favor, received us with great cordiality. He gave us a formal reception,at which he was assisted by Miss Kate Chase.

We who composed the Committee of Seventy were well-meaning but inexperienced men. In the light of the present, it is plain that in our abuse of Lincoln we~~xx~~ were utterly unreasonable. We could see nothing but Missouri. There was no personal dislike of Mr.Lincoln, but it was thought that the Blairs and the conservative element had gotten complete control of him.
