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Author(s): Randall B. Ripley

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THE PARTY WHIP ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*

RANDALL B. RIPLEY
The Brookings Institution

In the literature on political parties in the United States Congress two points are usually stressed. First, it is said that the political party label lacks a precise programmatic content because "party government" in the British sense is absent in the American Congress.¹ Second, however, it is contended that the party label is the single most important and reliable attribute in predicting the voting behavior of a Senator or Representative.²

* The research for this article was conducted while the author was an intern in the Office of the Democratic Whip in the United States House of Representatives, from April to September, 1963. The research was financially sponsored by a Brookings Institution Research Fellowship. In addition to the printed sources this article is based on interviews and correspondence with members and former members of the House, employees of the House, and various staff members; and on files of the Office of the Democratic Whip.

I am especially indebted to Congressman Hale Boggs and his Administrative Assistant, D. B. Hardeman, for cooperating in many ways in the research for this article. I am also grateful to John Bibby, Lewis A. Froman, Jr., Theodore Lowi, Robert Peabody, and H. Douglas Price, as well as Hardeman, for their careful critiques of an earlier draft.

The findings and conclusions are those of the author and do not purport to represent the views of the Brookings Institution, its trustees, officers, or other staff members.

¹ See Austin Ranney and Willmoore Kendall, *Democracy and the American Party System* (New York, 1956), p. 399; E. E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New York, 1942); and the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association, "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System," this REVIEW, Vol. 44 (Sept., 1950).

² See David B. Truman, "The State Delegations and the Structure of Party Voting in the U. S. House of Representatives," this REVIEW, Vol. 50 (Dec., 1956), p. 1023; Truman, *The Congressional Party* (New York, 1959), pp. vi-vii; Julius Turner, *Party and Constituency: Pressures on Congress* (Baltimore, 1951); and Avery Leiserson, *Parties and Politics* (New York, 1958), p. 379 (appendix).

Between these two contentions lies a sizeable area of unexplored territory. If party is the best predictive device in analyzing voting behavior in Congress then, despite the lack of "party government," the party machinery in both houses must have effects that deserve study. Professor Huitt has suggested the necessity and importance of this kind of study: "... the preoccupation with reform has obscured the fact that we have no really adequate model of party leadership as it exists in Congress, and that none can be constructed because we lack simple descriptions of many of the basic working parts of the present system."³ Huitt himself and a few others have filled some of these gaps.⁴

An important office of party leadership that has received no sustained treatment is that of whip. Only two moderately long articles have been specifically devoted to it, and neither analyzes the relation of the whips to rule by the majority party.⁵ Other works on Congress men-

³ Ralph Huitt, "Democratic Party Leadership in the Senate," this REVIEW, Vol. 55 (1961), p. 334; see also Robert L. Peabody and Nelson Polsby, *New Perspectives on the House of Representatives* (Chicago, 1963), pp. 269-270.

⁴ See Huitt, *op. cit.*; Malcolm E. Jewell, "The Senate Republican Policy Committee and Foreign Policy," *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 12 (Dec., 1959), pp. 966-980; Hugh A. Bone, "An Introduction to the Senate Policy Committees," this REVIEW, Vol. 50 (June, 1956), pp. 339-359; George Galloway, "Leadership in the House of Representatives," *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 12 (1959), pp. 417-441; and James A. Robinson, *The House Rules Committee* (Indianapolis, 1963). Paul Hasbrouck, *Party Government in the House of Representatives* (New York, 1927), is an older treatment of some parts of the House leadership.

⁵ These are "Whips' Effectiveness Tested on Close 1961 House Votes," *Congressional Quarterly*, Weekly Report #24 (June 16, 1961), pp. 992-998; and Alfred Steinberg, "Shepherds of Capitol Hill," *Nation's Business*, Jan., 1952, pp. 31-33. The first article presents roll call data and infers "effectiveness" from them; but no direct link between the data and the whips is established. The second is a popular treatment of the role and importance of the whips.

tion the whips, but only in passing.⁶

This article proposes to (1) recount briefly the 20th Century history of the whips in the House of Representatives, (2) describe the whip organizations in the House, (3) analyze the role played by the House Democratic whip organization in the Second Session of the 87th Congress (1962) and the First Session of the 88th Congress (1963), and (4) suggest the broader importance of the whips in the House.

I

Champ Clark, Speaker of the House for eight years (1911-19), called the whips "the right hands of the two leaders," and described the principal duty of a whip as "to have his fellow political members in the House when needed."⁷ His comments are still accurate, although the functions performed by the whips have become more diversified in recent years. The whips are (1) responsible for the presence of their fellow party members, but they must also (2) transmit certain information to them, (3) ascertain how they will vote on selected important pieces of legislation, and (4) guide pressure to change the minds of the recalcitrant and stiffen the wills of the wavering.

Most of these functions have been performed at least haphazardly in the House since 1789, although the name "whip" was not formally applied to a party official in the House until the end of the 19th Century.⁸ Throughout most

of the 19th Century members functioning as whips were in evidence only in connection with important legislation and only when the division between the parties was close enough to necessitate a device that would help gain a high degree of party regularity.⁹ Many of these whips were volunteers for a given floor fight only.¹⁰ Both parties began to designate their whips formally for an entire Congress around the turn of this century. Table I lists them and summarizes their House careers.

The Republicans. The exact method of Tawney's initial appointment as Republican whip in 1897 is obscure. Speaker Cannon ended it by appointing him Chairman of the Appropriations Committee in 1905, although he had never previously served on that Committee. Watson, who succeeded Tawney,¹¹ resigned from the House in 1908 to run for the

British Parliament about 1770. For a description of the British whips see Roland Young, *The British Parliament* (London, 1962), pp. 75-77; also Eric Alexander, Viscount Chilston, *Chief Whip* (London, 1961).

For a brief description of the whip in the United States Senate see a speech by J. Hamilton Lewis, long-time Democratic Senate whip, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 80, pt. 7, pp. 7044-7046 (1936).

⁹ See MacNeil, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-100; and Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 104. See also David S. Barry, *Forty Years in Washington* (Boston, 1924), pp. 100 ff. for comments on one Republican whip in the late 19th Century, Omar Conger of Michigan.

¹⁰ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 338, says he was acting as volunteer whip as late as 1909. Important Republicans who acted as volunteer whips in the late 19th Century were Thomas Reed of Maine and James Wilson of Iowa.

¹¹ DeAlva S. Alexander, *op. cit.*, note 6 above, p. 105, states that Watson was, in 1899 (his second term), the first whip chosen by party caucus; and he indicates that Tawney succeeded Watson. Alexander's assertion is repeated by MacNeil, p. 97; Galloway, *History*, p. 102; Steinberg, *op. cit.*; and in a speech by Representative Guy Hardy of Colorado in 1928, which is cited in Cannon's *Precedents*, vol. 8, p. 958 (1936).

This view is mistaken. Tawney was the first whip and was succeeded by Watson in 1905; see the *New York Times*, Dec. 3, 1905, 3:2; the *Washington Post*, Dec. 3, 1905, 2:2 and Dec. 13, 1905, 4:6; Edward T. Taylor, *A History of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives*, H. Doc. 299, 77th Cong., 1st sess. (1941), p. 51; and Charles W. Thompson, *Party Leaders of the Time* (New York, 1906), pp. 153, 195.

A short article for a small audience (University of Oklahoma alumni) but with some general interest is Carl Albert, "Oklahoma and the Democratic Whip," *Sooner Magazine*, July, 1955, pp. 18-19.

⁶ See Clem Miller, *Member of the House* (New York, 1962), pp. 52-54; DeAlva S. Alexander, *History and Procedure of the House of Representatives* (Boston, 1916), pp. 104-106; George Brown, *The Leadership of Congress* (Indianapolis, 1922), p. 222; Truman, *The Congressional Party*, pp. 227 ff.; Neil MacNeil, *Forge of Democracy* (New York, 1963), pp. 97-100; George Galloway, *History of the United States House of Representatives*, H. Doc. 246, 87th Cong., 1st sess. (1961), pp. 102-103; Floyd M. Riddick, *Congressional Procedure* (Boston, 1941), pp. 75-77; and Riddick, *The United States Congress: Organization and Procedure* (Manassas, Va., 1949), pp. 101-102.

⁷ Champ Clark, *My Quarter Century of American Politics* (New York, 1920), vol. 2, p. 337.

⁸ The name "whip" derives from the British fox-hunting term "whipper-in," used to describe the man responsible for keeping the hounds from leaving the pack. It was first applied to the

TABLE I. PARTY WHIPS IN THE HOUSE

Name, State, Years of service as whip	House career		
	Years before becoming whip	Years as whip	Years after being whip
<i>Democrats</i>			
Oscar W. Underwood, Alabama, 1900-01	5	1	14
James T. Lloyd, Mo., 1901-08	4	8	8
Thomas M. Bell, Ga., (1913-15?)†	?	?	?
William A. Oldfield, Ark., 1921-28	12	8	—
John McDuffie, Alabama, 1929-33	10	4	2
Arthur Greenwood, Indiana, 1933-35	10	2	4
Patrick Boland, Pa., 1935-42	4	7	—
Robert Ramspeck, Ga., 1942-45	12	3	—
John Sparkman, Alabama, 1946	9	1	—
John McCormack, Mass., 1947-49; 1953-55	18	4	13*
Percy Priest, Tenn., 1949-53	8	4	4
Carl Albert, Okla., 1955-62	8	7	2*
Hale Boggs, La., 1962-	17	2*	
<i>Republicans</i>			
James A. Tawney, Minn., 1897-1905	4	8	6
James E. Watson, Indiana, 1905-09	8	4	—
John W. Dwight, N. Y., 1909-13	6	4	—
Charles Burke, S. D., 1913-15	12	2	—
Charles M. Hamilton, N. Y., 1915-19	2	4	—
Harold Knutson, Minn., 1919-23	2	4	26
Albert H. Vestal, Indiana, 1923-31	6	8	—
Carl G. Bachmann, W. Va., 1931-33	6	2	—
Harry L. Englebright, Cal., 1933-43	6	11	—
Leslie C. Arends, Ill., 1944-	9	20*	

* As of the end of 1963.

† Bell served in the House from 1905 until 1931.

governorship of Indiana; he later served 16 years in the Senate. Though he had left the House, Cannon consulted him as a personal assistant in the 1910 rules fight.¹² The third Republican whip, Dwight, began to organize a more extensive system and develop modern techniques—particularly the use of a syste-

The exact date of Tawney's appointment as whip is as obscure as his method of appointment. Taylor, *loc. cit.*, gives the date as 1897 and says that Speaker Reed made the choice. Thompson, *op. cit.*, refers to Tawney as being whip in 1902, although he does not indicate how long he had then been so. Before 1920 the documentation for the identity of party whips was almost non-existent. I have therefore given footnote references identifying the whips before that date.

¹² Kenneth W. Hechler, *Insurgency* (New York, 1940), p. 70.

matic poll prior to an important vote.¹³

During Wilson's presidency Burke and Hamilton were understandably less active than Dwight had been. In 1919, with the Republicans again in control of the House, the post of whip resumed its importance to them. In that year, reflecting other changes in party practice after 1910, the power of appointing the Republican whip was transferred from the Speaker (or Minority Leader, depending on electoral fortunes) to the Republican Committee on Committees.¹⁴ The Republican Conference (caucus) could ratify or reject the Committee's recommendation. Except in 1919 itself the nor-

¹³ See MacNeil and Alexander; also the *New York Times*, Jan. 20, 1928, and the *Washington Star*, March 14, 1909, 1:8; March 22, 1909 1:5; and April 4, 1911, 4:2.

¹⁴ Cannon's *Precedents*, vol. 8, p. 961.

mal practice has been for the Conference automatically to adopt it.¹⁵

Knutson, who later became Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, was whip for four years.¹⁶ He was followed in turn by Vestal, Bachmann, Englebright, and Arends. The last three in particular developed, expanded, and solidified the organizational structure of the Republican whip.

The Democrats. The first Democratic whip, Underwood, later became floor leader in the House, and still later, the same in the Senate. Underwood offered the resolution at the 1900 Democratic Caucus—going into a campaign year—which formally created the posts of whip and assistant whip. The Minority Leader then announced Underwood's appointment as whip.¹⁷ The method of appointment for Democratic whips has never changed. The floor leader, aided by Democratic Speakers, has appointed all the Democratic whips.

Lloyd succeeded Underwood and served until he resigned to become Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in the crucial election years of 1908, 1910, and 1912.¹⁸ The identity of the Demo-

cratic whip in the period from 1909 until 1921 is obscure. Bell was the whip during at least the 63rd Congress (1913–15). He may have been whip for the entire 12 years, or there may have been others, as yet unidentified, who served part of that period.¹⁹

Oldfield was whip for eight years, serving until his death. McDuffie followed him for four years, resigning after an unsuccessful race for Speaker against Henry Rainey in the 1933 Democratic Caucus. Greenwood also ceased to be whip after an intraparty struggle which resulted in the election of Joseph Byrns to the Speakership. He was replaced by Boland, an important Byrns supporter. Greenwood and Boland built the modern Democratic whip organization in the House in the course of coping with the exigencies of New Deal legislation.

The party whip organizations were initially the product of the close, hardfought party battles of the late 19th Century. By the late 1920s and the beginning of the party battles that predated the New Deal struggles the whips became even more prominent in the House. Both parties were eager to maintain disciplined lines either for or against far-reaching legislation. The top-heavy Democratic majorities of the 1930's began to be plagued by dissenting Southerners and Westerners; defection increased the need for machinery aimed at a high degree of party unity in voting. Republicans desired to produce a united opposition, and needed discipline to participate effectively in their recurrent coalitions with Southern

¹⁵ In 1919 the old-guard Republicans dominated the Party Conference, to the dismay of more progressive members. Fights over many issues, including the choice of the new whip, occurred in the Conference. See the *New York Times*, March 12, 1919, 1:4. Knutson, the winner, received 118 votes out of 182 cast.

¹⁶ The only reference to Burke as whip I could find was on the floor plan of the Capitol in the *Congressional Directory* for the 63d Congress. For Hamilton see the *Washington Star*, April 1, 1917, 1:2. Hamilton also returned a form to the office of the *Biographical Directory of Congress* in 1928 in which he indicated that he was the Republican whip in the 64th and 65th Congresses. Knutson listed his tenure as whip as the 66th and 67th Congresses, on a similar form. Vestal became whip in 1923, not in 1925 as the *Biographical Directory* states. The files of the *Biographical Directory* indicate that his service as whip began in 1923; so does his obituary in the *Anderson (Ind.) Daily Bulletin*, April 2, 1932.

¹⁷ See the *Washington Post*, Jan. 10, 1900, 4:5; and the *New York Times*, Jan. 10, 1900, 1:6. Sydney P. Epes of Virginia, who died two months later, was named assistant whip.

¹⁸ Lloyd's service as whip is mentioned in the following places: *Congressional Record*, vol. 90, pt. 3, p. 3420 (1944); the *Hannibal (Mo.) Courier-Post*, April 4, 1944; and the *Canton (Mo.) Press-News*, April 4 (?), 1944. James E. Watson, in his memoirs, *As I Knew Them* (Indianapolis, 1936),

p. 295, mentions Claude Swanson of Virginia as a Democratic whip. I have found no other substantiation for this, however. Lloyd was the designated Democratic whip during the entire time Watson was the Republican whip. I wish to thank Professor Clarence Berdahl for bringing Lloyd's service to my notice. See Berdahl's articles, "Some Notes on Party Membership in Congress," this REVIEW, Vol. 43 (1949), pp. 309–321, 492–508, 721–734, for a treatment of many important facets of party history.

¹⁹ The *Congressional Directory* floor plan of the Capitol for the 63d Congress shows Bell as whip. His obituary in the March 20, 1941, *Gainesville (Ga.) News* speaks of him as Democratic whip "for a term or two." Berdahl thinks that Bell was whip from 1909 until 1919; I have not been able to substantiate this. Bascom N. Timmons, in his *Garner of Texas* (New York, 1948), pp. 59–60, 61, 64, 74, indicates that John N. Garner was Democratic whip, probably during the 1909–1913 period. I have been unable to find other evidence for this.

Democrats. By 1963 the Democratic whip had a reasonable expectation of succeeding to the floor leadership and even the Speakership.²⁰

Gradually the House began to recognize not only the importance of the individuals serving as whips but also the importance of the whips as institutions. From 1911 until the present the Republican whip has had an office in the Capitol, unless he chose to operate from his congressional office. The Democratic whip had an office in the Capitol in the 63d Congress (1913–15) and has had an office there continuously since 1919.²¹ Since 1913 the House has provided for at least limited staff help to be appointed by the whips.²² The sum was to be used for a messenger for each whip until 1947, when provision was also made for two clerks. In 1953 the party whips were given administrative assistants.²³ By 1963 the office of each whip had a budget of about \$40,000.²⁴

²⁰ This expectation was not a guarantee, however. In 1962 all of the leaders advanced one place after the death of Speaker Rayburn. This provides some precedent but does not establish a pattern. For evidence that Albert's tenure as whip helped lead to his election as Majority Leader see Polsby, in Peabody and Polsby, *op. cit.*, pp. 246–247. It is customary, especially on the Democratic side, for the floor leader to become Speaker when that office falls vacant.

²¹ This statement is based on the floor plans of the Capitol in the *Congressional Directory* for each session. The record may be somewhat incomplete.

²² This information comes from a perusal of the Legislative Appropriations Acts in the *U. S. Statutes-at-Large*. The title "whip" was first used in the 1913 legislation.

²³ When the Republicans captured the House in the 1952 elections John McCormack was slated to move from Majority Leader to minority whip. He asked Speaker Martin, Majority Leader Halleck, and Minority Leader Rayburn if he might keep one of his long-time employees as Administrative Assistant. He and the Republican whip, Les Arends, then agreed that they both would have Administrative Assistants.

²⁴ The value of the party whip organizations was widely enough recognized in the House by the late 1950s for a portion of the Democratic membership to imitate the political parties and establish a third whip organization. In 1957 a loose alliance of liberal Democrats was formed in the House under the leadership of Representative Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota. This group immediately established a whip organization, which functioned at least sporadically. In 1959 both the Democratic Study Group and its whip organiza-

II

The whip organizations of the parties grew in size and complexity through the years of this century. By 1963, on both sides they were large, formal organizations that performed a variety of tasks.

The Republican Organization. John Dwight in 1909–1913 was apparently the first Republican whip to have assistants.²⁵ There is no evidence that any Republican until Carl Bachmann in 1931 again used assistant whips. Bachmann organized the Republican whip system on essentially the same basis that is still in use. He divided the country into two divisions and appointed Joseph Martin of Massachusetts to be in charge of the Eastern division and Harry Englebright of California to be in charge of the Western division. He also designated a "key man" in each state with Republican members. When a poll of the Republican members was necessary Bachmann asked Martin and Englebright to get reports from the key men about their state delegations.²⁶ When Englebright became Republican whip in 1933 he retained the pattern of assistant whips (increasing them to three in number) and "key men" in the state delegations.

The Republican whip from 1944 to the present, Les Arends of Illinois, formalized and expanded the key man system. By 1963 he had a deputy whip, three regional whips, and 12 assistant whips. After the chief whip is chosen he has a free hand in appointing all of his assistants. The Republican organization in the First Session of the 88th Congress is summarized in Table II.

The Republican whip organization performs the four functions already mentioned, involving attendance, information, polling, and pressure. The Republican whip keeps records of Republican members' voting on teller votes as well as on roll calls. This the Democratic whip does only informally and sporadically, without notes or records being kept.

The Republicans have developed a different pattern of leadership succession. Joe Martin had been an assistant whip before becoming Minority Leader and then Speaker, but no whip has yet become the Republican floor leader. Similarly, when a Republican Speaker

tion were formally established. The Secretary of the DSG also serves as its whip.

²⁵ See the speech by Majority Floor Leader John Q. Tilson of Connecticut, *Cong. Rec.*, vol. 69, pt. 2, p. 1757 (1928).

²⁶ Letter from Carl G. Bachmann to the author, August 15, 1963.

TABLE II. REPUBLICAN WHIP ORGANIZATION, 1963

Whip: Leslie C. Arends, Illinois*Deputy Whip*: Charles Hoeven, Iowa

Regional and Assistant Whips		
Name and State	States in Zone	No. of GOP Members
<i>Regional Whip</i> : Katherine St. George, New York		
William Bates, Mass.	Conn., Mass., N. J., Me., N. H., Vt.	19
Carleton King, N. Y.	New York	21
William Curtin, Pa.	Pa.	14
<i>Regional Whip</i> : Jackson Betts, Ohio		
Elford Cederberg, Mich.	Michigan	11
Jackson Betts, Ohio	Ohio	18
William Van Pelt, Wisc.	Wisc., Minn., Iowa	16
Robert Michel, Ill.	Illinois	14
Richard Roudebush, Ind.	Indiana, Ky., Tenn.	12
<i>Regional Whip</i> : Catherine May, Wash.		
Walter Norblad, Ore.	Ore., Colo., Mont., Utah, Wash., Wyo.	13
Hjalmar Nygaard, N. D.	N. D., S. D., Nebr., Kans., Okla.	13
John Baldwin, Cal.	California	14
William Cramer, Fla.	Fla., Ariz., Md., N. C., Tex., Va., W. Va.	12

has been forced to become Minority Leader the Republican whip has kept his job, rather than surrendering it to the former Majority Leader. Thus Arends remained as whip in both 1949 and 1955 while Halleck lost any formal leadership title.²⁷ So long as Arends is content to continue indefinitely as whip, without contesting for the Speakership, the succession ladder simply bypasses him. This may be a temporary accident of personality; the test will come after his retirement, when it is seen whether his successor proves to be an aspirant for the Speakership or whether the post has become permanently neutralized.

The Democratic Organization. On the Democratic side Underwood had an assistant whip in 1900. But in the 1921-1928 period Oldfield had no assistant whips. John McDuffie (1929-1933) had two assistants. The great expansion in the whip organization, which had come in 1931 in the Republican Party, came in 1933 for the Democrats under Arthur Greenwood. He organized a system of 15 assistant whips, each responsible for the Democrats in a specific

²⁷ In 1949 Halleck expected Martin to appoint him Deputy Minority Leader and so did not desire to be whip. In 1955 Halleck saw no need to disturb the 11-year tenure of Arends as whip merely for the sake of a title.

zone. The zones were identical with those established for the Democratic Steering Committee, which was also created in 1933.²⁸ The Steering Committee withered quickly but the whip zones remained. The initial 15 zones were similar in composition to the present 18 zones.

Greenwood's successor, Pat Boland of Pennsylvania, worked diligently to perfect the functioning of the organization. During his 7-year tenure the press and other Democratic leaders began to take public notice of his operations.²⁹

The Democratic deputy whip, who is especially active on the floor in checking attendance and voting, is appointed by the whip.³⁰ The

²⁸ Letter from Clarence Cannon to the author, September 23, 1963; Cannon's *Precedents*, vol. 8, pp. 961-962 (1936); and E. Pendleton Herring, "First Session of the Seventy-Third Congress," this REVIEW, Vol. 28 (Feb., 1934), p. 69.

²⁹ See the statement by John McCormack after Boland's death, *Cong. Rec.*, vol. 88, pt. 3, p. 4318, 77th Cong., 2d sess. (1942). See also the *Washington Star*, August 18, 1935, D-2:6 and June 4, 1936, A-10:1; the *Washington Post*, August 25, 1935, III-3:2; and the *Scranton Times*, May 18, 1942.

³⁰ The post of deputy whip as a formal leadership position was created in 1955 for Hale Boggs of Louisiana, the present whip. John Moss of Cali-

Democratic assistant whips are either appointed by the dean of the delegations for which they are responsible or they are elected by members of those delegations.³¹ Table III summarizes the Democratic whip organization in the First Session of the 88th Congress.

The assistant whips are responsible for a small number of Democrats, averaging between 14 and 15. The whips, or staff members designated by them, make the regular contacts with all of the Democratic members' offices. When the Democratic leadership in the House wishes to transmit information to all Democrats—or elicit information from them—the chief whip's office contacts the 18 assistants. In this way all Democrats can be alerted to

fornia became deputy whip in 1962. Boland had a "principal assistant" or "chief assistant" whip, Thomas Ford of California. See the *Washington Star*, August 18, 1935, D-2:6, and *Cong. Rec.*, vol. 88, pt. 3, p. 4320, 77th Cong., 2d sess. (1942).

³¹ Boland apparently appointed his own assistant whips. In 1939 he threatened to "fire" some of them for disloyalty to the President's program. *New York Times*, August 22, 1939, 20:3.

The assistant whips may develop some independent weight in their state delegations. See the chapter by Alan Fiellin in Peabody and Polsby, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

come to the floor in 15 to 20 minutes. The leadership can ascertain the sentiments of virtually every Democrat in the House on a given bill in a day or two.³²

III

The purpose of this section is to analyze the functioning of the Democratic whip organization in the Second Session of the 87th Congress (1962) and the First Session of the 88th (1963)³³, years of great activity for it. The

³² In the Democratic Study Group the Secretary and whip since its founding has been Frank Thompson of New Jersey. He was elected initially and has continued to be re-elected every two years by the full membership of the DSG, which totalled 126 in 1963. He has appointed four regional whips, each of whom has either four or five regional subwhips reporting to him. The subwhips are responsible for calling from four to six other DSG members.

The DSG whip organization takes no polls on legislation, since the group was formed on the basis of ideological congeniality. The organization distributes information on pending legislation and works for maximum attendance, particularly on teller votes on amendments in Committee of the Whole.

³³ One primary fact determined the time span here studied—the availability of files.

TABLE III. DEMOCRATIC WHIP ORGANIZATION, 1963

Whip: Hale Boggs, Louisiana
Deputy Whip: John Moss, Cal.
Assistant Whips

Name and State	States in Zone	No. of Dems.	Method of Selection
Torbert Macdonald, Mass.	Mass., Conn., R. I.	14	Election
Abraham Multer, N. Y.	N. Y.	20	Election
George Rhodes, Pa.	Pa.	13	Election
Peter Rodino, N. J.	N. J., Del., Md.	14	Election
Thomas Downing, Va.	Va., N. C.	17	Appointed
John Flynt, Ga.	Ga., S. C.	16	Appointed
James O'Hara, Mich.	Mich., Minn., Wisc.	16	Election
Winfield Denton, Ind.	Indiana	4	Election
Harley Staggers, W. Va.	W. Va., Ohio	10	Election
Robert Everett, Tenn.	Tenn., Ark., Ky.	15	Election
Gillis Long, La.	La., Miss.	13	Election
Don Fuqua, Fla.	Fla., Alabama	18	Election
Frank Karsten, Mo.	Mo., Iowa	9	Election
Dan Rostenkowski, Ill.	Illinois	12	Appointed
Jack Brooks, Tex.	Texas	21	Appointed
Ed Edmondson, Okla.	Oklahoma	5	Election
Thomas Morris, N. M.	N. M., Ariz., Alaska, Colo., Ida., Hawaii, Mont., Nev., Ore., Wash.	17	Appointed
John McFall, Cal.	California	23	Appointed

Democratic whip organization, be it remembered, has worked as an arm of the majority party in the House ever since 1933, except for two two-year periods (1947–49 and 1953–55). In the 1930s, as noted above, Boland had greatly expanded its use. Rayburn, on the other hand, who was a strong leader and had never been whip himself, used it less than the weaker Speakers of the 1930s. For example, the whip who served for the longest period under Rayburn, Carl Albert, employed his top staff member on congressional business rather than on whip business.³⁴

But in 1962 and 1963 the new Speaker, John McCormack, began to use the whip organization for a greater number of formal polls. McCormack had been whip, as had the new Majority Leader, Albert Hale Boggs, the new whip, had been deputy whip under Albert. Thus the three top Democrats in the House all appreciated the potentialities of the whip organization—both formal and informal. These three men, joined by D. B. Hardeman, Administrative Assistant to Boggs, and the deputy whip, John Moss, functioned as a small, close-knit group dedicated to attaining the most favorable voting outcomes on Administration bills. This group—not, conspicuously, including the chairman of the Rules Committee—met with White House and Departmental officials on legislative matters throughout 1962 and 1963.

The Office of the Democratic Whip was composed of four people—Boggs, Hardeman, a secretary, and an intern—during the entire period studied. The office had a contact—generally a staff member—in the office of each of the 18 assistant whips. Information on poll requests was transmitted by telephone between the whip's office and the offices of the assistant whips. Occasionally the whip's office made contact with all Democratic members of the House directly, either on substantive legislative matters or on attendance needs.³⁵ The whip's

office, located in the Capitol, served as a meeting place for White House and Departmental congressional liaison officials interested in the success of a particular bill.

The whip during these two years was Hale Boggs of Louisiana, a loyal Administration supporter on most matters. The deputy whip, John Moss of California, was even more consistently loyal.³⁶ The assistant whips, the primary direct contacts with rank and file Democratic members, varied considerably in their voting loyalty to the Administration. Table IV shows the support they gave the Administration on the 17 votes chosen for analysis here,³⁷ together with the support given by all Democrats in each whip zone on these same votes. In general, the assistant whips tend to be more loyal to the Administration than all Democrats, and variations in their individual loyalty tend to reflect the normal variations by zone.³⁸

The problem of "disloyal" assistant whips is troublesome. The power to appoint and replace them rests exclusively with the Democratic delegations involved. But even if the whip had the power to remove assistant whips the roll-call voting record of the assistants would not be an infallible test. For example, in

of the Mississippi at their homes, asking them to return. A similar situation, even more acute, developed in 1963 after President Kennedy's assassination, as the House struggled until Christmas eve to pass a foreign aid appropriations bill acceptable to President Johnson.

³⁶ For the 87th Congress *Congressional Quarterly* reports that Boggs had a 73 per cent and Moss a 91 per cent Kennedy Support Score.

³⁷ See footnote 40, *infra*, for a listing of the votes chosen.

³⁸ This evidence that assistant whips were more loyal (hence, more liberal) should be compared with Duncan MacRae's suggestion that elected party leaders tend to take middle-of-the-road positions on issues. MacRae, *Dimensions of Congressional Voting* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1958), ch. 4.

The *Congressional Quarterly* study of the whips, *op. cit.*, p. 994, concludes that in terms of Democratic party support for the first half of the 1961 session "The performance of the whips was matched roughly by that of the membership as whole . . ." David Truman, *The Congressional Party*, p. 227, attributes some of the influence of the principal whips in the House to "their individual positions in the voting structure of the party." Donald Matthews, *U. S. Senators and Their World* (Chapel Hill, 1960), suggests that the Senate whips tend to fall off in party-line voting.

³⁴ This is not to suggest that Albert was not important as whip. Rayburn consulted him, but the whip organization as a whole was used less than in 1962–1963. It should be noted that when Albert became whip he replaced Percy Priest, who decided not to continue as whip in 1955 because he had become Chairman of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. *Cong. Rec.*, Vol. 101, pt. 1, pp. 191–192 (1955).

³⁵ An unusual instance of this occurred in the drive for adjournment in October, 1962, when the leadership was having difficulty in keeping a quorum in Washington. The whip's office called or sent telegrams to all missing Democrats from east

TABLE IV. VOTING OF DEMOCRATIC ASSISTANT WHIPS AND MEMBERS OF THEIR ZONES, 1962-1963

Part I: Per cent support of Administration on 17 key roll calls

States in Whip Zone	1962		1963	
	Assist- ant Whip	All Zone Mem- bers	Assist- ant Whip	All Zone Mem- bers
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Mass., Conn., R. I.	100	95	100	97
N. Y.	100	95	100	97
Pa.	100	98	90	95
N. J., Del., Md.	100	92	100	99
*Va., N. C.	43	53	60	56
Ga., S. C.	86	62	89	74
Mich., Wis., Minn.	100	97	100	97
Ind.	100	96	100	97
W. Va., Ohio	57	83	100	93
Tenn., Ky., Ark.	71	81	90	90
*Miss., La.	86	41	100	53
*Alabama, Fla.	67	62	78	70
Mo., Iowa	100	80	100	81
*Illinois	100	98	100	98
*Texas	29	51	100	70
Okla. (Kan. & Mont. in 1962)	100	78	90	90
Wash., Ore., Alaska, Hawaii, Ariz., N. M., Utah, Colo., Ida., Nev. (Mont. in 1963)	67	86	100	92
California	100	98	100	97
Average	84	79	94	85

Part II: Per cent support of specific legislation

Year and Legislation	Support by all Assistant Whips	Support by all Democrats
	(%)	(%)
1962:		
Urban Affairs	61	55
Tax Bill	94	86
Debt Limit	89	84
Farm Bill	78	81
Trade Expansion Act	89	83
Public Works	89	82
U. N. Bonds	87	81
1963:		
Rules Committee	83	81
Public Works Appropriation	94	86
Medical Student Loans	95	87
Feed Grains Program	93	88
Debt Limit (May)	100	87
Area Redevelopment	83	77
Debt Limit (August)	100	93
Tax Bill	100	90
Debt Limit (November)	100	85
Cotton Bill	93	79

* Assistant whip changed during the two-year period.

1962 one assistant whip supported the Administration only rarely and yet did an excellent job as assistant whip, not only in reporting

accurately but also in indicating the weak point of each member through which he might be induced to change his mind and support the Administration on a given bill. Loyalty is less important than accuracy and thoroughness. The Democratic assistant whips are expected to perform the functions involving attendance, information, and polling but they have a great deal of discretion in deciding whether they also wish to pressure their zone members to vote the Administration position.³⁹

An analysis of how the Democratic whip organization performed these four main functions in dealing with the major legislation the House acted on in 1962 and 1963 will form the bulk of this section. "Major legislation" here indicates those measures on which the House leadership decided a poll should be taken, on which the poll was taken and completed, and on which the House acted either favorably or unfavorably by roll-call vote. This definition includes seven bills in 1962 and ten in 1963.⁴⁰

³⁹ The Republicans, starting with a base of greater party agreement on issues, look on their assistant whips as definite agents of the leadership. The method of appointment for Republican assistant whips—by the chief whip himself—insures some accountability to the leadership. On the Democratic side Boggs obviously cannot assume that the assistant whip appointed by Howard Smith will be an avid Administration supporter.

Boggs summarized the job of assistant whip in a telegram to the *Shreveport (La.) Times* in the fall of 1963: "The assistant whips keep members in their zones informed as to which bills will be scheduled for a vote and when. On a request from the House leadership, they ascertain how each member in their zone will vote on a specific measure, and report the results to the leadership. When important bills are being considered by the House, they try to make sure that the members from their zone are present for key votes. The assistant whips are responsible solely to their party colleagues in their zones. The executive branch has absolutely no voice in either selecting or removing assistant whips."

⁴⁰ The specific issues in 1962 were: (1) final passage of the resolution disapproving the reorganization plan which would have created an Urban Affairs Department, (2) final passage of the 1962 Revenue Act, (3) final passage of an increase in the national debt limit, (4) recommittal motion on the feed-grains section of the farm bill, (5) recommittal motion substituting a one-year extension of reciprocal trade for the Trade Expansion Act, (6) recommittal motion on the accelerated public works bill, and (7) final passage

The 17 votes include 14 which the Administration won (11 by close margins) and three which the Administration lost (two by close margins).⁴¹

The first function of the whip organization is to insure maximum Democratic attendance on the floor when critical votes are taken. Getting this is a matter both of keeping the

of the bill authorizing the President to purchase U. N. bonds.

The specific issues in 1963 were: (1) adoption of the resolution permanently enlarging the Rules Committee, (2) passage of an amendment to a supplemental appropriations bill adding \$450 million to the accelerated public works program, (3) recommittal motion deleting medical student loan provisions from the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act, (4) final passage of an increase in the national debt limit, (5) final passage of a bill authorizing a voluntary feed-grains acreage diversion program for 1964–1965, (6) final passage of Area Redevelopment Act amendments, (7) final passage of a second debt-limit extension, (8) recommittal motion on the tax bill making a tax cut dependent on reduced governmental spending, (9) final passage of a third debt-limit extension, and (10) final passage of the cotton bill.

The recommittal motion on the 1963 tax bill did not fully meet the stated criteria, because part of the poll on the recommittal motion was taken through the Democratic members of the Committee on Ways and Means. The 15 zones used by these men when acting as the Democratic Committee on Committees were also employed in this poll and the results were channeled first to Chairman Mills and then to the whip's office. Aside from this significant deviation, however—a display of Mills's independent power—the whip's office performed its normal functions during this struggle. Since the bill was one of the most important to the Administration and the House leadership in 1963, an accurate picture of the whip system could hardly be given without including it here.

A few examples in the text will come from whip operations on bills other than the 17 listed above.

⁴¹ The three lost were Urban Affairs and the farm bill in 1962 and the Area Redevelopment Act amendments in 1963. The phrase "close margin" means roll calls on which a change of 25 votes or less would alter the result. Urban Affairs, the recommittal motion on the trade bill, and U. N. bonds were not "close" in 1962. Only the medical student loan provisions was not "close" in 1963. Nine of the 17 voting results could have been changed by a shift of 15 or fewer votes.

members in Washington and getting them to the House chamber when the vote comes. To this end, the whip's office uses a variation of a poll called an attendance check. In this procedure the assistant whips simply ask the members if they will be in town "next Wednesday" or "next Wednesday and next Thursday." Answers to these questions tell the whip which members should be asked to change their plans and stay in town. Or, if the leadership has a choice in scheduling it can estimate on which one of two or three days the attendance and absence situation will work most in the Administration's favor.

On the day of a vote on the floor the whip's office checks its attendance poll against the absentees on the first quorum call of the day to indicate what members need to be called or may need pairs. The whip's office is particularly anxious to arrange live pairs—whereby an anti-Administration vote actually present is nullified by an absent pro-Administration vote. As the time of the vote or votes approaches, whip calls go out from the whip's office, specifying what is being voted on and indicating that the Speaker, Majority Leader, and whip desire the member's presence on the floor.⁴²

The whip's office goes to great lengths to guarantee the presence of members on crucial votes. In April, 1963, votes on a medical student loan provision and on the feed-grains program were scheduled for the same week. The whip's office called one Democratic member who was on the West Coast to make a long-scheduled speech and arranged for her to fly back for the votes. It reached another member touring his district with the Argentine Ambassador and asked him to return to Washington. In the May, 1963, fight over increasing the limit on the national debt the whip's office was instrumental in arranging for two Democrats to attend the session in wheel chairs. Occasionally, faulty timing lost a vote. In the June, 1963, vote on the Area Redevelopment Act amendments, a member was told that the vote would be taken about two hours later than it actually came. Consequently he was at the Washington Airport when his vote was needed.

The promotion of optimum attendance can also involve some selectivity. On the day of the Area Redevelopment vote in 1963 the Air Force was scheduled to take 19 members to an air show in Paris. The whip's office called the Air Force to get assurances that the plane

⁴² The Majority Manager of Telephones on the floor also instructs his operators to call each member's office when a vote is near but the operators do not specify what is at issue.

would not leave until one hour after the final vote on the bill. Then it got word to the six Democratic members known to be friendly to the bill who were also scheduled to go on the trip and let them know this, so as to insure their presence on the floor.

In the August, 1963, debt-limit fight the whip's office was especially active in working on attendance. Democrats friendly to the bill and not answering the quorum call on the day before the vote received telegrams from Boggs urging them, in the Speaker's name, "to make every effort to be present Thursday . . ." for the vote. On the day of the vote the whip's office called the offices of 15 Democratic members who had not answered the quorum call that morning. Despite the previous stress on attendance seven of these members had absented themselves without informing the leadership.

In late August, 1963, there was a long, bitter floor fight over the foreign aid authorization bill. The whip organization made a concerted effort to get all Democrats to the floor and keep them there; a series of teller votes was anticipated on Wednesday and Thursday. On Tuesday a meeting held in the whip's office was attended by all but one of the assistant whips (or their representatives), the Democratic House leadership, Executive liaison personnel, Undersecretary of State Harriman and AID Administrator Bell. Harriman and Bell explained the provisions of the bill and the necessity of defeating crippling amendments. The leadership stressed that all assistant whips should be on the floor during the entire voting period (which consumed 10 to 12 hours) and should keep track of the members from their zones. The appeal was effective to the extent that all 18 assistant whips were on the floor during both days of teller votes. Yet two early votes were lost because of absentees and thus a whip call directed at friendly assistant whips (15 of the 18 on this issue) stressed the necessity of winning the first teller vote on the next day.

The attendance in voting on the tax bill in 1963 was almost perfect. On the most important vote (on the Republican recommittal motion) only one Democrat was unexpectedly absent. The other four Democratic absentees had been identified for several days; three of them were in the hospital. Special efforts were made to get everyone else. For example, two Democrats flew back from a conference abroad specifically for the vote.

No statistical measure can judge *precisely* the effect of the Democratic whip organization on attendance for roll call votes. Yet some

inferences can be drawn from a few figures.⁴³ On the 17 bills in these two sessions on which the whip organization was fully active total Democratic voting attendance was 94 per cent. This can be compared with the Democratic attendance on all roll calls: 83 per cent in 1962 and 84 per cent in 1963.⁴⁴ This higher attendance was partially a function of the importance of the bills. Yet the specific instances recounted above suggest that the whip organization had some marginal effect in producing a high voting turnout.

The second function of the whip's office is providing information to Democratic members on pending measures. At the most mechanical level the whip's office is responsible for informing all Democrats what is scheduled for floor action week by week. But the office also provides information more directly related to legislation which is highly important to the Administration and to the House leadership. In May, 1963, during the struggle over the increase in the debt limit the whip organization distributed sheets of information on what the defeat of such an increase would mean to the country and to all Democratic members. A more neutral communication was sent to all Democrats directly from the whip's office with reference to the June, 1963, Area Redevelopment amendments. The content of this letter was an outline explanation of the provisions of the bill. A similar letter—signed by Albert and Boggs—was sent in connection with the cotton bill late in the 1963 session.

In 1963, prior to the passage of the foreign aid authorization bill, an effort at informing the assistant whips on specific features of the program was made at the meeting described above. As a result of the meeting, AID prepared two memoranda which were then distributed to the assistant whips through the whip's office.

Before the voting on the tax bill in 1963 the whip's office was instrumental in helping Chairman Mills distribute a short summary of the bill to all Democratic members. It was accompanied by a brief letter urging support for final passage and defeat of the recommittal

⁴³ The *Congressional Quarterly* study of the first half of 1961, *op. cit.*, pp. 993-994, documents the high voting turnout in that session and suggests the whip organizations might be part of the cause.

⁴⁴ The assistant whips had attendance records much like those of all Democrats on all roll calls, but on the 17 key votes they did somewhat better than the rank and file. In 1962 the assistant whips voted 83.4 per cent of the time on all roll calls and 84.7 per cent in 1963. But on the 17 key votes their voting attendance rose to 96 per cent.

motion because "this bill is essential to our national well-being." The letter was signed by Mills, the Speaker, Albert, and Boggs.

The third function of the whip's office is to ascertain how the Democratic members of the House will vote on certain pieces of legislation central to the Administration's program.⁴⁵ The principal device used to get this information is the poll. The whip's office does not take a poll until the leadership decides one is needed. This comes usually some time after the bill has been reported from the committee and before it is scheduled for floor action. Ordinarily, then, the poll must be completed within a period lasting from two days to two weeks. Naturally the longer time periods produce greater accuracy in results. Likewise, the more clear and specific the question asked of the members the more accurate the result. If the legislation is extremely complex a simple response for or against the bill may hide important feelings about amendments. The most effective assistant whips probe the sentiments of their membership about specific provisions. If a current of opinion develops against a certain feature, the legislation may be changed in time to save it from defeat. In 1963 a poll was started on a bill extending the Export-Import Bank and allowing it to continue direct or "backdoor" borrowing from the Treasury. The initial poll results revealed a strong feeling against backdoor financing and the Banking and Currency Committee changed the bill to eliminate it.

The question the assistant whips are to ask members is precisely framed, since ambiguous questions produce ambiguous answers. It is not always on the final passage of the legislation.

⁴⁵ The Democratic whip's office also relays to the leadership whatever information it receives about Republican voting probabilities. Such information may come from lobbyists, Executive officials, or personal contacts between Democratic and Republican members. The Republican and Democratic whips' offices do not, of course, trade information.

Information on Republican voting tends to be quite unreliable when it reaches the Democratic whip's office. For example, during the debt-limit fight in May, 1963, it was supposed that at least eight to 10 Republicans would vote for the increase. Only one did. When the Administration lost the Area Redevelopment bill in June, 1963, the whip's office had received information that 21 Republicans would vote for the bill. Only 15 did. During the 1963 struggle over enlarging the Rules Committee six Republicans who finally voted with the Democratic leadership had been written off as lost to Halleck and Judge Smith.

Often it is on the recommittal motion to be offered by the Republicans, if the "instructions" in this motion can be discovered in advance of the vote. At other times a specific amendment is the subject of a poll.

The results of the poll are supplemented by and checked with officials from the White House and the Executive Department involved, and occasionally group lobbyists provide some information. Without a sensitive and knowledgeable interpreter of the poll data the results could be highly misleading. Fortunately for the Democratic leadership such an interpreter was in charge of the office during the period studied. He could tell when a report from a member was of dubious validity and when it could be accepted at face value.⁴⁶ He had a "feel" for contacting the proper members.

How accurate were the final poll results which were submitted to the leadership? Accuracy is important because decisions about provisions in the bill, scheduling the bill for floor action, and attempts to change Democratic votes are based partially on these results. To judge the accuracy of the whip poll the final complete poll presented to the leadership usually two days before the vote—which still left time for any of the actions indicated above—was checked, individual by individual, against the final roll call embodying the issue on which the poll had been taken. The results are summarized in Table V, to show the percentage of members reported correctly by the poll and also the number reported correctly and incorrectly and the number whose positions could not be ascertained. Evidently the whip's office increased in accuracy in 1963 as compared with 1962. Apparently the refinement of techniques and the lessons of experience were put to good use.

Probably the most important use for the poll results is in helping the leadership determine where to apply pressure. Meetings of the Speaker, Majority Leader, whip, Administra-

⁴⁶ There are several reasons for a member's making an inaccurate report of his position. He might want to avoid leadership pressure by not alerting anyone to his opposition. He might be annoyed at the inconvenience of repeatedly reporting his position. Finally, he might use the report of opposition as a bargaining device. For example, on the poll on the debt limit increase in May, 1963, a loyal Administration supporter from the midwest reported "doubtful" and, at the same time, indicated his eagerness for final Treasury confirmation that a new Internal Revenue Service installation would be located in his district.

tive Assistant to the whip, deputy whip, White House and Departmental liaison officials, and the relevant Committee Chairman begin during a period between three weeks and three days before a bill comes to the floor. At these meetings a division of labor is made, on the basis of the whip poll. Thus a more thorough and accurate poll produces fewer wasted contacts and enhances the probability that the contacts that are made will be with members who may be persuaded.

TABLE V. ACCURACY OF DEMOCRATIC WHIP POLLS, 1962-1963

	Per cent Correct	Number Correct	Number Incorrect	Number Unknown
1962:	(%)			
Urban Affairs	87	226	15	19
Tax Bill	81	212	26	23
Debt Limit	90.5	237	18	7
Farm Bill	82.5	216	36	10
Trade Expansion	92	241	15	6
Public Works	87.5	228	23	10
U. N. Bonds	87	227	24	10
1963:				
Rules Committee	97	247	2	8
Public Works Approp.	91	233	8	15
Medical Student Loans	94	240	0	16
Feed Grains	84	214	16	26
Debt Limit (May)	93	239	9	8
Area Redevelopment	91	232	17	6
Debt Limit (August)	85	218	32	6
Tax Bill*	96	246	6	4
Debt Limit (Nov.)	92	235	19	2
Cotton Bill	84	214	34	8

* Not formally a whip organization poll. See footnote 40, *supra*.

This fourth function of the whip's office—that of directing pressure—is, in some ways, the most important of the four. The goal of the office is, after all, to produce votes for the President's program. There is no precise systematic or statistical way of charting the effectiveness of this whip-guided pressure, since the ultimate test would compare what happened with what might otherwise have happened.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Conceivably, some inferences might be drawn from a comparison of the winning percentage on roll calls used by *Congressional Quarterly* in computing its Presidential Support Index with the Administration's record of success on the key votes analyzed here. The question could be put whether the President won a greater percentage of the time when the Democratic whip organization was fully engaged in the battle. On the 17 key votes the President won 14 times—82 per cent support—as against an overall 85 per cent winning record (on 60 roll calls) in 1962. From this it might be argued that the whip organization made

But an indication of some incidents involving the legislation studied in this article will give a sample of the work done and its effectiveness.

The whip's office was effective in 1962 in identifying the trouble spots on the tax bill of that year. One particularly dangerous area was the New York delegation, which was finally brought into line, with the loss of only three votes. Several Southern delegations were initially opposed to the bill but a caucus of the North Carolina delegation, together with the effective work of the assistant whip for Texas, helped hold Southern losses on the bill to 15 votes. At the last minute, during the floor debate, the secretary in the whip's office discovered that some of the members from a mid-western state might be wavering in their support for the bill. This message was transmitted to Boggs on the floor and he proceeded to escort one of the delegation's members to the Speaker's office where both the Speaker and the President (on the telephone) convinced him that he should support the bill.

During the 1962 prelude to the vote on increasing the national debt limit the whip's office was instrumental in enlisting Francis Walter of Pennsylvania to use some of his credit with the Southerners to convince one major Southern delegation to vote for the bill. As a result, only three Democrats from that state voted nay.

During the week of June 25, 1962, the whip poll began to show that the Republican motion to recommit the trade bill with instructions to continue the reciprocal trade agreements program for another year might attract as many as 80 Democratic votes. Frantic activity on the part of the President, Chairman Mills of the Ways and Means Committee, Secretaries Goldberg and Hodges and Undersecretaries Wirtz and Price, the Speaker, Majority Leader, whip, and others on Tuesday and Wednesday of that week reduced the eventual Democratic losses on the recommittal motion on Thursday to 44.

During the 1963 Rules Committee fight, after the whip poll was relatively complete, the Speaker, Majority Leader, and whip each took a list of doubtful members to call. Of the 17 called about their vote seven finally voted with the leadership.

no material difference, since the winning percentages are about the same. But it might also be argued that since the roll calls used here represent the "toughest" of the more numerous roll calls chosen by *Congressional Quarterly* the winning percentage is higher than could be expected without concentrated whip activity.

The events leading up to the passage of the debt-limit increase in May, 1963, provide another illustration of the use made of the information supplied by the whip poll. At a meeting five days before the vote the results of the poll were discussed. During this meeting the Speaker, Majority Leader, and Larry O'Brien of the White House called and talked to several members about either their opposition or their possible absence. Those members still considered doubtful or open to persuasion were divided among the leadership for further work. Chairman Mills asked that the latest whip poll be given to him the day before the vote so that postponement of the bill could still be announced if it appeared that defeat were likely. A week before the final vote the Speaker had seen an early version of the poll and, on the basis of that, persuaded six members reporting doubtful to commit themselves to voting for the bill. By the time of the floor action the poll indicated that the vote would be extremely close. Armed with that information the leadership secured promises from 13 Democrats who were planning to vote against the legislation that they would vote for it if their votes were needed to change defeat into victory.⁴⁸

The passage of the second debt-limit increase of 1963, in August, was the occasion for a substantial amount of whip-directed activity. The Secretary of the Treasury persuaded one Southern Democrat to vote for the increase after the whip poll had shown him to be vacillating. The Speaker contacted 15 wavering Democrats directly and, as a result, persuaded 10 of them to vote for the bill. Chairman Mills was especially effective in getting Southerners to vote for the bill. Again, as in May, the leadership had ten "pocket votes," that is, men who preferred to vote nay but would vote aye if necessary to pass the bill.⁴⁹

In summary, the whip's office performs its four functions in such a way as to enhance the chances of Democratic victories on floor votes in the House. No absolute figures can be given on votes won that would otherwise be lost. Yet

⁴⁸ Three of the 13 voted with the leadership even though they were not ultimately needed. The other 10 voted nay but remained on the floor after voting, ready to change their votes if necessary.

⁴⁹ Seven of these 10, largely at the urging of Mills, voted aye even though not needed. Mills was anxious to have a respectably large margin of victory. He was trying to set a precedent for November, when another debt limit increase would be necessary.

the weight of evidence is that the efforts to insure a maximum attendance, to inform the Democratic membership of undesirable effects on the country if an Administration proposal is defeated, to ascertain voting expectations with great accuracy in advance, and to direct pressure to the precise spots where it will do the most good, result in some small, yet definite, net gains for the Democratic majority in the House.

IV

David Truman has commented that "the persistent reality of party in the functioning of the [House] chamber is unmistakable."⁵⁰ Julius Turner stated that "Party pressure seems to be more effective than any other pressure on congressional voting."⁵¹ Yet neither they nor any other commentators on Congress using primarily statistical indices based on roll call votes have been able to be more specific about the nature of party activity in the House. The indices describe the *results* of the activity. But the *activity itself*—the "reality" of Truman or the "pressure" of Turner—cannot be caught by indices of votes.

The whip organizations are at the core of party activity in the House, particularly on the Democratic side. Thus the data here presented on the whip organizations are also data on parties in the House. They can be analyzed to provide a considerable range of generalizations about party activity in the House. Some of the generalizations which follow are quite speculative and demand much more research. Others come closer to being fully supported by the data on the whips.

1. The Democratic whip organization has become the focus of a corporate or collegial leadership in the House. Truman concluded that the evidence provided by record votes shows no collegial leadership,⁵² although he indicated that the individual elective leaders in each party showed somewhat more unity. But observation of the Democratic whip organization suggests that the pattern of leadership in 1962 and 1963 was for the Speaker, Majority Leader, whip, deputy whip, and relevant committee chairman to work closely together in the effort to pass a given piece of legislation. To expect a greater degree of corporate leadership—including *all* major committee chairmen on every separate piece of major legislation—is unrealistic. Each chair-

⁵⁰ Truman, "The State Delegations . . .," *op. cit.*, p. 1045.

⁵¹ Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁵² Truman, *The Congressional Party*, p. 245.

man has time to be concerned only about the legislation produced by his committee. The major missing participant during the period of this study, whom one would expect to find in a collegial leadership because he has a legitimate interest in all major legislation, is the Chairman of the Committee on Rules.⁵³

2. Truman found that the voting structure of the parties in Congress "was focused upon one or a pair of positions: the Floor Leaders, joined at times, particularly on the Democratic side, by the Whips and, among the House Democrats, impliedly by the Speaker."⁵⁴ For House Democrats the operation of the whip organization helps explain why this focus is not mere coincidence. Even if the assistant whips do not uniformly "pressure" the members of their zones they do inform them of the voting preferences of the Speaker, Majority Leader, and whip. This information, as universally distributed to all Democrats, is one of the "triggers" which Bauer, Pool, and Dexter discuss.⁵⁵

3. Truman suggests that the majority party has a natural basis for greater coherence than the minority party.⁵⁶ The Democratic whip organization, coordinated with the leadership offered by the President, helped the House Democrats to cohere on the major votes in 1962-1963. Similarly, the whip organization is an important institutional device for helping the House leadership perform a mediating role between the President and the rank and file Democratic membership. The elected legislative leaders of the President's party have a stake in his success in the House. The whip organization has a similar stake and also provides machinery for improving the President's chances.⁵⁷

4. An important function of the Democratic whip organization is the carrying and recording of various bargains struck between party mem-

bers on legislative matters. Within whip zones and even between whip zones both explicit and implicit bargains⁵⁸ are made between individual members. The whip organization then provides a framework for channeling the information on the bargains to a more central location—either the ship's office or the relevant Committee Chairman or one of the leaders individually. The transmission of information is incomplete but it is more complete than totally unorganized gossip.

5. The operations of the Democratic whip organization, especially of the sort noted in points 2 and 4 above, suggest that information can be as important and as effective as "pressure" of the classic mold. Information about legislation and about the intentions of individual legislators can be used to cue voting behavior favorable to the President and the leadership.⁵⁹

6. The growth in the strength, complexity, and importance of both party whip organizations in this century suggests a growing sense of party solidarity within the House. The whip organizations now involve 16 Republicans and 20 Democrats directly. These 36 men and women have made a commitment of time—which members of the House must necessarily hoard—to work for their respective parties within the House. Unless they felt that party work was worth doing a sufficient number of such commitments, of a desirable calibre, might not be forthcoming.

7. The history of the party whip organizations suggests that the importance of the whip partly depends on the mode of leadership exercised by the Speaker or Minority Leader, and secondarily on the role of the Rules Committee Chairman. Strong, solitary leaders like Rayburn have relied less on the whip than leaders who seek and need the active help of others. Leaders with fewer resources, like McCormack and Halleck, necessarily rely more on others in the leadership circle—including the whip and his organization.

⁵⁸ On implicit bargaining see Lewis A. Froman, Jr., *People and Politics* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1962), pp. 55-56.

⁵⁹ Again this coincides with the findings of Bauer, Pool, and Dexter, *op. cit.* The importance of information is highlighted by Charles Clapp, *The Congressman* (Washington, Brookings Institution, 1963). He reports, p. 302, that criticism of both party whip organizations by House members centers "around the failure to perform the informing function." Lewis Anthony Dexter, in Peabody and Polsby, *op. cit.*, pp. 312 ff., discusses "the tyranny of information" in another context.

⁵³ Truman's reference to "the ambiguity surrounding the term 'the leadership'" (*ibid.*, p. 282) is also to the point here. "The leadership" is a fairly precise term when used in connection with a specific piece of legislation. It always includes the Speaker, Majority Leader, whip, and Committee Chairman. It may include the deputy whip, a Subcommittee Chairman, or a senior Committee member who is going to act as floor manager of the bill.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

⁵⁵ Raymond Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and Lewis A. Dexter, *American Business and Public Policy* (New York, 1963), p. 466.

⁵⁶ Truman, *The Congressional Party*, p. 278.

⁵⁷ See *ibid.*, ch. 8.

8. The contrast between the place of the Democratic whip organization and the Republican whip organization in 1962-1963 provides material for broader generalizations about the differences between the two parties in the House. The Democratic whip in these years was firmly lodged in a three-man leadership circle. His influence was great and his prospects for eventual advancement to Majority Leader were good. The Republican whip, however, would never obtain another leadership post. In addition, he had to work not only with the Minority Leader but also subject to the decisions of the 35-man Republican Policy Committee, of which he was but one member.⁶⁰ The majority leadership appeared to be substantially more compact than the minority leadership.

9. At the same time several features of the two party whip organizations suggest that the customary characterization of the Democratic Party in the House as a loose coalition of disparate groups without much central allegiance and of the Republican Party in the House as a closely-knit body of men dedicated to common principles may be at least partially correct. The Democratic assistant whips are regarded primarily as informing agents rather than as pressuring agents, although individual assistant whips may on occasion choose to pressure their zone members. The Democratic whip's office keeps no systematic voting records with which to confront the less loyal members. The Republican assistant whips, however, are expected to work for a solid Republican vote in accord with the dictates of the Policy Committee. The Republican whip's office keeps

voting records, even on teller votes, so that the whip may berate the goats and praise the sheep when the occasion demands. The method of selection of the assistant whips is also an important difference. The Democratic whip is presented with assistants he may not want. The Republican whip picks his own assistants.⁶¹

In short, the data suggest that a change is necessary in the typical description of the House which attributes, in the words of Professor Bone, "no consistently great influence in policy directing or in establishing party accountability for legislative program" to the party machinery.⁶² As important pieces of party machinery the whip organizations possess such influence. How great and how consistent the influence, are still open questions. This article has attempted to provide some tentative answers to those questions.

⁶¹ The voting records of the 1963 Republican and Democratic assistant whips over the previous two years indicate that each party organization had a similar number of "mavericks." Five Democratic assistant whips had a mean Larger Federal Role Support Score 22.6% lower than the mean Support Score of all 16 assistant whips who had been members of the 87th Congress. Five Republican regional and assistant whips had a mean Larger Federal Role Support Score 23% higher than the mean Support Score of all 14 regional and assistant whips who had been members of the 87th Congress. The Support Scores for individual members come from *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* for 1962.

Both the Republican and Democratic assistant whips had served, on the average, slightly more than nine years in the House by the end of 1963.

⁶² Hugh Bone, *American Politics and the Party System* (New York, 1955), p. 597.

⁶⁰ See the forthcoming book by Charles Jones on the House Republican Policy Committee.