

Chapter 24 – Tri-Party Conflict: The 86th Congress

The 28 surviving members of the Class of '46 in the 86th House included only two men who had not served continuously since their initial elections, but it also included eight representatives who came to the 80th Congress through special election. The 18 chosen through regular elections and continuous in service were now tied at 108th in overall seniority, but that of the other ten varied. The 18 had served twelve years in the House as of the start of the 86th Congress, but there were still 107 members with greater seniority. Among these were specially elected Classmates Olin Teague of Texas at 103rd and Burr Harrison of Virginia at 104th. The other specially elected were Robert Jones of Alabama at 126th, Russell Mack of Washington at 127th, Edward Garmatz of Maryland at 128th, Abraham Multer of New York and William McCulloch of Ohio tied at 129th, and Watkins Abbitt of Virginia at 131st. Bryan Dorn, who missed the 81st Congress, was 169th in seniority and Toby Morris of Oklahoma, absent for the 83rd and 84th congresses, was 208th.

Even Morris was more senior than the average person of the 435-member House, but overall seniority counted for far less than that on committees. Here the members of the Class who were chairs remained as before. Democrats Omar Burleson of Texas was still Chair of House Administration and Teague Chair of Veterans' Affairs. Republican Thor Tollefson of Washington was still the ranking member on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. By definition then, the policy areas of their committees were also their specialties, but their activities in the introduction and enactment of bills and resolutions in these areas confirmed their interests and the centrality of their positions in the legislative process.

Teague was the champion legislator of the Class. Over his terms in the House thus far, he introduced 270 Veterans' Affairs bills, and 38 were enacted, 18 this Congress. Tollefson had introduced 55 Merchant Marine and Fisheries bills and eight were enacted (but none this Congress), a pittance next to Teague, but Tollefson was more successful with bill enactments than any other remaining Republican of the Class.¹ Burleson had introduced only seven House Administration bills and only four were enacted (one this Congress), but this committee dealt largely in resolutions, not bills, and Burleson had 39 of those succeed, seven this Congress.

One of Teague's successful bills in the 86th Congress, HR 7650, made a major change in the calculation of pension payments to veterans without service-connected disabilities. It added a means test, while adding benefits for widows of Second World War and Korean conflict veterans. This had Administration support and gained lukewarm endorsement from the major veterans organizations. An immediate increase in pensions was offset by the means test down the road and avoided the push for an increase in pensions for World War One veterans, so-called Wonies. His Veterans' Affairs Committee reported the bill the day after hearings, and the bill passed the House two legislative days later under suspension of the rules. Members got to vote for pensions, while avoiding a big increase for Wonies, and through the speedy process avoiding a high-pressured lobbying assault.²

The champion initiator of legislation in the Class remained Democrat Multer, though far from the titleholder in accomplishment. Through the end of the 86th Congress he introduced 554 public bills, 151 in the

¹ Tollefson's total of eleven public bill enactments through the 86th Congress also exceeded that of any Republicans in the Class as a whole, though Keating might have challenged for the title had he not moved to the Senate after the 85th Congress.

² *CQWR*, June 19, 1959, 816-7, 834; June 26, 1959, 862; August 21, 1959, 1119. MacNeil, 343-4.

86th House alone. A total of two were enacted, but none this Congress. Teague had introduced 424 public bills; 48 became law. Multer was now fifth on Banking and Currency, and 109 of his public bills were for that committee; none of them enacted. Nonetheless, the Credit Union Association of New York gave him recognition for an amendment to HR 8305 in the 86th Congress, amendments to the Federal Credit Union Act, which would allow such entities to cash checks for members.³

Second to Teague on Veterans' Affairs was Democrat Dorn of South Carolina and now chair of the Subcommittee on Compensation and Pension. He had introduced 26 veterans bills, none of which were enacted. But, then, only four of his 67 public bills were and none this Congress. In a sense, Democrat Garmatz was also second fiddle to Republican Tollefson on Merchant Marine. Now third in seniority in the majority party, Garmatz was chair of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard, Coast and Geodetic Survey, and Navigation. He had introduced 22 bills that were sent to the Committee, four of which were enacted, two this Congress.

The bigger change in committee seniority in the new House was among remaining Republicans whose memberships advanced due to the 1958 windowing of so many of their party. Donald Jackson of California moved up one seat on Un-American Activities to become the ranking member thanks to a retirement. Carroll Kearns of Pennsylvania advanced from second in seniority to ranking on Education and Labor due to a retirement, after he had moved up from third during the 85th House with a resignation. McCulloch took a big leap from fourth to ranking on Small Business after a retirement, Classmate Walter Riehlman of New York left for a new committee, and Classmate Horace Seely-Brown of Connecticut was defeated for reelection. More importantly, McCulloch became the ranking member on the Judiciary Committee when Kenneth Keating of New York went to the Senate.

Judiciary was clearly McCulloch's area of specialization. While not a profligate writer of would-be legislation, 17 of the 33 public bills he had introduced, and both of his bills that were enacted (one in the 86th Congress) were Judiciary bills. The preeminent Democratic member of the Class on Judiciary was Harold Donohue of Massachusetts. Only 10th in seniority, he had introduced 23 public Judiciary bills, one of which was enacted (but not in the 86th), his only such success in seven terms.

Kearns focused on the education part of Education and Labor, 60 of his 155 public bills had gone to that committee, two of which were enacted out of his five total successes (none in the 86th). Being the ranking member, he was effectively the Administration's point man on education issues, introducing HR 7140, Eisenhower's effort to restrict Federal education aid to areas impacted by untaxed Federal installations. It was reported that Kearns was uninterested in leaving Education and Labor to fill a vacancy on Ways and Means created by the death of Richard Simpson of Pennsylvania in January 1960.⁴ Kearns also gathered an encomium from *Time*:

Pennsylvania's six-term Republican Congressman Carroll Kearns, onetime Chicago Symphony soloist (baritone) fights a lonely battle for his muse on lawyer-dominated Capitol Hill. Says Kearns, who, at the request of Secretary of State Dulles, recently conducted four Air Force Symphony concerts in Iceland: 'If I could put a Sputnik into the air, I would like to have it wired for sound and have it play "Peace on earth, good will to men."⁵

Kearns also jumped five seats to second in seniority on District of Columbia thanks to the death of Simpson, a retirement, and three defeats, including that of Classmate John Allen of California. While he

³ CUANY.org.

⁴ *CQWR*, April 1, 1960, 575. *The Titusville Herald*, January 16, 1960.

⁵ *Time*, January 26, 1959.

did not redirect his primary interests from Education, he paid attention as well to his duties as a member of the District Committee. He had introduced 30 such bills and three were enacted.

Jackson's enhanced position on HUAC reflected his interests as well as anything could, though this would not be apparent in legislation through a committee that handled few bills. Jackson did introduce one bill for the Committee and that was in the 86th, but the only public bill of his that was enacted was a civil service bill and not in this congress. Jackson's interest in legislation ran to private bills – he had introduced 138 compared to 31 public bills, and 17 of the former were enacted, one this Congress. Of the remaining members of the Class, only Jackson had introduced more private than public bills.

The largest leap, though not to the top, was taken by Republican Wint Smith of Kansas, who moved from the twelfth position on Agriculture to the sixth. There were two retirements, two defeats (including Classmate Ralph of Harvey of Indiana), and two deaths (including Richard Simpson). One would expect Smith to care about agriculture, but he had been on the Committee only since the previous congress. He did have an agriculture bill enacted this Congress, his only success with a public bill, but he had introduced only five meant for the Committee. His improved seating on Agriculture brought him the ranking position on two subcommittees, Family Farms and Rice, the latter being little relevant to his constituents. Smith had traded Education and Labor for Agriculture, and his bill introductions for the former committee also totaled five, with an emphasis on the Labor part, still not particularly relevant to his constituents.

The fourth place of Georgian James Davis among Democrats on the District of Columbia Committee was critical in his specialization. He was chair of one of the Committee's numbered subcommittees.⁶ Sixteen of his District bills were successfully enacted, placing him second to Teague in public bill accomplishment. Nor did he ignore his second committee, Post Office and Civil Service, where he was third overall and chair of the Subcommittee on Manpower Utilization. He had introduced 49 Post Office bills in addition to his 56 District of Columbia bills, but only two of the former were enacted. He had no enactments in the 86th Congress.

Davis was also appointed chair of a new Special Subcommittee on Home Rule for the District. Among the bills offered was one by Multer, HR 4630, which was the Administration's. Despite a press release of Multer striking balls and chains from a female model in convict stripes using a mallet labeled, "HOME RULE BILL" and filing two discharge petitions, Multer was not able to shake the bill from committee.⁷

John Bell Williams of Mississippi was seventh on District of Columbia, but his focus was his second seat on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, where he chaired the Subcommittee on Transportation and Aeronautics. The former Air Corps pilot's specialty was aeronautics. Seven of the 49 Commerce bills he had introduced were enacted (three this Congress), four dealing with air travel.

Other notable committee changes were McCulloch's appointment to the Joint Committee on Immigration and Nationality Policy, Smith's appointment on District of Columbia and the Civil War Centennial Commission, the return of Katherine St. George of New York to Post Office and Civil Service after the hiatus of the 85th Congress, and, particularly, the placing of Riehlman and Teague on the new

⁶ Numbered subcommittees, rather than those identified by a subject area, were attractive to committee chairs in allowing them more latitude in assigning bills for consideration and thus having more influence over the actions taken on the proposed legislation. Reversions from numbered to named subcommittees could indicate a revolt of committee members at high-handed actions by the committee chair.

⁷ *CQWR*, July 17, 1959, 964; July 31, 1959, 1028; August 28, 1959, 1185; January 29, 1960, 165-6; June 3, 1960, 978. *The Washington Daily News*, February 17, 1959.

Committee on Science and Astronautics. St. George had been third on Post Office in the 84th House but now was ninth. Riehlman gave up the ranking position on Small Business (up from second in the 85th Congress) for the new committee, while Teague gave up fourth (up from fifth) on District of Columbia. In return Riehlman became the ninth Republican and Teague the fourth Democrat on Science and Aeronautics.

St. George was an active instigator of Post Office and Civil Service legislation, with her total of 73 introductions through the 86th Congress, but only 14 of these had been since she traded the Post Office Committee for Armed Services. That still topped her authoring of ten bills for the latter in those two years. Still, she was successful with four Armed Services enactments (one in the 86th) and only two Post Office ones. Riehlman remained second on the Government Operations Committee and was ranking on the Subcommittee on Military Operations. He had been on the Committee now for seven terms and had introduced only five bills to do with its activities. One was enacted, his only such success. In comparison, he had introduced 17 unsuccessful bills that were handled by Ways and Means.

Democrat Porter Hardy of Virginia topped Republican St. George with five enacted Armed Services bills, but none in the 86th. Only tenth in seniority and not a chair of a standing committee, he still made news and affected policy through his active investigations of government waste, primarily in military programs.

Tax bills, those that were allocated to Ways and Means, were quite popular with members of the Class. Through the 86th Congress, they introduced 858 of them and only 96 Government Operations bills. Sixteen of the former and five of the latter were enacted, meaning that a Government Operations bill was about three times as likely to be enacted as the more popular Ways and Means bill.

The Public Works Committee was the major focus of John Blatnik of Minnesota, Robert Jones of Alabama, and Mack. Blatnik was now fourth and Jones was fifth in seniority among Democrats, while Mack was second among Republicans. Blatnik was chair of the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors and of the new Special Subcommittee on Federal-Aid Highway Programs. Jones was chair of the Subcommittee on Public Buildings and Grounds. Mack was ranking on the Subcommittee on Flood Control. Each introduced numerous Public Works bills, 23 for Blatnik, 22 for Jones, and 20 for Mack. The Democrats had success in these, six for Blatnik and five (two in the 86th) for Jones were enacted, while Mack came up with nil. It is worth noting that both Blatnik and Mack moved more Ways and Means bills than Public Works bills, none of the former being enacted.

One of Blatnik's failures was HR 3610 to amend the Water Pollution Control Act. Eisenhower asked for \$20 million in grants in fiscal 1960 as a last paydown, after which telephone service taxes would descend to the states to fund the program. Blatnik's bill would set the annual amount at \$100 million and not address telephone taxes. The House adopted Blatnik's amount, the Senate set the sum at \$80 million, and the conference came up with \$90 million, which was adopted. Eisenhower vetoed the bill and the House failed to override on a near-party-line vote. The original grant program thus survived but at its lower amount. Among the Class, Riehlman was the only Republican to vote to override, while five Southern Democrats (Davis, Williams, Dorn, Abbitt, Harrison) supported the veto.⁸

Most important in influencing policy were the members of the Class on the three exclusive committees. Harrison moved up from tenth to seventh and Frank Karsten from eleventh to eighth on Ways and Means (due to one member failing of renomination and two dying), and Harrison secured the

⁸ *CQWR*, January 16, 1959, 62; June 12, 1959, 786. Jennings. Burleson did not vote.

chairship of the Subcommittee on Administration of Social Security Laws. Democrat Joe Evins of Tennessee remained on Appropriations, now nineteenth instead of twentieth (due to a failure of renomination). Prince Preston and Otto Passman remained a paltry thirteenth and fourteenth in seniority on Appropriations but retained their critical chairships of the Subcommittees on Department of Commerce and Related Agencies and on Foreign Operations, respectively.

Four of Harrison's tax bills (two in the 86th) and two of Karsten's (one in the 86th) were among the Class's elusive sixteen enacted. Preston and Passman continued as the sponsors of record of the enacted Appropriations bills in their areas. Evins had no Appropriations bill sponsorships to his name and his chairship of the Subcommittee on Organization and Operations of the Small Business Administration in the "temporary" Small Business Committee could bear no legislative fruit. His previous tenure on Veterans' Affairs corresponded to the 37 bills he introduced in that area, none of which were enacted. He had two public bills enactments to show for seven terms, a Public Works bill in the 85th and an Interior bill in the 86th.

The most successful remaining member of the House in Interior and Insular Affairs bills was Morris with five enactments out of 47 introduced, but only five of his sponsorships were in the last two terms after his return from a two-term hiatus from the House. On return he had taken a seat on Armed Services, where he was now sixteenth in seniority. He introduced one Armed Services bill while on that committee, but his one successful public bill during that period was an Interior bill in the 86th Congress.

Still the most prominent member of the Class of '46 in the House remained Carl Albert of Oklahoma in his third term as Majority Whip for the Democrats. In legislation, four of his ten public enactments over his time in the House were Agriculture bills, and such were the bulk of his introductions. He was now seventh in tenure on the Agriculture Committee and chair of the Subcommittee on Wheat. Abbitt was the other Democratic member of the Class specializing in Agriculture, chairing the Subcommittee on Tobacco, more critical for his District than was wheat for Albert's. Republican Paul Dague of Pennsylvania also focused on Agriculture and was second in seniority among his party on the Committee as well as ranking on Abbitt's subcommittee and on the Subcommittee on Foreign Agricultural Operations. Yet his public bill introductions were greater in number on Ways and Means and Veterans' Affairs and equivalent on Interior. But, no matter, not a one of his 30 public bills was enacted, while his influence within the Agriculture subcommittees was significant.

Among the Republicans, McCulloch would stake a claim to broad influence in being chosen as the acting chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee on December 31, 1959, following the brain surgery of Chair Richard Simpson of Pennsylvania two weeks earlier. This committee raised funds to reelect members of the House as well as new members, and a successful chairship could generate a host of thankful colleagues. As it turned out, however, when Simpson died on January 7, the Committee chose William Miller of New York as the permanent chair in a contest that was fallout from the battle a year before for minority leader.⁹

On January 6, 1959, House Republicans had met in conference to choose their nominee for Speaker. Since that person would inevitably lose to Sam Rayburn, the nominee would become Minority Leader. Joseph Martin had been Republican House leader since 1939 and twice Speaker. He was now 74 and

⁹ *CQWR*, January 8, 1960, 59; January 22, 1960, 117.

hobbling with a thrombotic leg. The Republican second-in-command, Charles Halleck was 16 years younger and known for partisan pugnaciousness, while some considered Martin too accommodating to his friend Rayburn. Halleck, despite his loyalty to the Administration, had had his projected challenges to Martin twice derailed by Eisenhower. Now, his party battered by the 1958 election, the President stood aside and Halleck unseated Martin.¹⁰

The victory of the Indianan is generally portrayed as resulting from the perception of Republican members that a more active and aggressive leader was needed – a choice made over tactics rather than issues. Martin did not see it that way, blaming the automobile industry, business organizations, and “the beef trust,” as well as Vice Pres. Richard Nixon for his defeat. Political columnist Fulton Lewis Jr, using roll call voting scores, contended that it was the more “traditional” members who ousted Martin in a rejection of “modern Republicanism.” Political scientist Andrew Busch would observe that the 1958 election pared some of the more liberal members of the Party from the House, with the result being a more conservative membership. Still, on a secret ballot the more accommodating Martin barely lost, 74-70.¹¹

The secret ballot prevents the categorization of most members of the Class of '46 as pro-Halleck or pro-Martin. Martin, himself, would report that Smith, one of the most right-wing Republicans, backed him in the contest. If the 1959 contest for the chairship of the National Republican Congressional Committee can be taken to indicate loyalties in the leadership battle of the previous year, then McCulloch can be placed with Martin as well. Martin partisans backed McCulloch for the position, while Halleck followers supported William Miller. As with Smith, these lineups did not support the contention that Martin's supporters were more liberal than Halleck's. Congressional Quarterly labeled William Miller a “moderate” and McCulloch a “staunch conservative, while emphasizing that Miller was a Halleck man and McCulloch a Martin loyalist.”¹²

The Halleck-led Party was generally credited with Administration and Republican successes in the 86th House despite its few members. And in spite of the large numbers of Democrats, including newly elected Northern and Western Democrats, that party was largely unsuccessful in enacting legislation. The new members and even those who were chosen over the last few elections remained outside the leadership of the House Democrats. Class of '46 member Oklahoman Albert was third in the leadership but not one of the increasingly liberal non-Southern wing of the Party. The Rules Committee under the control of Southern Democrats and Republicans remained a barrier to liberal legislation.¹³

Americans for Democratic Action was almost never even partially satisfied with the actions of Congress, but their analysis of the output of the 86th Congress was on the mark:

Liberal legislators in the 86th Congress were waging a losing battle against several insurmountable hurdles: (1) the negative exercise of Presidential leadership to block constructive legislation; (2) timid and inept Congressional leadership of a Democratic Party deeply divided on every major issue; (3) the persistence of obsolete Congressional procedures easily manipulated by a conservative minority to thwart majority rules.”¹⁴

¹⁰ Martin as told to Donovan, 8, 16. Scheele (1966), 16-7, 18. Eisenhower (1965), 384. Remini, 383.

¹¹ Busch, 99, 112-3. Scheele (1966), 16. Martin as told to Donovan, 6, 12. *CQWR*, February 8, 1963, 149-53. Lewis used scores calculated by Americans for Democratic Action on votes they considered critical. *Humboldt Standard*, January 15, 1959.

¹² Martin as told to Donovan, 9. *CQWR*, January 22, 1960, 117; February 8, 1963, 149.

¹³ *ADA World*, October 1959. Busch, 99-100. Barone, 307.

¹⁴ *ADA World Congressional Supplement*, September 1960, at adaction.org.

The “obsolete procedures” were primarily those that enabled the Rules Committee to prevent legislation from reaching the floor.

Democratic liberals backed off in their threat to use their majority in the Democratic caucus to force changes in the procedures or membership of the Rules Committee on the assurance of Rayburn that the Committee would not prevent liberal legislation from reaching the floor. The Speaker, however, came up short. Without Martin leading the Republicans and Rayburn fearing to antagonize the Southern wing of the Party, such legislation languished.¹⁵

Blatnik was one of the leaders of the Democrats pressing for action on the Rules Committee, and the failure of Rayburn’s assurances led directly to his central role in the faction formally organizing in September 1959 as the Democratic Study Group. Multer was an original member of its 20-member policy board. Blatnik and Multer, as well as Karsten, had been part of the incipient assemblage in the previous congress. When the following week Rayburn declared he was backing Senator and fellow-Texan Lyndon Johnson, who most of the Group did not support, for the Democratic presidential nomination, the Group decided to develop its own formal legislative program and soon organized its own whip structure. Such an effort produced little legislation, with the Conservative Coalition, though weakened still powerful, if not in raw numbers, but in control of much of the committee system. The choice of the term “study group” was meant to avoid antagonizing Rayburn, but he got the message.¹⁶

While conservative Democrats had no equivalent organization, their strength in league with Republicans was usually sufficient to defeat liberal initiatives. Drew Pearson reported that there was a regular meeting of 33 Southern Democrats and 33 Republicans to work out tentative joint strategies on some bills. He also claimed that one of the matters to benefit from this arrangement was Passman’s amendment to HR 7509, the fiscal 1960 appropriations bill for the Army, Interior Department, and TVA to add \$500,000 for a water hyacinth eradication program in four Southern states. Pearson wrote that minority leader Halleck whipped the Republicans in line as a gesture in support of the alliance. Passman’s amendment passed by four votes in debate but by only one vote on passage. Nevertheless, Eisenhower vetoed the bill and the House failed to override.¹⁷

Dorn was vocal in opposition to critics of the inability of the strengthened Democratic majority to deliver such legislation. When, Paul Butler, the Democrat National Chair spoke in reproach, Dorn called upon him to resign, saying, “The philosophy he expounds is that of the National Socialists, the collectivists and the Fascists.”¹⁸

Pres. Eisenhower’s primary legislative focus in his last two years in office was balancing the budget. The anticipated fiscal 1959 budget surplus was turned into the largest post-War deficit by the recession. A four-month-long steel strike in 1959 exacerbated continuing unemployment, which particularly affected Democrats’ concerns over a parsimonious budget. The President complained that the House tried to add, not always successfully, \$1.26 billion to his fiscal 1960 budget. The struggle over the fiscal 1961 budget in the second session of the 86th Congress was more of the same with the added positioning for the coming

¹⁵ *CQWR*, January 8, 1960, 39-40. Hardeman and Bacon, 429-31. *ADA World*, October 1959.

¹⁶ *CQWR*, January 1, 1965, 2. Busch, 95. Bolling (1965), 54.

¹⁷ Drew Pearson, June 16, 1959. *CQWR*, June 12, 1959, 786-7. Passman claimed that his amendment so angered Clarence Cannon (D MO), the chair of the Appropriations Committee, that he had barely spoken to him in a year. Passman interview (1960).

¹⁸ *CQWR*, July 10, 1959, 940.

election. The Administration budget as realized did achieve a surplus in fiscal 1960, though a more substantial deficit in 1961.¹⁹

The President's program fared reasonably well in the first session, but as 1960 brought a presidential election year, his successes fell as Democratic opposition stiffened. Republicans and Southern Democrats reined in many domestic Democratic initiatives, but Southern Democrats were happy to add \$600 million to Eisenhower's defense budget to publicize the so-called "missile gap" with the Soviets and to bolster Federal spending in many Southern defense installations. The President was not above playing politics with the Congress, copying Truman's 1948 tactic by calling Congress back into special session to pass his program, knowing it would not.²⁰

Among members of the Class of '46, Harrison, a member of Ways and Means, was active on the budget issue in the context of the interest rate of government securities. The Treasury had difficulty raising funds to offset the large fiscal 1959 deficit through bond sales due to a statutory upper limit on interest. Democrats opposed a requested increase from the Administration, which would have enlarged the cost of the national debt. Contrarily, Harrison sponsored HR 8637 to suspend the rate limit for three years. Ways and Means first agreed to the bill then voted it down, with Harrison being the only Democratic vote for it. A small rate increase was ultimately enacted.²¹

One member of the Class introduced an ill-fated bill on tax policy. Teague's HR 11153 was one of a handful that would have reinstated a tax deduction for contributions to organizations that lobbied Congress. Although Teague, chair of Veterans' Affairs, was known to strongly criticize the lobbying by veterans organizations, such a bill would have been a benefit to veterans who contributed to them.²²

Apart from national budget or tax policy, Burleson killed a Senate-passed bill (S 2436) to increase limits and reporting on political contributions. His objection was the extension of this amendment of the Corrupt Practices Act of 1925 to primary elections. With the support of the Speaker, he used his chairship of House Administration never to schedule committee hearings on the bill.²³

Burleson also came under fire for his committee's policing of the disbursement of House committee travel expense money, so-called "contingent funds," as well as his personal drawing on the funds. The House disbursing officer made the accounts public in 1959 and *Knight Newspapers* and *Life* published articles about payments for trips to resorts and night clubs and on luxury liners. Burleson himself was reported to have used the funds for the receipt of \$12 per diem payments for committee work in 84 of 88 days in late 1948, including on weekends, Thanksgiving, and Christmas day. Rayburn decided the accounts should remain open, and Burleson proposed a number of reforms. The legislative branch appropriations bill for fiscal 1961 (HR 12232) included reforms on travel expenses.²⁴

Nepotism on congressional staffs also came up for its periodic newspaper airing in 1959 when the Associated Press published a list of 65 House members who employed staffers of the same surname as the member. Included were Class members Evins (a nephew), Garmatz (sister), Jackson (wife), Robert Jones (wife), Karsten (daughter), Teague (daughter-in-law), and Tollefson (wife). Eleven days after the

¹⁹ Key (1967), 429. *Congress and the Nation* (1965), 369, 372-3, 391. Busch, 97. The surplus in 1960 was not as unique as it would more recently appear, it being the sixth surplus since the War, three under Eisenhower.

²⁰ Busch, 96. *Congress and The Nation* (1965), 32. Barone, 330.

²¹ *CQWR*, August 21, 1959, 1129. *Congress and the Nation* (1965), 370.

²² *CQWR*, June 27, 1958, 820; April 1, 1960, 572-3. *CQ Almanac 1956*, 528.

²³ *CQWR*, March 25, 1960, 478.

²⁴ *CQWR*, June 3, 1960, 962; June 17, 1960, 1064; August 5, 1960, 1386.

publication, Kearns introduced HRes 209 to establish a committee to investigate such employment. The Resolution did not emerge from the Rules Committee. Kearns, himself, was subject to a nepotism charge, as his wife Nora was hired by the Post Office Department to speak at women's clubs and other venues in the Department's campaign against obscene materials. The Democratic chair of the Subcommittee on Postal Operations noted that neither Mrs. Kearns nor the other wife of a Republican representative hired for the task had been present at subcommittee hearings on the subject. Drew Pearson had fun with the matter, claiming that Mrs. Kearns went to Tijuana to buy filthy pictures and smuggle them across the border. Rep. Kearns had created a bit of a track record on the issue by charging years before that military post exchanges were selling obscene publications to American troops in Korea.²⁵

While many relatives were worthy of their pay, the AP revealed that the 19-year-old son of an Iowa Democrat was on his father's payroll at \$11,873 per year or about half as much as the Representative's base pay and considerably more than most staffers.

Such distractions detracted little from legislating, prominent among which were agricultural programs (blamed for a good portion of Republican losses in 1958) and foreign aid (a favorite punching bag despite its small proportion of the Federal budget).

The President, buffered by the American Farm Bureau, continued to support the policies of Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson, though the associates of the Vice President, looking toward his own presidential run, leaked that Nixon "would, at the proper time, reveal his true sympathy for the hard-pressed farmer." Even Smith, no fan of Federal farm supports, recognized the dangers for his party if not himself in the Midwest and voted for the higher price supports in the House rejection of a conference report on S 1968, the wheat marketing quota and price support program. He was the only Republican representative from one of the top wheat-producing districts to vote against the conference report and for the House version. After the Senate accepted the House amendment, Eisenhower vetoed the bill.²⁶

Foreign aid, however, was a program that Eisenhower valued and the Congress devalued. Since 1955, the President's proposals had run into Otto Passman, chair of the relevant Appropriations subcommittee, whose bills consistently deflated Administration requests. The national press was beginning to pay attention to the Louisianan, not only in his results but his method of getting there. *The New York Times* reported:

When he takes the floor to argue for reductions, Passman commands respect by his ability to rattle off budget figures from memory by the dozens and to condense a variety of arguments into a few minutes of rapid-fire oratory. ... His delivery is unique. To the accompaniment of a torrent of words and figures, his pent-up nervous energy manifests itself in what colleagues call 'Passman's dance.' The dance, executed with a firm grip on the sides of the lectern in the House well, includes bumps, grinds and terpsichoreal kicks to one side or the other.²⁷

A known clothes-horse, Passman would take to the floor in a snow-white silk suit and argue:²⁸

²⁵ *CQWR*, February 27, 1959 356; April 3, 1959, 502; March 18, 1960, 456. Graves, 29, 82. The nephew, Dan W. Evins, later established the Cracker Barrel restaurant chain. *The Kerrville Times*, June 30, 1999. Elizabeth L. Garmatz was on the House payroll of Garmatz' predecessor and continued on her brother's staff for many years. *Lincoln Evening Journal and Nebraska State Journal*, February 20, 1967. *The Mexia Daily News*, May 1, 1960. Drew Pearson, September 5, 1960. *The Kane Republican*, December 2, 1952.

²⁶ Key (1967), 430-1. *CQWR*, June 26, 1959, 851.

²⁷ Reported in *The Corpus Christi Caller*, June 15, 1960.

²⁸ *CQWR*, September 8, 1961, 1556.

First, we cannot spend ourselves rich. Second, we cannot make ourselves secure by giving ourselves away. Third, we cannot buy friends. We were once told that foreign aid would stop Communism. Now we are told it is our duty to buy our way of life for countries all over the world. But we cannot in fact improve their living standards by as much as one per cent even if we should give away everything we own.²⁹

Passman also accused the foreign aid program of being rife with “corruption, scandal and blackmail.” Passman arguably benefitted personally from the program in junkets. In fall 1959 he traveled to Spain, Italy, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, India, Pakistan, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, and Formosa on a mission to study American aid, flying commercial at public expense.³⁰

Hardy’s penchant for seeking out governmental waste came to Passman’s aid on the matter of shadiness in the program. He successfully amended the foreign aid authorization (HR 7500) and appropriation (HR 8385) bills for fiscal 1960 to require State Department records on the programs to be available to Congress. While Eisenhower necessarily signed the bills, he took exception to Hardy’s amendments and kept the State Department from responding to requests. The stand-off continued, leading some to wonder what the Administration was hiding, until newly elected Pres. John Kennedy would ask fellow Democrat Hardy to back off.³¹

Blatnik also blazed a path of investigation of alleged Administration waste by chairing a Special Subcommittee on the Federal-Aid Highway Program. He announced on October 13, 1959, at the annual convention of the Association of State Highway Officials that the new subcommittee would spend up to four years investigating reports of graft and irregularities in the Program. The Subcommittee addressed less accusatory issues as well, but by the end of 1960 was holding hearings on possible extortion and bribery.³²

The political world being so replete with corruption, scandal, blackmail, graft, irregularities, extortion, and bribery, it was little surprise that organized labor would be brought into the game. The committee of Sen. John McClellan (D AR) on Improper Activities in Labor and Management, which held hearings in 1957 and 1958 that focused on the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, resulted in accusations of bribery, extortion, and blackmail on the part of Labor leadership. Classmate Sen. John Kennedy, brother of the chief counsel and inquisitor on McClellan’s committee, co-sponsored a labor reform bill in 1958 and reintroduced it (S 1555) in 1959. Kearns, ranking on the House Committee on Education and Labor introduced the Administration labor reform bill (HR 3540).³³

The AFL-CIO supported the Kennedy bill and opposed the Kearns bill. The former advanced through the Senate while the latter languished in committee. In response, Kearns introduced a new bill (HR 7265) that unlike his earlier bill would not impose criminal penalties for violations of specified activities and would not require unions, management, and individual union officials to file financial reports with the secretary of labor but would require reports to union memberships. This bill stayed in committee as well, while Kennedy’s bill was transformed by amendments in the House by Phillip Landrum (D GA) and Robert Griffin (R MI) into their namesake bill, which impaired Labor’s bargaining power with management. Eisenhower endorsed it, the Senate passed it, and the House voted to send it to the President.³⁴

²⁹ *Time*, August 10, 1959.

³⁰ *CQWR*, Feb 14, 1960, 299-307; May 27, 1960, 943.

³¹ *CQWR*, June 19, 1959, 819-20; July 31, 1959, 1047-8; April 21, 1961, 671-2.

³² *CQWR*, October 16, 1959, 1416; February 26, 1960, 322; May 20, 1960, 900; December 16, 1960, 1975.

³³ Barone, 305-6. *CQWR*, February 13, 1959, 259-61; May 22, 1959, 700-1. Cosponsored with Irving Ives in 1958, who retired before 1959.

³⁴ *Congress and The Nation* (1965), 31. *CQWR*, August 14, 1959, 1113.

On the four roll calls in the House, members of the Class voted largely as before on Labor issues. Northern Democrats supported Labor and opposed the increased limits. Republicans and Southern Democrats supported management and favored greater restrictions on Labor. The exceptions to this generalization were Kearns and Tollefson for Republicans and Robert Jones for Southern Democrats. Kearns and Tollefson both opposed the initial substitution of Landum-Griffin and voted for recommittal of the bill after the substitution; indeed, Kearns moved the recommittal. Jones also opposed the substitution, then voted against recommittal. All three then voted for passage and the conference report. Oklahomans Albert and Morris voted exactly as did Kearns and Tollefson.³⁵

The non-laboring labor impacted by the recession had received supplemental jobless benefits from a 1958 act, which the 86th Congress did not renew. Karsten introduced HR 3547 to establish minimum Federal standards for the unemployment system, which varied greatly by state in eligibility requirements and compensation, but which was Federally funded. The Administration opposed both an extension of supplementary benefits and Federal standards, and Karsten's bill died in his Ways and Means Committee.³⁶

The Townsend Plan made one of its periodic reappearances in 1959, as it tends to do in periods of economic stress. A combination of aid to the aged and economic stimulus, the current version expanded aid to adult disabled and female heads of households with minor children. Blatnik, Mack, Morris, St. George, and Tollefson signed on. The economics never seemed to work out and, as before and since, the activity was still-born.³⁷

In more conventional Social Security policy, Harrison introduced HR 9323 to liberalize benefits, particularly for the disabled and, being chair of the relevant subcommittee of Ways and Means, held hearings. Then in May 1960 he urged that all changes to Social Security be postponed in favor of "exhaustive study."³⁸

The bigger event in the 86th Congress was the Democratic failure in the push for Medicare by the Party leadership. The Administration opposed the initiative, though supporting more grants to the states to aid the "medically indigent." As with the farm program, the Nixon coterie whispered that the Vice President was in favor of something closer to the Democratic plan.³⁹

There was a Civil Rights Act of 1960, which journalist Robert Caro would characterize as "weakened to the point of meaninglessness" by Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson and Attorney General William Rogers. Sen. Allen Ellender of Mississippi described it as a "victory for the South." McCulloch introduced the Administration bill, HR 4457, in February 1959. It would have made it a crime to interfere with a Federal court's school desegregation order, authorized the Justice Department to inspect voting records, extended the Civil Rights Commission, authorized the President to eliminate racial discrimination in government contracts, and provided technical and financial aid for school desegregation, among other points. A House Judiciary subcommittee added authorization for the attorney general to initiate civil suits

³⁵ A separate bill, HR 8342, was transformed by the Landrum-Griffin substitute in the House then incorporated into S 1555. The House voted for the HR 8342 substitution, against recommittal, which was moved by Kearns, then passed it. The acceptance of the conference report was on S 1555. Riehlman and Evins did not vote on the conference report.

³⁶ Busch, 97. *CQWR*, February 6, 1959, 226; January 1, 1960, 26.

³⁷ *CQWR*, April 24, 1959, 583. A recurrence was presidential candidate Andrew Yang's version in 2020.

³⁸ *CQWR*, November 27, 1959, 1514; May 13, 1960, 854.

³⁹ Key (1967), 430-1. Busch, 96. *Congress and the Nation* (1965), 32.

to safeguard all civil rights, but the full Committee removed the provisions regarding contracts and assistance. The Committee then reported a “clean bill,” HR 8601, much as the bowdlerized Administration bill, but without the injunctive authority. McCulloch introduced the Administration’s HR 10035 to allow a Federal court to appoint referees to identify people denied voter registration, with a potential to hold registrars in contempt. It was never reported. In floor debate of HR 8601 there was a flurry of amendments. Ones that McCulloch and the House accepted would allow African Americans to vote provisionally and a version of the referee provision. The bill then passed the House, 311-109.⁴⁰

There were four roll call votes on HR 8601: Adoption of the rule for debate, McCulloch’s substitution of the referee proposal, a motion to recommit, and passage. In general, Southern Democrats opposed the rule, the substitution, and passage, while voting for recommitment. Republicans and other Democrats opposed recommitment and supported the rule, the substitution, and passage. The exceptions among the Republicans in the Class were Smith, who voted as a Southerner on each roll call, and Jackson, who also did apart from his support of the rule. No Southerner broke ranks. Albert voted like a non-Southern Democrat except on his opposition to referees. Morris voted for the rule and against recommitment but opposed referees and passage. The two Oklahomans maintained their fence-sitting between Southerners and other Democrats.⁴¹

School desegregation and Federal activities to follow up on the enfranchisement provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 continued to roil some Southern congressional districts, including those of Abbitt, Hardy, Dorn, Davis, and Passman.

In Virginia, both the State Supreme Court and a Federal judicial panel ruled that State legislation which provided for school closings was contrary to the constitutions, the Virginia one and the United States one, respectively. The switch was then from “massive resistance” to “freedom of choice,” resulting in token integration in Hardy’s District while public schools in Prince Edward County in Abbitt’s District would continue closed until 1964. In Georgia, a Federal judge delayed a desegregation order on Atlanta schools until 1961 to give the General Assembly a “last chance” to repeal a State law that would shut down any desegregated school.⁴²

The Federal Justice Department fought a battle with the Louisiana Attorney General to obtain voter registration records in a number of parishes in Passman’s District, leading in 1960 to the registration and voting of African Americans in East Carroll Parish for the first time in decades. Equivalent Federal activity in South Carolina met with less State resistance but slow compliance by local registrars. Attorney General Rogers alleged on May 9, 1960, that McCormick County in Dorn’s District had no African American voters registered. The County attorney called him a liar, saying there was one registered since 1959 and three last week. The number was up to 49 on May 13. The Civil Rights Act did not invalidate South Carolina’s literacy or property ownership requirements for voting.⁴³

Out-of-office Republicans in the Class continued to benefit from a Republican president. Abe Goff of Idaho, who was confirmed to an appointment to an unexpired term in January 1958, was reappointed for

⁴⁰ Caro (2002), 1034. *ADA World*, Sep 1960. *CQWR*, January 1, 1960, 27-9; January 8, 1960, 59; February 19, 1960, 255; March 18, 1960, 435-7; March 25, 1960, 465-6.

⁴¹ Blatnik and Burleson did not vote on the rule.

⁴² Titus, 20. *CQWR*, February 6, 1959, 225; May 13, 1960, 834. Harmon, 104. *The Washington Post*, July 15, 1998.

⁴³ *CQWR*, May 13, 1960, 834; May 27, 1960, 925; August 3, 1962, 1308-9. *The Index-Journal*, May 10 & 14 & 16 & 17, 1960.

a full seven-year term on the Interstate Commerce Commission. George MacKinnon, fresh from his losing race for governor of Minnesota, was appointed a special assistant to the attorney general, specifically to get James Hoffa, President of the Brotherhood of Teamsters. Charles Russell also lost an election as governor, but it would have been his third term in Nevada. He was appointed the Director of the International Cooperation Administration mission to Paraguay. Goff, MacKinnon, and Russell had been gone from the House since their first term, but Antoni Sadlak of Connecticut was newly defeated. He wanted a congressional liaison appointment in the Administration but settled for being the regional assistant manager of the Veterans' Administration in Hartford. Edward Miller of Maryland, also late of the 1958 election bloodletting, was appointed vice-chair of the United States delegation to the second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea in Geneva, but not to his desired judicial seat.⁴⁴

John Allen of California, a month after his 1958 defeat for reelection to the House, was picked by Eisenhower to be undersecretary of commerce for transportation, bumping fellow exile James Patterson of Connecticut after West Coast shippers weighed in, according to Drew Pearson. Allen ran into confirmation problems in the Senate when Pearson published allegations of impropriety in the former Representative's associations with a Chinese gambler and an Oakland manufacturer. Chin Bok Hing had been in the United States since 1914 but had never been naturalized. His clubs were known as illegal gambling emporia, and he was brought to trial in 1952 and convicted, then skipped bail.⁴⁵

Pearson reported that Allen's law firm set up and managed a trust fund for Hing in 1945 that received cash from the gambler and invested it in a corporation owned by Hing, with the exception of a share owned by Allen's brother Donald. Pearson claimed that the Eisenhower Administration dropped a Truman Administration investigation of money laundering and tax evasion on the part of the Allen firm.⁴⁶

The Oakland manufacturer was Jess Ritchie, who pushed a battery additive called AD-X2. The Bureau of Standards rejected the additive as worthless. Political connections pushed for a reassessment, the Federal Trade Commission sided with Ritchie, and the Secretary of Commerce fired Allen Astin, Director of the Bureau. Claims and counter claims continued for many years, during which Ritchie won a Republican nomination for the House but became the national Chair of the Constitution Party, U.S.A.⁴⁷ Allen's involvement was in the introduction of private bills to benefit Ritchie's firm.⁴⁸ We might point out at this point that Allen was a champion instigator of private legislation, introducing 150 over his tenure and seeing 50 enacted.

Confirmation was held up, but came on June 18, 1959.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ "Biographical Note," Goff Papers. MacKinnon interview, 9-10. *The Bridgeport Post*, December 28, 1958.

⁴⁵ *Oxnard Press-Courier*, December 10, 1958. Drew Pearson, January 1, February 19, 1959. *San Mateo Times and Daily News-Leader*, September 3 & 10, November 4, December 24, 1952. *The Fresno Bee the Republican*, July 5, November 3, 1952; October 29, 1953. *Santa Cruz Sentinel-News*, May 14, 1953.

⁴⁶ Drew Pearson, March 10, 1959.

⁴⁷ *The Raleigh Register*, January 19, 1953. "The AD-X2 Controversy," at nist.gov. *Nevada State Journal*, December 20, 1952. *San Bernardino Daily Sun*, April 9, 1953. Drew Pearson, March 5, 1959. *The Corpus Christi Caller*, May 5, 1953. *The Bakersfield Californian*, June 22 & 24 & 25, 1953; July 28, 1954. *The Fresno Bee the Republican*, June 26, 1953. *The Bend Bulletin*, November 13, 1953. *Times Record*, March 22, 1954. *Fort Pierce News Tribune*, July 2, 1954. *The Progress*, November 21, 1955. *The Progress-Index*, May 17, 1956. *San Bernardino Daily Sun*, August 24, 1957. *The Berkshire Eagle*, April 4, 1960.

⁴⁸ HR 12333 in the 84th and HR 3875 in the 85th congresses. Neither made it out of committee.

⁴⁹ *Arizona Republic*, June 19, 1959.

Thruston Morton of Kentucky, out of the House since 1953, and now in his first term in the Senate, obtained a position of a different order, being elected Chair of the Republican National Committee. He was, as is the usual case, the choice of the president when his party is in power.⁵⁰

Republicans Frederic Coudert, recently retired from the House, and Edward Jenison, missing since 1955, took state positions. Coudert was appointed to the New York Commission on Governmental Operations of the City of New York. Jenison was appointed Director of the Illinois Department of Finance.⁵¹

Four members of the Class were involved in two non-House elections in 1960. Caleb Boggs of Delaware, completing his two terms as Governor, was elected to the US Senate, upsetting the Democratic incumbent by a bare margin. Meanwhile, Vice Pres. Nixon of California, Sen. Kennedy of Massachusetts, and Sen. George Smathers of Florida ran for president. Smathers' campaign for the Democratic nomination was a matter of avoidance of selecting between the two major candidates, Lyndon Johnson, Majority Leader of the Senate, and Kennedy, who was Smathers' personal friend. Smathers was the only candidate in the Florida presidential primary and held the State's delegation at the Convention until it was apparent Kennedy would be the nominee, at which point Smathers threw his support to the winner. Kennedy, of course, defeated Nixon in the general election.⁵²

At a different level of civic engagement, in 1959 Charles Deane was elected President of the North Carolina Baptist Convention and thus head of Southern Baptists in the State. Deane lost the Democratic nomination for the House in 1956 because of his refusal to sign the Southern Manifesto against *Brown v. Board of Education*. His selection as President of a conservative, totally white denomination over three ministers, though a narrow victory, offered hope that Southern white attitudes over equal rights were changing. As President, Deane pushed for racial integration of the denomination's colleges in the State. Though reelected in 1960 for his second one-year term, as was the usual practice, the Convention the following day rejected a resolution in support of integration of the colleges, though the practice was not denied to the individual college.⁵³

Finally in personal matters, Mary Williams Dague was elected the President of the Pennsylvania American Legion Auxiliary, and Ann Smartt Evins and Opal Osborne Karsten were two of the nine-member Quartet [sic] Unlimited that dressed in blue dresses with blue sashes and white gloves to perform "Whistle Stop" at the Democratic National Convention in 1960. Mildred Johnson Dorn gave birth to Johnson Griffith Dorn, their second son and fifth child. Charles Potter, out of office since losing his Senate seat in 1958, was divorced from wife Lorraine Eddy Potter, and two months later announced a marriage to Mary Bryant Wismer, divorced the previous year.⁵⁴

William Lewis of Kentucky, who served eight months in the House, died on August 8, 1959, in London, Kentucky, at age 90. Wife Alice Morgan Lewis survived. Ken Regan of Texas, who served three-and-one-half terms, died seven days later in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he had had a home since the previous

⁵⁰ Reinhard, 151.

⁵¹ Coudert, Jones, and Klepp, 11. *The Daily Pantagraph*, May 28, 1960.

⁵² "A Guide to the George A. Smathers Papers."

⁵³ Deane, 141. *The High Point Enterprise*, March 24, November 17, 1960. *The News & Observer*, November 26, 1969.

⁵⁴ Alice Lewis stone, A.R. Dyche Memorial Park, London, Kentucky. *Warren Times-Mirror*, February 19, 1960. *The Delta Democrat-Times*, July 10, 1960. *The Index-Journal*, June 14, 1978. *Enquirer and News*, May 1, 1960. *The Akron Beacon Journal*, July 4, 1959.

year. He underwent “major exploratory” surgery in April. His wife said there was no malignancy, but that he suffered kidney failure as a complication of the surgery. He was 71 or maybe 68 or 66 or 62.⁵⁵

On March 28, 1960, Mack was on the floor of the House, talking to two other representatives. Henry Dixon of Utah said, “It’s a nice day, isn’t it,” to which Mack replied, “Not for me,” and fell to the floor, striking his head on a seat. He was carried to the cloakroom, where the physician to Congress pronounced him dead of a coronary occlusion. His second wife Laura Prohaska Mack survived. He was the fifteenth member of the Class of ’46 to die.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *The Corpus Christi Caller*, August 15, 1959. *The New Mexican*, August 16, 1959. *The Austin American*, April 27, 1959.

⁵⁶ *The News-Review*, March 29, 1960.