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Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn

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This article deals with the transition in House leadership from Cannon to Rayburn. The transition involved moving from a hierarchical pattern of leadership to a bargaining pattern. In accounting for this transition, we argue that it is the institutional context of the House that determines leadership power and style. Moreover, we argue that there is no straightforward relationship between leadership style and effectiveness; rather, style and effectiveness are contingent or situational. We conclude that the impact of institutional context on leadership behavior is itself primarily determined by party strength. When party strength is high, power is concentrated and leaders are task- or goal-oriented, whereas when party strength is low, power is dispersed and leaders will be oriented to bargaining and maintaining relationships.

Leadership is an aspect of social life which has been extensively studied in a variety of institutional or organizational settings (Miner, 1980). Yet it remains a topic in which our intellectual grasp falls far short of our pragmatic sense of the impacts leaders have on organizational operations and performance.

This is as true, if not more true, of Congress than of other organizations. Here too analysts are perplexed by the difficulties of conceptualizing key variables, treating highly transient and idiosyncratic personal factors, and identifying relationships amidst a maze of interactive effects. Moreover, the task is rendered even more complex by the highly politicized character of the Congress as compared with most of the organizational contexts in which leadership has been studied.

This is not to say that knowledge and understanding of congressional leadership have remained static. Peabody (1976), Jones (1968), Ripley (1967), Polsby (1969), Manley (1969), Hinckley (1970), and Nelson (1977) have all done instructive and insightful work. Nonetheless, our grip on the topic is as yet not firm; we continue to lack a developed sense of what we should be looking at and how to proceed.

The purpose of this article is to aid in remedying this deficiency. It is premised on two key assumptions. First, the study of leadership requires comparative evidence regarding both behavior and contexts. Hence our use of history as a laboratory and our choice of Cannon and Rayburn as focal points of analysis. Second, the study of leadership requires abstract or analytical concepts to aid in formulating and testing important relationships. Hence our historical analysis relies on

several broad concepts and relationships, drawn both from organization theory and from recent work on the operation of the Congress.

In sum, though this article deals with the transition from Cannon to Rayburn, its main objective is not to fill in the historical record. Its primary goals are rather to bring evidence and analysis to bear to improve our understanding of the key determinants and underlying dynamics of congressional leadership, and to suggest a set of propositions or hypotheses that can serve as a basis for more focused and elaborate forms of investigation and theory building.

The House Under Czar Rule

The legacy the House of the nineteenth century left to that of the twentieth was a set of rules which placed the majority firmly in control of the House and centralized power in the hands of the Speaker as the agent of this majority. It was this legacy the House rejected when it revolted against the Speaker in 1910. In so doing it not only stripped the Speaker of many of his important powers, but also paved the way for a metamorphosis in the nature of the House as a political institution.

The Speaker and the House. It was with good reason that Speakers of the House in the years between 1890 and 1910 were often referred to as czars (Galloway, 1961, pp. 134-36). The Speaker appointed the committees. He served as the chairman of and had unchallengeable control over the Rules Committee (Brown, 1922, pp. 87-90). He

had great, though not unlimited, discretion over the recognition of members desiring to call business off the calendars, to make motions, or to address the House, and absolute discretion over the recognition of motions for unanimous consent and suspension of the rules (Chiu, 1928, pp. 175-97).

These prerogatives gave the Speaker great power to control outcomes in the House. At the committee stage, those who had received prized assignments from the Speaker naturally felt a sense of gratitude and obligation to him. Those who desired a change in assignment knew full well that their chances of advancement depended on the good graces of the Speaker. Conversely, since in this age seniority was far from as sacrosanct as it is today, members were also aware that to alienate the Speaker was to risk loss of a chairmanship, an assignment, or rank on a committee (Abram and Cooper, 1968; Polsby et al., 1969).

Nor was the appointment power the Speaker's only source of leverage in controlling outcomes at the committee stage. Members of any particular committee were also disposed to cooperate with the Speaker because of the vast array of rewards and sanctions his position in the House bestowed on him. For example, the Speaker could provide access to the floor by granting a rule or recognizing a motion to suspend the rules; he could lend invaluable assistance in getting a project included in a bill or in getting a bill out of committee. Moreover, if all the rewards and sanctions at the disposal of the Speaker still proved to be insufficient, there was yet another factor that discouraged opposition at the committee stage. The plain fact was that to oppose the Speaker would in all probability be fruitless. If a committee refused to report a bill the Speaker wanted reported, the Speaker could pry the bill out of committee either through use of the Rules Committee or suspension of the rules. Similarly, if a committee reported a bill the Speaker opposed, the bill had little chance of reaching the floor. The power of the Speaker was such that he could obstruct the consideration of any bill he did not want considered. Given the various and potent types of leverage the Speaker possessed, it is not surprising that in this period committee chairmen took their cue from the Speaker regarding which bills they would report and that Speakers referred to the committee chairmen as their "cabinet" (Busby, 1927, p. 219).

As for action on the floor, here too the Speaker's prerogatives under the rules gave him great power. A number of factors combined to give him control over the agenda of the House. Through use of the Rules Committee and other privileged committees, he could interrupt the regular order of business either to give priority to a bill he

wanted considered or to block a bill he opposed.¹ He could use unanimous consent and suspension of the rules to give access to the floor to bills he favored and could deny the use of these procedures to bills he opposed. In addition, his discretion in the recognition of motions calling bills up for consideration was a source of leverage.

The Speaker's ability to control the agenda, however, stemmed not merely from his powers of repression, but also from the necessity of relying upon him if the House was to reach the bills it wanted to consider. The volume of legislation before the House made it exceedingly cumbersome to follow the involved order of business set forth in the rules. As a result, the House did not insist on following its regular order. Indeed, the points in the order where committee members could call business off the calendars were usually not reached. Instead, the House relied on the Speaker to bring bills up for its consideration and to determine the time of consideration through the use of privileged reports and special procedures, such as unanimous consent. In short, then, both because of the powers of the Speaker over the agenda and the unwieldiness of proceeding according to the regular order, the House gave the Speaker even more power over the agenda than his power under the rules bestowed on him.²

A second aspect of the Speaker's power over floor decisions concerned his ability to control considerations on the floor. Here again, his command of the Rules Committee and his power as presiding officer gave him considerable leverage over floor debate and dilatory tactics. In addition, many of the same rewards and sanctions at the Speaker's disposal for controlling committee decisions could also be used to control floor decisions. Especially for members of the majority party, to oppose the Speaker was to risk the loss of his assistance in matters of vital importance to one's constituency and therefore also to impair one's

¹ Aside from the Rules Committee, nine other committees were privileged to report at any time on certain matters. In addition, the eight committees charged with general appropriation bills also were privileged to report at any time on such bills. *Hinds' Precedents*, Vol. 4, Sec. 4621. It should also be remembered that the unanimous consent procedure at this time consisted simply of motions on the floor to that effect. The rule providing for a Consent Calendar was not adopted until 1909 (Chiu, 1928, pp. 179-88).

² The total control the Speaker exercised over the consideration of minor legislation thus resulted from the combined impact of the lack of a regular order of business and the need to secure recognition by the Speaker to use either unanimous consent or suspension to bring constituency bills to the floor (Chiu, 1928, pp. 228-30).

chances of reelection. Moreover, through bestowing favors over a number of years, the Speaker could build up a substantial fund of credits, credits which could then be expended as needed to secure the cooperation of members in his debt. Thus, the ability of the Speaker to control decisions on the floor and in committee stemmed not only from the immediate impacts the exercise of his formal powers involved, but also from their long-run dividends.

The Speaker as Party Chief. To complement his prerogatives under the rules, the Speaker possessed another source of power that was equally significant. In placing a potent array of rewards and sanctions at his disposal, the rules did of course provide him with considerable leverage. However, the Speaker's ability to command majority support in committee and on the floor was materially aided by another factor: party discipline.

In an age when party regularity is far from an overriding consideration, it is difficult to appreciate how important party was in the House at the turn of the century. In this period the great majority of members in both parties subscribed to the doctrines of party government. Representative government was seen to depend on the existence of a responsible majority which had the power to rule and which, as a result, could be held accountable for performance (Jones, 1968). Only under such conditions, it was believed, could the people effect their wishes. The individual representative was thought to be elected on the basis of a party's platform and was therefore regarded to have an obligation to support party positions, even against personal convictions or desires.

The fact that members in this age thought and spoke in terms of the doctrines of party government had more than rhetorical importance. Party government served as the main justification for vesting great power in the Speaker and permitting him to play the role of Czar. Though the Democrats never fully accepted the proposition and ended by rejecting it, a cardinal tenet of Republican faith was that rule by a responsible majority party required centralizing organizational power in the Speaker.

The Speaker's position as head of his party thus also provided him with an important source of leverage. It is true, of course, that even in this period many issues were not treated as party issues. Nonetheless, most important issues were regarded as matters on which the party as a whole should stand together. In such a context the Speaker derived considerable power from his position as party chief. Initiative in the definition of party policies belonged to him. Moreover, if he

could not win the support of all elements in the party, he had at his disposal a powerful mechanism for enforcing adherence to his wishes—the caucus. Through a binding vote in the caucus, he could oblige the opposition to support his policy positions out of party loyalty (Brown, 1922, pp. 92-93, 100, 161-62; and Wilson, 1961, p. 96). In short, the Speaker could rule the House through the force of party discipline. As long as the bonds of party held taut, he had only to command the support of a majority of his party to command a majority in the House.

We may conclude, then, that the House of Reed and Cannon contained a highly centralized power structure with control resting essentially in the hands of the Speaker. The key to the Speaker's power lay not simply in his prerogatives under rules, nor in his position as party chief, but rather in the manner in which these two sources of leverage reinforced each other (Cooper, 1970). The existence of a stable party majority insured the Speaker's ability to implement his formal powers and gave him a degree of maneuverability and control that the rules alone could not give him. Similarly, the rewards and sanctions the rules placed in the Speaker's hands gave party regularity a degree of priority it would not have possessed if it had rested merely on the extent of agreement among party members or their devotion to the doctrines of party government. Speakers could therefore quite appropriately refer to committee chairmen as their "cabinet." During this period the committee and party systems were blended to an extremely high degree. The Speaker was both the party leader and the chairman of the Rules Committee. The majority leader was the chairman of the Ways and Means or Appropriations Committee and, with the start of the whip system in 1897, the whip was chairman of Judiciary or a top member of Ways and Means. Unlike the contemporary House where party leaders and committee chairs are separate, committee and party leaders were one and the same. Tensions between the two systems were accordingly greatly reduced. Whereas in the contemporary House committee chairs often have low party support scores, such was not the case at the turn of the century. It was thus not a mere figure of speech to refer to committee chairs as a "cabinet." Both structurally and behaviorally, committee and party leaders were a cabinet (Brady, 1973).

The Bases of Czar Rule. We have argued that the interaction of the Speaker's formal powers and the strength of party resulted in a centralized form of leadership—Czar rule. This can be shown empirically. Data exist which strongly buttress the

**Table 1. Czar Rule and Levels of Party Voting in the House
(1881-1921)**

| Congress | Year | Percentage Party Votes | Majority Party | Centralized Leadership |
|----------|------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 47 | 1881 | 16.6 | Republican | No |
| 48 | 1883 | 7.0 | Democratic | No |
| 49 | 1885 | 15.5 | Democratic | No |
| 50 | 1887 | 8.7 | Democratic | No |
| 51 | 1889 | 42.5 | Republican | Yes |
| 52 | 1891 | 4.2 | Democratic | No |
| 53 | 1893 | 6.1 | Democratic | No |
| 54 | 1895 | 24.8 | Republican | Yes |
| 55 | 1897 | 50.2 | Republican | Yes |
| 56 | 1899 | 49.8 | Republican | Yes |
| 57 | 1901 | 38.9 | Republican | Yes |
| 58 | 1903 | 64.4 | Republican | Yes |
| 59 | 1905 | 34.6 | Republican | Yes |
| 60 | 1907 | 26.3 | Republican | Yes |
| 61 | 1909 | 29.4 | Republican | Yes/No |
| 62 | 1911 | 23.0 | Democratic | No |
| 63 | 1913 | 19.9 | Democratic | No |
| 64 | 1915 | 21.7 | Democratic | No |
| 65 | 1917 | 9.4 | Democratic | No |
| 66 | 1919 | 14.9 | Republican | No |

Source: David Brady and Phillip Althoff, "Party Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1890-1910: Elements of a Responsible Party System," *Journal of Politics* 36 (1974): 753-75.

argument we have made deductively on the basis of the historical record.

First, if party strength functioned as a key ingredient of Czar rule, then levels of party voting should be markedly higher in congresses with centralized leadership. Table 1 presents data on party votes (90 percent of one party versus 90 percent of the other) for congresses from 1881-1921. It thus includes "Czar rule" congresses in which the Speaker possessed the formal powers described above and a ready ability to use the caucus, and congresses in which one or more of these sources of leverage was absent.

Table 1 shows a strong connection between centralized leadership power and levels of party voting. In the period from 1881 to 1899 party voting scores attained levels of 25 percent or more only in the three congresses in which centralized leadership power existed. In the period from 1899 to 1921 party voting did not drop below 25 percent until after the 1910 revolt against the Speaker, and then fell to below 10 percent in 1917 for the first time in a quarter-century. To further substantiate our argument, we ran a point bi-serial analysis of the data. This statistic is used when the data are dichotomous and is appropriate for Table 1, given a distinction between centralized and non-centralized leadership power. The point bi-serial for this data set was a striking .89, demonstrating the degree to which levels of party voting can be seen as associated with concentrated

leadership power.

Second, if an interactive relationship exists between concentrated formal power and party strength, then party strength must have its own sources of determination and impact. Indeed, in our view the causal impact of party strength on the distribution of power in the House is of primary importance. For the Speaker to have the power involved in Czar rule, a majority of the House members had to agree to bestow such power. Since the House is organized on the basis of party and since during this period the Republicans were usually in the majority, it was their potential for group cohesion and loyalty that established the conditions for centralized leadership. In short, the vehicle through which centralized leadership developed was the congressional Republican party (Brown, 1922, pp. 71-126). The rationale underlying this development was that without party government the industrial gains of the late nineteenth century would have been negated by congressional Democrats.

However, to sustain the role and significance we have accorded party strength, we must be able to identify and demonstrate independent sources of determination. In this respect it may be noted that the development of strong party systems in Europe and Britain is associated with the rise of leftist-socialist parties and that in the United States those states where the parties represent polarized constituencies have high levels of party

voting. Our argument is therefore that the fundamental bases of party strength at the turn of the century, as in all periods of our history, are largely external, that party strength is rooted in polarized constituency configurations.

In order to ascertain the constituency bases of the congressional parties as well as the differences between them, we calculated the degree to which each congressional party represented agricultural as opposed to industrial districts. For example, in the 55th House (1897-1899), 69 percent of the Democrats and 26 percent of the Republicans represented agricultural districts, that is, districts where the ratio of farms to industrial workers was at least three to one. Thus the difference between the parties was 43 percentage points. This differential was computed for the 47th through the 66th Houses (1881-1921) and serves as a measure of electoral polarization. The specific hypothesis is that there should be a strong relationship between polarization and party voting. Table 2 confirms the hypothesis. When polarization was high, so too was party voting. Conversely, in Houses where the differential was less than 20, that is, where the parties were less polarized, the proportion of party votes did not rise above 20 percent and dropped to as low as 4.2 percent. However, perhaps the best overall statistic is Pearson's r ,

which is .81 for the two variables presented in Table 2.

The data also show that during the period from the realignment of 1894-96 to approximately the election of Woodrow Wilson (the 54th through the 61st House), the parties remained polarized and levels of party voting remained high. On the other hand, during the "period of no decision" (47th through the 53rd Houses), the degree of polarization fluctuated, and levels of party voting varied accordingly. Similarly, after 1908 the congressional parties became less polarized as the Democratic party became more competitive in industrial districts, and party voting in the House again declined.

In sum, then, it is critical to note the correspondence between a polarized electoral system and a highly centralized leadership structure. Though the Speaker's formal powers reinforced party strength, the polarized electoral bases of the party system provided an indispensable platform for Czar rule. Thus, when electoral polarization began to decline, the centralized internal structure also began to come apart (Brady et al., 1979).

The House from Cannon to Rayburn

Despite its power, the system of Czar rule could not maintain itself. It proved to be too rigid a system to accommodate the factional tendencies in the party system. During the early years of the twentieth century, economic and social ferment in the Midwest and West brought to Congress a group of young Republicans passionately devoted to enacting a whole series of reform measures. Cannon used his power as Speaker and party chief to contain and frustrate the desires of these members. In so doing, he soon aroused their enmity not merely for his policies but also for the whole system of power then prevalent in the House (Jones, 1968).

The Revolt against the Speaker. Though the number of Insurgent Republicans in the House was never large, by 1909 their strength in combination with the Democrats was sufficient to bring the revolt to a successful conclusion. The first step came in 1909 with the establishment of a Consent Calendar and a call of the committees every Wednesday to take up business on the House or Union Calendars. At this time more sweeping change was prevented by the defection of a group of conservative Democrats (Hechler, 1940, pp. 42-63). The next year, however, the Insurgent Republican-Democratic coalition gained a decisive victory. On March 19, 1910, after a dramatic two-day fight, the House passed a resolution removing

Table 2. Polarization of Parties and Party Voting in the House (1887-1921)

| Congress | Year | Differential | Party Votes |
|----------|------|--------------|-------------|
| 47 | 1881 | 36 | 16.6 |
| 48 | 1883 | 15 | 7.0 |
| 49 | 1885 | 25 | 15.5 |
| 50 | 1887 | 24 | 8.7 |
| 51 | 1889 | 41 | 42.5 |
| 52 | 1891 | 19 | 4.2 |
| 53 | 1893 | 22 | 6.1 |
| 54 | 1895 | 36 | 24.8 |
| 55 | 1897 | 43 | 50.2 |
| 56 | 1899 | 33 | 49.8 |
| 57 | 1901 | 35 | 38.9 |
| 58 | 1903 | 39 | 64.4 |
| 59 | 1905 | 41 | 34.6 |
| 60 | 1907 | 36 | 26.3 |
| 61 | 1909 | 31 | 29.4 |
| 62 | 1911 | 24 | 23.0 |
| 63 | 1913 | 12 | 19.9 |
| 64 | 1915 | 11 | 21.7 |
| 65 | 1917 | 14 | 9.4 |
| 66 | 1919 | 18 | 14.9 |

Source: David Brady and Phillip Althoff, "Party Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1890-1910: Elements of a Responsible Party System," *Journal of Politics* 36 (1974): 753-75.

the Speaker from the Rules Committee, enlarging its membership, and providing for election of the committee by the House. This victory was followed two months later by the passage of a resolution which established a procedure through which individual members could initiate the discharge of bills from committees (Brown, 1922, pp. 143-88). Finally, in 1911 the last major objective of the opponents of Czar rule was achieved. The House, now under Democratic control, amended its rules to provide for the election of all standing committees and their chairmen (Hasbrouck, 1927, p. 11).

The immediate results of the revolt against the Speaker did not greatly impair the ability of the party leadership to lead the House on behalf of the party majority. In acting to weaken the Speaker, the Democrats had no intention of weakening the ability of the party majority to pass its program. Most Democrats believed as strongly in party government as most Republicans. Their objection was not to party government and party responsibility but to domination of the majority party and the House by the Speaker. Thus, when the Democrats gained control of the House in 1911, they set up an effective system of rule through the majority party. On the one hand, they made extensive use of the caucus and binding votes in caucus (Haines, 1915, pp. 53-110). On the other hand, they centralized power in the party by making the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, Oscar Underwood, both floor leader and chairman of the committee on committees.³ Under Underwood's leadership, the Democrats controlled the House as tightly as the Republicans had under Cannon. Indeed, it is fair to say that the Insurgent Republicans were no happier in the new "reformed" Democratic House than they had been in the old "tyrannical" Republican one. They had no greater liking for "King Caucus" than for "Czar rule."

The long-run results of the revolt, however, were quite different. If Czar rule was unable to maintain itself in the face of centrifugal pressures in the party system, caucus rule was even less fitted to do so. In the absence of the buttress the for-

mal powers of the Speaker provided for party cohesion, increases in factional discord within the party alignments easily asserted themselves and led both to a disintegration of party control mechanisms and to a dispersion of power within the House (Cooper, 1961, 1970).

The disintegration of party control mechanisms was gradual but extensive. The caucus was the first to go. Once the Democrats achieved the major items in their domestic program, the power of the caucus began to wane. From 1916 on, the divisions within the parties made it difficult to rely on the caucus and usage quickly declined (Luce, 1922, p. 513). This is consistent with the data presented in Table 1 that shows party voting at less than 15 percent in the 1917-1921 period—a 22-year low. There were small upsurges in activity in the early 1920s and early 1930s during the initial years of party turnover in the presidency. However, its use for policy purposes soon became rare in the 1920s and simply disappeared in the late 1930s. Thus by the end of the 1930s the caucus was virtually moribund as a mechanism for determining party policy (Kefauver, 1947, pp. 102-03).

When the Republicans regained control of the House in 1919, they set up a steering committee and began to rely on it rather than the caucus (Brown, 1922, pp. 195-224; Chiu, 1928, pp. 329-34). Though this committee from the first was less of a control device than the caucus and more of a coordinating and planning mechanism, during the early 1920s it did serve to augment the leadership's power to direct its partisans. However, the same tendencies toward factionalism and bloc voting that reduced the caucus to marginal significance had a similar effect on the steering committee. By the late 1920s the party leadership had come to see the steering committee as a hindrance to their maneuverability and effectiveness. As a result, they abandoned the mechanism and began to rely instead on informal meetings among themselves, i.e., on an informal board of strategy composed of the Speaker, the floor leader, and a few trusted lieutenants (Chiu, 1928, pp. 334-36). The situation did not change when the Democrats took control of the House in 1931. Though they too established a steering committee, their leadership operated in much the same fashion as the Republican leadership had in the late 1920s (Galloway, 1961, p. 145). In short, then, by the late 1920s reliance on party control mechanisms to coordinate action and enforce cohesion had largely passed from the scene. Instead, the majority party was reduced to operating primarily through a small coterie of men, gathered around the Speaker, who met to plan strategy and whose power of direction was much less than that of the caucus or even the steering committee in their heyday.

³In changing the rules to provide for election of the standing committees by the House, the Democrats took care to maintain centralized party control. Thus, they blocked the alternative preferred by the Insurgent Republicans, which would have provided for party committees on committees elected by geographic regions. Instead, the Democrats adopted a rule that only provided for election by the House and then made the Democratic members of Ways and Means, led by Underwood, their committee on committees (Brown, 1922, pp. 172-77, and 62 *Congressional Record* 1, pp. 63-64).

Nor were the caucus and the steering committee the only party control mechanisms to lose power and effectiveness in the period after 1916. The power of party mechanisms to control committee personnel also declined. Republican Speakers from 1890 to 1910 respected seniority, but they were quite prepared to violate it in the interests of party policy. The same is true of Underwood. By the 1920s the situation was substantially different. The decline of the caucus and, to a lesser extent, of the steering committee enhanced the power and independence of party factions. Their sheer willingness to stand together and cooperate with the leadership became more important than ever before. In addition, as the power and independence of party factions increased, the appointment mechanisms became more decentralized. Thus, by 1919 the Republicans had taken the power of appointment from the leader of the party and had vested it in a committee on committees, composed of nearly 40 members. Similarly, after 1923 the Democrats no longer combined the posts of floor leader and chairman of the committee on committees. In such a context seniority was transformed from an important consideration to a sovereign principle. It alone provided a standard in terms of which decentralized appointment mechanisms could distribute key committee positions among party factions without provoking disputes that would weaken the party. As a result, in contrast to earlier eras, departures from seniority were rare in the 1920s and even rarer thereafter (Abram and Cooper, 1968; Polsby et al., 1969).

From Hierarchy to Bargaining. Given the reductions in the formal powers of the Speaker between 1909 and 1911, the disintegration of party control mechanisms after 1916 produced a dispersion of power in the House. If in Cannon's day the Speaker's prerogatives as Speaker and as party chief combined to centralize power in the House, now the reduction in the formal powers of the Speaker and the disintegration of party control mechanisms combined to decentralize power in the House.

On the one hand, the rewards and sanctions which the rules placed in the hands of party leaders were reduced. The party leadership no longer had absolute control over committee appointment, the Rules Committee, or the consideration of minor business. On the other hand, the ability of party leaders to consolidate and maintain support in their own ranks was also reduced. If it is true that factionalism in the party system led to the decline of party control mechanisms, it is also true that the decline of these mechanisms had the further effect of allowing party factionalism greater expression. The result of these developments was to heighten the power and indepen-

dence of the individual member and of key organizational units in the House. Denied the power they possessed over the individual member under Czar rule or caucus rule, party leaders began to function less as the commanders of a stable party majority and more as brokers trying to assemble particular majorities behind particular bills. Denied the power they possessed over the organizational structure under Czar rule or caucus rule, party leaders began to function less as directors of the organizational units and more as bargainers for their support.

These tendencies intensified as time passed. During the 1920s the breakdown of the steering committee and the rise of seniority to predominance cast party leaders more firmly in the roles of brokers and bargainers than had been the case at the start of the decade (Chiu, 1928, pp. 315-36 and Hasbrouck, 1927, pp. 48-50). Similarly, events during the 1930s confirmed and strengthened these roles. If the level of party cohesion during the 1920s was not high enough to permit reliance on party control mechanisms, it was still of such proportions that in general the holders of key organizational positions were loyal to the leadership and willing to cooperate with it. Nor, despite the increases in factionalism and bloc voting, did party leaders during the 1920s confront any stable and comprehensive basis of division among their fellow partisans, any extensive and consistent split across a whole range of issues. By the late 1930s, however, the situation had changed in both these regards.

After a brief increase in party voting during the initial years of the New Deal, party strength again began to decline in a steady and substantial fashion (Sinclair, 1978). Moreover, this decline gave birth to a new and distinctive feature, the Conservative Coalition (Brady and Bullock, 1980; Manley, 1977). Table 3 provides supportive data on both trends.

Thus, as the 1930s came to an end, party politics in the House began to display characteristics and configurations that were to become entrenched in the 1940s and to endure for several decades. These changes, however, made the task of the majority party leadership more, not less arduous. First, party divisions in the majority party now assumed a pronounced bifurcated form. In seeking to build majorities from issue to issue, the leadership accordingly was frequently threatened with the loss of support of a substantial portion of the southern wing of the party, a wing that from the late 1930s to late 1950s was roughly equal in size to the northern wing of the party (Cooper and Bombardier, 1968). Second, the divisions within the majority party now began to be translated into the organizational structure in a manner that far exceeded previous experience. The party leader-

Table 3. The Decline of Party Voting in the House and the Rise of the Conservative Coalition (1909-1953)

| Congress | Year | Percent Party Votes | Percent Coalition Activity | Percent Coalition Victories |
|----------|------|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 61 | 1909 | 29.4 | — | — |
| 62 | 1911 | 23.0 | — | — |
| 63 | 1913 | 19.9 | — | — |
| 64 | 1915 | 21.7 | — | — |
| 65 | 1917 | 9.4 | — | — |
| 66 | 1919 | 14.9 | — | — |
| 67 | 1921 | 35.2 | — | — |
| 68 | 1923 | 13.4 | — | — |
| 69 | 1925 | 5.3 | 3.5 | 63.5 |
| 70 | 1927 | 5.6 | 1.4 | 100.0 |
| 71 | 1929 | 13.6 | 5.8 | 80.0 |
| 72 | 1931 | 13.8 | 4.9 | 62.0 |
| 73 | 1933 | 18.9 | 2.1 | 48.0 |
| 74 | 1935 | 14.2 | 4.3 | 56.0 |
| 75 | 1937 | 11.8 | 7.6 | 67.0 |
| 76 | 1939 | 17.6 | 9.3 | 95.0 |
| 77 | 1941 | 10.5 | 12.5 | 92.0 |
| 78 | 1943 | 9.6 | 21.8 | 96.0 |
| 79 | 1945 | 12.1 | 22.1 | 88.0 |
| 80 | 1947 | 12.7 | 19.6 | 100.0 |
| 81 | 1949 | 6.5 | 16.4 | 83.0 |
| 82 | 1951 | 4.9 | 24.9 | 86.0 |

Sources: David Brady, Joseph Cooper and Patricia Hurley, "The Decline of Party Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 4 (1979): 381-407; David Brady and Charles Bullock, "Is There a Conservative Coalition in the House?" *Journal of Politics* 42 (1980): 549-59.

ship's ability to use the machinery of the House to suit its own purposes accordingly declined. It began to encounter difficulty securing the support of particular committees and committee chairmen much more frequently. This was especially true of the one committee in the House on which the leadership was most dependent and which historically had always been regarded as falling within the province of the leadership—the Rules Committee. For the first time in history the leadership found itself confronted with a Rules Committee that regarded itself and acted as an independent agent, rather than as an arm of the leadership (Galloway, 1961, pp. 145-48; Jones, 1968).

These developments further weakened the power and position of the leadership and in so doing further enhanced the independence of individual members and organizational units. Moreover, the impact was long-lasting, not transitory. A divided majority party was less amenable to leadership direction and control than an incohesive one. From the late 1930s on, the leadership was forced to place even more reliance on brokerage and bargaining than had been necessary in the early 1930s or 1920s (Herring, 1940, pp. 21-45).

The Rayburn House

The period from 1910 to 1940 may therefore be seen as a period of transition in the character of the House as a political institution. By 1940, the year Sam Rayburn assumed the Speakership, a new and distinctive type of House had emerged. It was a House that was destined to endure in most of its essential features until the reform of the Rules Committee in the early 1960s and in many of its essential features until the reemergence of the caucus in the late 1960s (Cooper, 1970; Brady et al., 1979).

The House under Decentralized Rule. The Rayburn House was a far different body from the House of Cannon or Reed. Centralization of power and hierarchical control had given way to a diffusion of power and bargaining.

On the one hand, the majority party leadership could no longer command the organizational units due to the breakdown of party control mechanisms and the elimination of the Speaker's prerogatives over appointment and the Rules Committee. Rather, it had to seek to win their

support and do so in a context in which divisions in the majority party had become so pronounced that they had begun to appear at key vantage points in the organizational structure. On the other hand, the majority party leadership could no longer command overwhelming support from the ranks of its partisans on the floor due both to the decline in party strength and the decline in the fund of rewards and sanctions at its disposal. Rather, it had to seek to build majorities from issue to issue and do so in a context in which a deep split existed in the ranks of the majority party and distaste for party discipline was intense and pervasive. Political scientists writing about the House in the 1940s and 1950s accordingly emphasized themes quite different from those emphasized in the initial decades of this century: the primacy and amount of catering to constituency, not party loyalty or discipline; the dispersed and kaleidoscopic character of power in the House, not the authority and responsibilities of party leaders; the role of committee chairmen as autonomous and autocratic chieftains, not their operation as loyal party lieutenants (Young, 1943; Gross, 1953).

However, the fact that power became decentralized in the House does not mean that significant centers of power did not continue to exist. What occurred was a wider dispersal of power, not its fractionalization.

First, the party leadership retained substantial ability to influence and even control outcomes in the House. If party voting decreased, the party bond remained important both because of the degree of agreement still present and because of the interest most members had in establishing some kind of party record. Thus, though the leadership could no longer rule the House on the basis of votes drawn from its own party, it could still usually count on a large and stable reservoir of support from its fellow partisans (Mayhew, 1966). In addition, party leaders continued to derive leverage from other sources. The formal powers remaining to the Speaker aided their ability to control access to the floor and proceedings on the floor. The influence party leaders maintained over the party committee on committees enabled them to alter the political complexion of particular committees through the screening of new appointments. The power party leaders retained, due to their positions in the House and in the party, to dispense favors and build up credits augmented their capacity to secure the cooperation of ordinary members and holders of organizational positions (Ripley, 1967). Finally, the leadership could rely on the president's influence to win the support of reluctant partisans both in committee and on the floor.

Second, committees and committee chairmen emerged as rival power centers of great impor-

tance. In a context in which House rules gave the committees immense power over the handling of legislation within their jurisdictions and committee rules and practice gave their chairmen immense power within their committees, the decline in leadership authority and power redounded to the advantage of the committees and their chairmen. Typically, committee opposition to legislation sealed its fate, even when favored by the leadership. Conversely, committees that operated in a unified fashion were accorded great deference on the floor and had high levels of success (Fenno, 1962). Party leaders thus could not treat committees merely as instruments of their will nor chairmen simply as loyal lieutenants. Rather, they had to function largely as petitioners of committee support and floor managers of committee legislation.

In the Rayburn House the committees accordingly reemerged as the feudal baronies they had been in the decades immediately preceding Czar rule. And, indeed, to a significant degree the story of the Rayburn House is a story of conflict among northern majorities in the Democratic party, the majority party leadership, and southern-dominated committees in which northern pressure for action was continuing, leadership efforts sporadic, and committee obstruction very difficult to overcome. Ironically enough, then, the ultimate result of the revolt of 1910 was to redefine the problem of majority rule in the House, not to solve it. A new and equally serious difficulty, i.e., minority obstruction, simply replaced the difficulty that had aroused passions in the preceding era, i.e., autocratic leadership power.

Leadership Style in the Rayburn House. In sum, by 1940 the role and power of the party leadership in the House had been substantially altered. Though the leadership retained responsibility for and continued to provide overall guidance and direction in the conduct of the House's business, it now had to operate within a far harsher set of constraints than in 1910. At the floor stage, the leadership usually had no choice but to engage in the painful process of assembling shifting majorities behind particular bills through bargaining and maneuver. At the committee stage, the leadership was often forced to engage in intricate and prolonged negotiation with committees and committee chairmen. Indeed, the leadership was now placed in a position where inability to accommodate an organizational unit would mean failure to pass party legislation, unless it was able to organize a majority of such strength and intensity that it could force a vote on the floor through the pressure of opinion in the House or the use of a mechanism such as discharge. The result was that by

1940 the personal, political skills of the leadership, rather than its sources of institutional power, had become the critical determinant of the fate of party programs.

All this, in turn, led to the emergence of a leadership style that contrasted markedly with that of Cannon and Reed. The components of this new style emerged gradually in the 1920s and 1930s as power in the House decentralized. It crystallized under Rayburn and was fully applied by him. It represented his experienced and finely tuned sense of what made for effective leadership in a House in which the Speaker lacked the formal powers of a Czar, had to mobilize a majority party fairly evenly balanced between discordant northern and southern elements, confronted a set of committees and committee chairmen with great power and autonomy, and had to deal with individual members who rejected party discipline and prized their independence.

The main facets of the Rayburn style can be analyzed in terms of the following categories: personal friendship and loyalty, permissiveness, restrained partisanship and conflict reduction, informality, and risk avoidance.

Whereas Cannon and Reed relied on their authority and power as Speakers and party chiefs, Rayburn relied on personal friendship and loyalty. If the Speaker could no longer command the House, his vantage points in the formal and party systems as well as his personal prestige provided a variety of opportunities to do favors for members. Rayburn exploited these opportunities in a skillful and imaginative manner. He sought continually to bind members to him as a person on the basis of favors rendered to them as persons, favors which eased their lives in Washington, enhanced their sense of personal worth, and/or advanced their political careers. In contrast to Cannon and Reed, who emphasized policy goals over personal relationships, Rayburn sought to attain policy goals through personal relationships, through nurturing friendships and creating obligations (Bolling, 1965, pp. 65-68; Daniels, 1946, pp. 56-58).

Whereas Cannon and Reed were quite intolerant of party defection and quite amenable to employing punishments as well as rewards as means of inducement, Rayburn was very permissive. He explicitly legitimized party irregularity on the basis of policy disagreement or constituency pressure and was reluctant ever to punish or coerce a member. To be sure, he did withhold rewards or favors from those he felt failed to cooperate with him for light or insubstantial reasons. Nonetheless, his prevailing inclination was not to alienate members whose vote or help he might need on future occasions (Steinberg, p. 178).

Whereas Cannon and Reed were highly partisan

and accepted both intraparty and interparty conflict as necessary aspects of majority party leadership, Rayburn sought to temper partisanship in personal relationships and to restrain conflict generally. He saw party mechanisms, such as the caucus and steering committee, as mechanisms for exacerbating party divisions and studiously ignored them. He established friendly relations with minority party leaders receptive to his overtures and extended advice and favors to rank-and-file minority members. He emphasized reciprocity and compromise as the prime behavioral rules for all members. Thus the guiding motif of his regime was not "serve party policy goals," but rather "to get along, go along," i.e., trade favors (MacNeil, 1963, pp. 84-85).

Whereas Cannon and Reed sought to achieve party programs by mobilizing partisan majorities and working through a stable set of partisan lieutenants, Rayburn's approach was more informal and ad hoc. Bargaining needs and opportunities determined his legislative strategies and personal contact served as his main means of implementing these strategies. Thus, on the whole, he worked through varying sets of trusted friends who were loyal Democrats and whom he had placed in key positions in the committee system. However, he was not averse when pressed at the committee stage to appealing to powerful opponents, who were nonetheless close friends, for help, men such as the southern Democratic stalwart, Gene Cox, or the Republican leader, Joe Martin. Similarly, at the floor stage he customarily asked varying sets of members, who were close friends and/or owed him favors, to insure his majority by standing ready to vote for him if needed, even against their policy preferences and/or constituency interests (Clapp, 1963, pp. 286-87).

Finally, whereas Cannon and Reed were aggressive in the pursuit of party policy goals, Rayburn was cautious. His inclination was to avoid battles when the outcome was uncertain. To be sure, in instances when a Democratic president and/or large number of his fellow partisans pressed him, he would usually wage some sort of fight. But both because he felt that defeat undermined his influence and because he did not like to expend his credits in losing causes, his clear and decided preference was to refuse battle, to wait until prospects for victory were favorable. Similarly, he shied away from challenging any of the key facets of decentralized power in the House, despite their restrictive impact on his ability to lead. His inclination was to work with what existed and endure, rather than to seek basic change. Only when extremely provoked did he contest the power of senior chairmen or the prerogatives of the Rules Committee and even then only indirectly. Thus he did not discipline Graham Barden but rather took

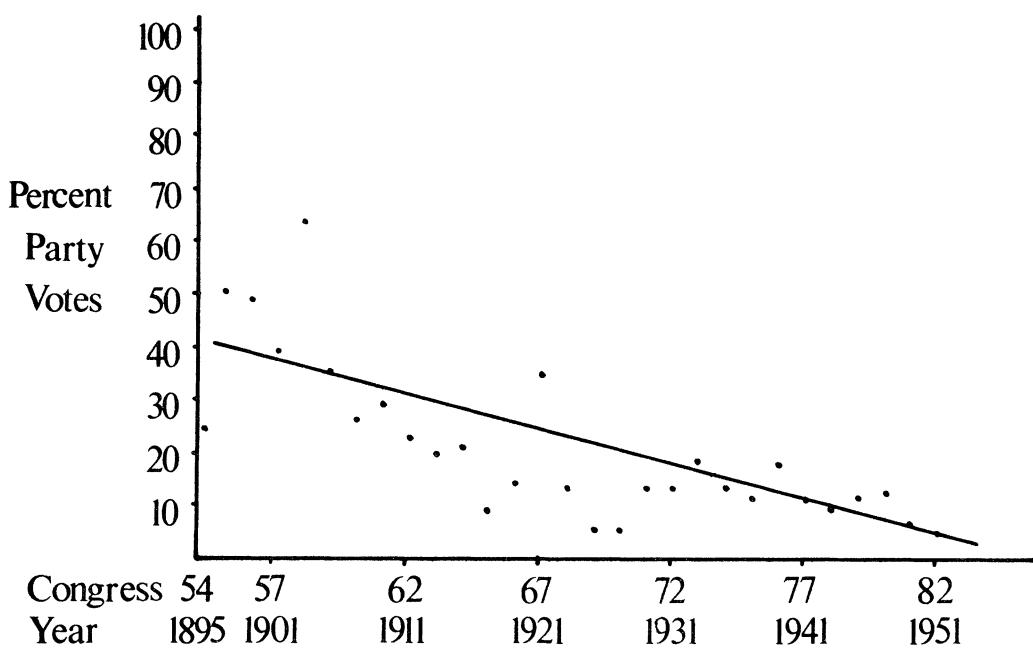
over the Education and Labor Committee by filling vacancies with liberal Democrats. Thus he did not discipline Howard Smith or Bill Colmer or limit the power of the Rules Committee. He rather chose to expand its membership. In short, then, Rayburn was far more inclined to accept the defeat of party programs than to risk his influence and prestige in battles to attain them (Clapp, 1963, pp. 66-69; Wicker, 1968, pp. 43-54).

The Bases of Personalized Leadership. Earlier we argued that Czar rule derived from the interaction of the Speaker's formal powers and his leverage as party chief. We further argued that party strength was the determining factor in this interaction and that it was rooted primarily in the polarized constituency bases of the two parties. The emergence by 1940 of a new type of House and a new leadership style, both of which we may identify with Sam Rayburn, can be explained in terms of the altered character and impact of these same variables.

Confining ourselves simply to events in the House, the interaction between formal power and

party strength again played a critical, though quite different, role. As we have already suggested, the interaction of these variables now worked to reduce leadership power. Party strength could no longer support or justify high concentrations of formal power in the leadership. Limited formal power, however, allowed party divisions fuller expression and increases in these divisions undermined party control mechanisms. The atrophy of these mechanisms, in turn, augmented the power and independence of party factions and transformed the leadership into bargainers and brokers, into middlemen rather than commanders (Truman, 1959, pp. 202-27).

Evidence of the continuing decline in party strength, which we interpret as both cause and effect of the decentralization of power in the House, has already been presented in Table 3. To reinforce our tabular evidence we regressed party voting against time for the whole period from 1894-1952. The results are presented in Figure 1. The slope of the line is negative ($B = -1.3$) and the correlation between time and party voting -74 . Clearly, changes in party strength and changes in



$$\begin{aligned} \text{Intercept} &= 40.8 \\ B &= -1.3 \\ r &= -.74 \end{aligned}$$

Source: David Brady, Joseph Cooper, and Patricia Hurley, "The Decline of Party in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1887-1968," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 4 (1979): 384-85.

Figure 1. Party Voting in the House of Representatives (1895-1953)

institutional structure covary in a manner that is consistent with our argument.

Nonetheless, if we again would acknowledge the impact of the internal, interactive effect between formal power and party strength and accord party strength the determining role in this interaction, we again would also argue that levels of party strength are subject primarily to external determination. In short, though restricted formal power provided a context in which party divisions could be expressed and extended, the primary engine of increased divisiveness was increased disharmony in the constituency bases underlying the majority party coalition. Thus, as in the case of leadership power and style during the period of Czar rule, the key to the Rayburn House and the Rayburn style lies in electoral alignment patterns.

Table 2 shows that from 1881 to 1921 party strength was high when the constituency bases of the parties were highly polarized and that it declined when these bases became less polarized. We have argued that increased factionalization in the party system was the primary source of the increased divisiveness that undermined the use of party control mechanisms in the 1920s. In order to show how constituency alignments are related to the further decline of party and the emergence of the Rayburn House, it is necessary to analyze the New Deal realignment and its aftermath.

The political revolution known as the New Deal was the product of the Great Depression. The voters providing the Democrats their majority came primarily from those groups most affected by the depression, farmers and low-income city dwellers, including blue-collar workers, ethnic groups, and blacks. Thus, the New Deal resulted

in an increase in Democratic party allegiance across all constituent characteristics. Rather than recreating polarized congressional parties as in the period of Czar rule, the New Deal created a monolithic majority party which encompassed all types of constituencies. To the Democratic party's traditional base of support, the rural South, it added the urban Northeast and the urban and rural Midwest (Sundquist, 1973, pp. 183-218; Ladd and Hadley, 1975, pp. 31-88).

Table 4 illustrates and supports this point. It includes the following data, collected from the 1930 census and mapped onto congressional districts: the number of blue-collar workers, value added by manufactures, and population density. Constituencies are ranked as high or low in relation to these characteristics in terms of the national mean and the percentage increase as well as the absolute ratio increase calculated for Democratic congressmen.

The monolithic majority party coalition created by the New Deal was formed around the basic issue of government aid to combat the effects of the Depression. Hoover and the Republican party favored voluntarism and nonintervention, whereas the Democrats favored active government involvement. As long as the issue of the role of government in combating the Depression remained the central and defining one, congressional Democrats had a broad basis for unity, despite their increased disparteness. And, indeed, in the 1930s there was a break in the long-term trend toward declining party voting (see Figure 1). However, as is now evident, the Roosevelt coalition could not maintain its cohesion across changing issue dimensions (Sinclair, 1978). As a monolithic rather

Table 4. Increases in Congressional Majority Party Composition during 1932 Realignment

| District Characteristic | Percent Democratic Congressmen | | | Absolute Ratio Increase |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 70th House (1927-29) | 73rd House (1933-35) | Percentage Increase | |
| Blue-Collar | | | | |
| Low (Farm) | 57 | 82 | 25 | 1.37 |
| High (Labor) | 32 | 64 | 32 | 1.97 |
| Value Added | | | | |
| Low (Non-Industrial) | 54 | 81 | 27 | 1.40 |
| High (Industrial) | 34 | 67 | 33 | 1.89 |
| Density | | | | |
| Low (Rural) | 53 | 77 | 24 | 1.38 |
| High (Urban) | 30 | 67 | 37 | 1.96 |

Source: Compiled from U.S. Bureau of Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States (1930): Agriculture*, Vol. 2, parts 1, 2 and 3; *Manufactures*, Vol. 3; *Population*, Vol. 3, parts 1 and 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office).

than polarized coalition, it was particularly vulnerable to the emergence of issues that would divide its various components rather than unite them as the Depression had done.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s two factors combined to redefine the political climate and render it far less hospitable to majority party unity. The first was the alteration in the character and thrust of the New Deal, which focused attention and controversy on the federal government's general role as an agent of social welfare rather than its narrower role as an agent of economic recovery. The divisive potential of this development was signaled by the battle over New Deal legislation in the 75th Congress (1937-1939), a battle that in the eyes of many analysts marks the true emergence of the Conservative Coalition (Brady and Bullock, 1980). The second was the worsening international situation, which finally led to the Second World War. This development focused attention and controversy not only on defense and foreign policy, but on the management of a war economy as well. In so doing, it also bypassed or submerged old bases of Democratic unity and reinforced divisions along liberal-conservative lines (Young, 1956).

The emergence and growth of the Conservative Coalition in the late 1930s and early 1940s, documented in Table 3, testifies to the impact of these factors in producing a new and enduring split in the congressional Democratic party that was rooted in differences between rural conservative southern constituencies and urban liberal northern ones. Nor is it surprising that as the dimensions of the split increased and finally stabilized, party voting declined. A comparison of the data in Table 3 broadly demonstrates the point; but to pin it down we calculated the correlation (Pearson's r) between Conservative Coalition activity and party voting for the period 1931-1953. The result is an impressive $-.67$.

In short, then, external factors are of primary importance in accounting for personalized rule as well as Czar rule. In a context in which the interaction of restricted formal power and declining party strength had already combined to disperse power, the emergence of a basic split in the majority party, rooted in constituency differences, further substantially undermined leadership power. Rayburn's highly personalized style was thus a reaction to his party situation, to the corps of independent and divided partisans he had to work with and lead. Indeed, his style is not only distinguishable in kind from that of Cannon and Reed, but even in degree from that of preceding Democratic Speakers, such as Garner and Rainey, who did not have to worry continually about southern support on key committees and the floor (MacNeil, 1963, p. 34).

Conclusion

Our historical analysis of the transition from Cannon to Rayburn suggests several broad propositions or hypotheses that explain House leadership roles and behavior and have general import or significance for the analysis of legislative leadership. They are as follows.

First, institutional context rather than personal skill is the primary determinant of leadership power in the House. To be sure, leadership power, like other forms of power, is a combination of the fund of inducements available and the skill with which they are used. Nonetheless, skill cannot fully compensate for deficiencies in the quality or quantity of inducements. Indeed, the very skills required of leaders themselves vary in terms of the parameters and needs imposed by the character of the House as a political institution at particular points in its history. Thus, Rayburn was not and could not be as powerful a Speaker as Cannon or Reed. His sources of leverage in the formal and party systems were simply not comparable. Nor did Reed or Cannon require the same level of skill in building credits or bargaining as Rayburn to maximize their power. Similarly, it is doubtful that O'Neill can be as strong a Speaker as Rayburn whatever the level of skill he possesses, given the increased fractionalization in both the formal and party systems that has occurred in the past two decades.

Second, institutional context rather than personal traits primarily determines leadership style in the House. To be sure, style is affected by personal traits. Nonetheless, style is and must be responsive to and congruent with both the inducements available to leaders and member expectations regarding proper behavior. Indeed, the personal traits of leaders are themselves shaped by the character of the House as a political institution at particular points in time through the impact of socialization and selection processes that enforce prevailing norms. Thus, if Rayburn was a more permissive and consensual leader than Cannon or Reed, this is not because he was inherently a less tough or more affective person, but rather because of his weaker sources of leverage and the heightened individualism of members. If O'Neill's leadership style is far closer to that of Rayburn, McCormack, and Albert than to Cannon or Reed, this is not attributable to basic personality similarities and differences.⁴ It is rather attributable to

⁴O'Neill's style is more partisan in personal relationships and more consultative or open than Rayburn's. But it remains highly personal, ad hoc, informal, and permissive. See *National Journal* (1977), pp. 940-46; (1978), pp. 4-9, 1384-88; (1979), pp. 1326-31.

the fact that the House he leads is far more like theirs than the House during the days of Czar rule. Similarly, though leaders remain distinct personalities (note, for example, O'Neill and Albert), range of tolerance for personal traits or predispositions that conflict with prevailing norms is restricted. O'Neill therefore must and does curb the exercise of new sources of leverage gained since the revival of the majority caucus in 1969 to avoid even appearing like a Czar.⁵ In contrast, members who cannot eliminate or temper traits that run counter to prevailing norms are disadvantaged in the pursuit of leadership office. Witness Dick Bolling who would have been far more at home in the House of the 1890s.⁶ In a basic sense, then, the impact of context on leadership style has something of the character of a self-fulfilling hypothesis.

Third, there is no direct relationship between leadership style and effectiveness in the House. This is true whether effectiveness is interpreted relatively or absolutely. Interpreted relatively, effectiveness is a matter of the skill with which resources are used, not actual results. However, whereas style is primarily determined by the parameters and needs imposed by the political character of the House as an institution at certain points in his history, particular styles can be applied with varying degrees of skill. Note, for example, the differences between Rayburn, McCormack, and Albert. Similarly, if effectiveness is interpreted absolutely, i.e., in terms of actual results of achievements, there is still no direct or simple relationship between style and effectiveness. On the one hand, there is no one best "style"; the relationship between style and effectiveness is rather a highly contingent or situational variable. On the other hand, even when contexts dictate roughly similar styles, they do not necessarily accord them roughly equal chances of suc-

cess. Thus, given his sources of leverage in the formal and party systems, O'Neill has little choice but to adopt a leadership style that in many key respects is similar to Rayburn's. Yet, the greater degree of fractionalization in both systems in the 1970s, as opposed to the 1940s, reduces his overall prospects for success in passing party programs. O'Neill therefore is likely to have far less success overall than Rayburn, even though he too leads in a highly personal, informal, permissive, and ad hoc manner.

Fourth, and last, the impact of institutional context on leadership power and style is determined primarily by party strength. To be sure, the degree of organizational elaboration substantially affects the intensity of the demands imposed on integrative capacity and is largely a product of factors other than party strength, e.g., size and workload. Nonetheless, integrative capacity derives or flows primarily from party strength (Cooper, 1975). The higher the degree of party unity or cohesion the more power in both the formal and party systems can be concentrated in the hands of party leaders and the more leadership style will be oriented to command and task or goal attainment. The lower the degree of party unity or cohesion the more power in both the formal and party system will be dispersed and the more leadership style will be oriented to bargaining and the maintenance of good relations. The infrequency of eras of centralized power in the House is thus explicable in terms of the very high levels of party strength required to support it, requirements which have increased as the organization itself has become more elaborate. Similarly, the degree of power dispersion now present is explicable in terms of present weaknesses in party unity or coherence both in absolute terms and relative to an organizational structure that has grown far more complex in the past two decades. Given the dependence of internal party strength on appropriate constituency alignments, all this, in turn, means that leadership power and style are ultimately tied to the state of the party system in the electorate, that external or environmental factors have a decisive bearing on the parameters and needs that institutional context imposes on leadership power and style. In short, then, to be understood Cannon and Reed must be seen in the context of an entire party system, and the same applies to Rayburn in the 1940s and 1950s and to O'Neill today.

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⁵Since the mid-1970s the Speaker has had the power to nominate Democratic members of the Rules Committee to the Democratic Caucus and the power to multiply or sequentially refer legislation to committees, to establish time limits for their reports (in effect, Speaker discharge), and to establish special ad hoc committees to receive such reports and report to the House. However, the Speaker has used ad hoc committees and referral with a time limit cautiously. In addition, he has not as yet refused to recommend the reappointment of any sitting Rules Committee member and threatened to do so only rarely and even then only by implication. See *National Journal* (1977), pp. 940-46.

⁶Bolling is perhaps more reminiscent of Reed than any recent House leader. Compare Polksy (1969, pp. 343-45), Bolling (1975, pp. 236-44), and *National Journal* (1976, pp. 170-71, with Brown (1922, pp. 84-97) and Robinson (1930, pp. 377-99).

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