



## Smithsonian Institution

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

### Delegate Magazine 1977

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[[image - black and white photograph of Civil Rights marchers]]  
 [[caption]] Marching in civil rights demonstrations, during Sixties, Sutton was in good company. Note singer Harry Belafonte, Mrs. Coretta Scott King and King children. [[/caption]]

Sutton although they have been staunch political allies in the past.

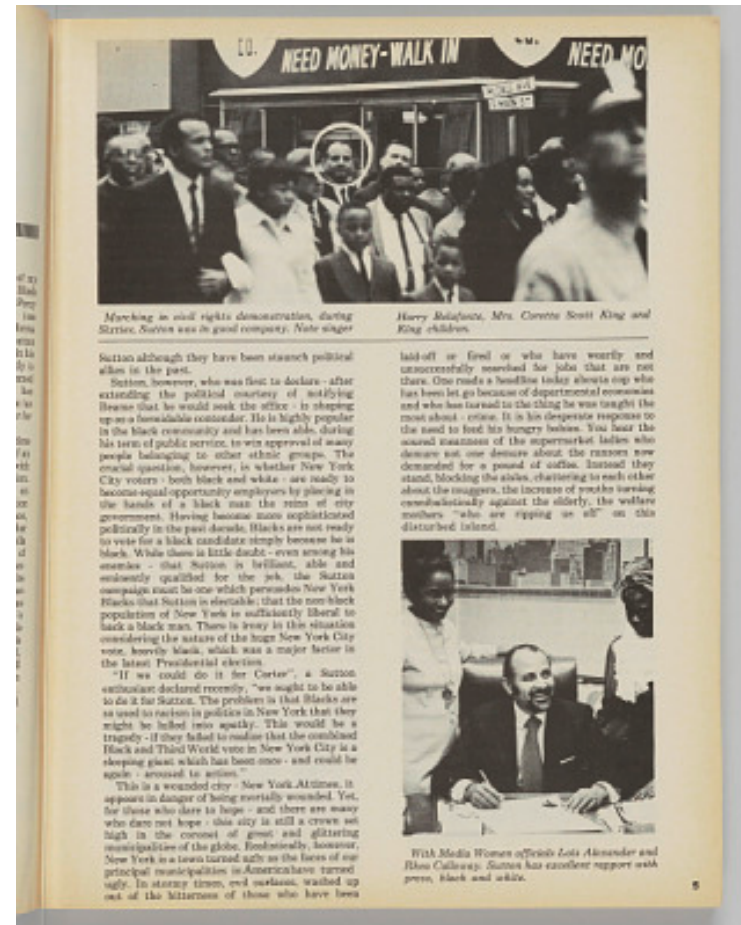
Sutton, however, who was first to declare - after extending the political courtesy of notifying Beame that he would seek the office - is shaping up as a formidable contender. He is highly popular in the black community and has been able, during his term of public service, to win approval of many people belonging to other ethnic groups. The crucial question, however, is whether New York City voters - both black and white - are ready to become equal opportunity employers by placing in the hands of a black man the reins of city government. Having become more sophisticated politically in the past decade, Blacks are not ready to vote for a black candidate simply because he is black. While there is little doubt - even among his enemies - that Sutton is brilliant, able and eminently qualified for the job, the Sutton campaign must be one which persuades New York Blacks that Sutton is electable; that the non-black population of New York is sufficiently liberal to back a black man. There is irony in this situation considering the nature of the huge New York City vote, heavily black, which was a major factor in the latest Presidential election.

"If we could do it for Carter", a Sutton enthusiast declared recently, "we ought to be able to do it for Sutton. The problem is that Blacks are so used to racism in politics in New York that they might be lulled into apathy. This would be a tragedy - if they failed to realize that the combined Black and Third World vote in New York City is a sleeping giant which has been once - and could be again - aroused to action."

This is a wounded city - New York. At times, it appears in danger of being mortally wounded. Yet, for those who dare to hope - and there are many who dare not hope - this city is still a crown set high in the coronet of great and glittering municipalities of the globe. Realistically, however, New York is a town turned ugly as the faces of our principal municipalities in America have turned ugly. In stormy times, evil surfaces, washed up out of the bitterness of those who have been laid-off or fired or who have wearily and unsuccessfully searched for jobs that are not there. One reads a headline today about a cop who has been let go because of departmental economies and who has turned to the thing he was taught the most about - crime. It is his desperate response to the need to feed his hungry babies. You hear the soured meanness of the supermarket ladies who demure not one demure about the ransom now demanded for a pound of coffee. Instead they stand, blocking the aisles, chattering to each other about the muggers, the increase of youths turning cannibalistically against the elderly, the welfare mothers "who are ripping us off" on this disturbed island.

[[image - black and white photograph of Percy Sutton, seated at desk, with two women standing on either side]]  
 [[caption]] With Media Women officials Lois Alexander and Rhea Calloway, Sutton has excellent rapport with press, black and white. [[/caption]]

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