

## Chapter CCLXXVIII.<sup>1</sup>

### PARTY ORGANIZATION IN THE HOUSE.

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1. **The caucus.** Sections 3602, 3607.
  2. **The caucus journal.** Section 3608.
  3. **The caucus rules.** Sections 3609, 3610.
  4. **The floor leader.** Sections 3611–3614.
  5. **The whip.** Section 3615.
  6. **The committee on committees.** Sections 3616–3620.
  7. **The steering committee.** Sections 3621–3625.
  8. **The patronage committee.** Sections 3626–3629.
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#### **3602. The caucus, like the House, organizes ab initio for each Congress.**

On March 30, 1917,<sup>2</sup> at the first meeting of the majority caucus for the Sixty-fourth Congress, on motion of Mr. John J. Fitzgerald, of New York, the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved,* That the order of business of the meeting of the caucus shall be as follows:

1. The nomination of a Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Sixty-fifth Congress.
2. The nomination of a chairman and other Members of the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives in the Sixty-fifth Congress.
3. The nomination of the officers of the House in the Sixty-fifth Congress, to wit: The Clerk of the House, the Sergeant at Arms of the House, the Doorkeeper of the House, the Postmaster of the House, and the Chaplain of the House.
4. The consideration of such other matters touching the organization of the House in the Sixty-fifth Congress as may be brought before it.

#### **3603. On May 17, 1919,<sup>3</sup> in the minority caucus, Mr. William Kettner, of California, submitted the following resolution which was agreed to:**

*Resolved,* That the order of business for this session of the caucus shall be as follows:

1. Election of the chairman, secretary, and assistant secretary of the caucus for the Sixty-sixth Congress.
2. Adoption of rules of the caucus for the Sixty-sixth Congress.
3. Nomination of a candidate for Speaker of the Sixty-sixth Congress, who, as heretofore, ex officio shall be the minority leader.
4. Nominations of candidates for (a) Clerk, (b) Sergeant at Arms, (c) Doorkeeper, (d) Postmaster, and (e) Chaplain of the House for the Sixty-sixth Congress.

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<sup>1</sup>This chapter has no analogy with any previous chapter.

<sup>2</sup>First session Sixty-fifth Congress, Caucus Journal, March 31, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>First session Sixty-sixth Congress, Caucus Journal, May 17, 1919.

5. Selection of minority members of the Ways and Means Committee for the Sixty-sixth Congress, and defining the powers of the Democratic Members thereof with respect to recommendations of assignments of minority Members to the standing committees of the House.

6. Selection of persons for the positions in the House assigned to the minority.

7. Election of a Doorkeeper and Sergeant at Arms of the caucus for the Sixty-sixth Congress.

8. Any other matter or matters proper for the consideration of the caucus.

**3604.** On February 27, 1919,<sup>1</sup> at the organization of the majority conference for the Sixty-seventh Congress, Mr. John Q. Tilson, of Connecticut, offered a resolution, which was agreed to as follows:

*Resolved,* That the following shall be the order of business and rules of procedure governing this conference:

1. Appointment of three tally clerks.

2. Nomination of Speaker of the House, Sixty-sixth Congress.

3. Notification of nominee for Speaker and presentation to the conference.

4. Nomination of Clerk of the House, Sixty-sixth Congress.

5. Nomination of Sergeant at Arms of the House, Sixty-sixth Congress.

6. Nomination of Doorkeeper of the House, Sixty-sixth Congress.

7. Nomination of Postmaster of the House, Sixty-sixth Congress.

8. Nomination of Chaplain of the House, Sixty-sixth Congress.

9. Selection of committee on committees and defining its duties.

10. Selection of Committee on revision of rules.

11. The transaction of such other business as may properly come before the conference called for "organization purposes."

**3604a.** On March 2, 1933,<sup>2</sup> in the majority caucus, on motion of Mr. Clarence Cannon, of Missouri, the following resolution was agreed to:

*Resolved,* That the order of business for this session of the Caucus shall be as follows:

1. Election of the Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Sergeant at Arms, and Doorkeeper of the Caucus for the Seventy-third Congress.

2. Adoption of the rules of the Caucus for the Seventy-third Congress.

3. Nomination of a candidate for Speaker of the Seventy-third Congress.

4. Election of the Majority Leader for the Seventy-third Congress.

5. Nomination of candidates for (a) Clerk, (b) Sergeant at Arms, (c) Doorkeeper, (d) Postmaster, and (e) Chaplain of the House for the Seventy-third Congress.

6. Authorization of a steering committee and determination of its jurisdiction.

7. Any other business germane to the organization of the Caucus or the House.

**3605.** The caucus system has been in use for many years and has been utilized by both parties.

**Explanation of caucus procedure requiring two-thirds vote to bind members and exempting constitutional questions, matters of conscience, and pledges to constituents.**

On September 24, 1913,<sup>3</sup> while the House was considering the bill (S. 2727) to create an additional land district in the State of Nevada, Mr. Sereno E. Payne, of New York, digressed to discuss the charge that a caucus controlled the legislative program of the majority and designated the bills to be considered.

<sup>1</sup>First session Sixty-sixth Congress, Conference Journal, February 17, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>First session Seventy-third Congress, Caucus Journal, March 2, 1933.

<sup>3</sup>First session Sixty-third Congress, Record, p. 5157.

In reply Mr. Speaker Clark, of Missouri, speaking from the floor, said:

There are a great many new Members in this House, and while this continual criticism of the conduct of the majority in this House would have no effect whatsoever on the older Members, without regard to political affiliations, it might make new Members think that we are proceeding in an extraordinary manner; that there is no precedent for caucus action.

Every student of government knows that in a country whose institutions are bottomed on suffrage the government will be a government by parties. It matters nothing whether we want it that way or not, that is the way it is. The history of England and of the United States prove that beyond peradventure. Responsibility rests upon the majority, and we shrink not from acknowledging our responsibility to the country and of acting accordingly.

Now let us see about caucus rule. We must have organization in order to enact the will of the people into law. Do you know how many people it takes to hold a caucus? Two can hold a caucus as well as two hundred and ninety-odd Democrats.

In a Democratic caucus it takes two-thirds of all Democrats elect to make caucus action binding. It is not binding at all on constitutional questions or matters of conscience or where a Member has made promises or pledges in his campaign for election. In such cases the rule exempts Members from caucus action.

So far as an open caucus is concerned, the Democratic caucus blazed the way to give publicity to caucus action.

The Democratic Party established the rule in its caucus that every resolution should be entered in the journal and the journal should be kept open not only to members of the caucus but to the press and everybody else interested, so that they can inspect it and see what has been done. That journal is kept like the *Journal of the House*, on the same principle, with all matters of legislation embraced on it.

Every resolution which is offered in the Democratic caucus is entered in the journal, is open to inspection, and given to the newspapers if they desire to print it.

The minutes are examined almost every day by Members of the House and by newspaper reporters and others who desire to examine them. They are open to the public.

**3606. Instance wherein Members failing to abide by the action of their party caucus were disciplined by removal from committees or reduction in rank.**—On March 17, 1910,<sup>1</sup> Mr. George W. Norris, of Nebraska, offered a resolution (H. Res. 502) declaring the Speaker ineligible to membership on the Committee on Rules, increasing the number of members on the committee, and providing a new method for their appointment.

Mr. John Dalzell, of Pennsylvania, made the point of order that the resolution was not privileged. During the ensuing debate, Mr. Augustus P. Gardner, of Massachusetts, and Mr. Charles N. Fowler, of New Jersey, stated that they had been removed from committees. Mr. Victor Murdock, of Kansas, and Mr. Henry A. Cooper, of Wisconsin, added that they had been arbitrarily reduced in rank on committees to which they had been assigned.

Mr. Speaker Cannon, of Illinois, having relinquished the gavel, addressed the House from the floor and said:

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Fowler, was chairman of the Committee on Banking and Currency when the emergency currency bill was pending in that committee. The only way to consider that bill in the House was to have that committee make a favorable or an unfavorable report upon it.

The gentleman will recall that the Republican side of the House held two caucuses, and the caucus by a large majority expressed its wish that the Committee on Banking and Currency should

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<sup>1</sup>Second session Sixty-first Congress, Record, p. 3321.

report that bill with or without favorable recommendation, so as to enable the House to work its will upon it by a majority. That committee, under the leadership of the gentleman from New Jersey, a Republican chairman, refused to respect the will of the Republican caucus. That made a foundation upon which the Speaker of the House could recognize a Member to move to suspend the rules and discharge the committee from the consideration of the bill and thus bring it before the House, which was done, and a majority of the House did work its will upon that bill.

Subsequently the gentleman from New Jersey; the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Cooper; the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. Murdock; and the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Norris, failed to enter and abide by a Republican caucus, and this being a Government through parties, for that, as well as for other sufficient reasons, the Speaker of the House, responsible to the House and to the country, made the appointments with respect to these gentlemen as he conceived it to be his duty in the execution of the trust reposed in him.

**3607. A discussion of the organization and functions of the party caucus.**—On May 11, 1928,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Guy U. Hardy, of Colorado, in the course of remarks inserted in the Record under leave to print, discussed the organization and functions of the party caucus, as follows:

In the general readjustment in party affairs back in 1910 and 1912 the Republicans gave up the caucus altogether and held meetings of party members under the name of Republican conferences. But in recent years they have gone back again to the old name of Republican caucus.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of a new Congress each two years party caucuses are called together to select candidates for Speaker. If there are two or more candidates for Speaker, the matter is threshed out here. After the caucus votes all party members support the man who receives the majority vote in the caucus.

The Republican caucus voted in 1919 to give the speakership to Frederick H. Gillett over his opponent, James R. Mann. In 1925 it selected Nicholas Longworth over his opponent, Martin B. Madden. In the former case the Republicans were just coming into control of the House. In the latter case Speaker Gillett had left the House on being elected to the United States Senate.

The majority caucus also names the various important employees of the House, such as Clerk, Sergeant at Arms, Doorkeeper, Postmaster, and others. Each caucus also selects its party leader and the whip.

Democrats are subject to be bound by the decision of the Democratic caucus. It requires a two-thirds vote, however, to bind the membership on matters of legislation and a member may arise and ask to be relieved of caucus instruction in specific cases.

**3608. Proceedings of the Democratic caucus are recorded in its journal, which is open to inspection by the public.**

On April 17, 1913,<sup>3</sup> pending a motion for adjournment, and in response to an inquiry from Mr. Victor Murdock, of Kansas, Mr. Oscar W. Underwood, of Alabama, said:

The Democratic caucus was the first to give publicity to caucus action. The Democratic Party established the rule in its caucus that every resolution should be entered in the journal and the journal should be kept open, not only to members of the caucus, but to the press and everybody else interested. The caucus journal is kept like the journal of the House, with all matters of legislation embraced in it, and anyone can inspect it and see what has been done.

**3609. The formal rules of party caucus with statement of party principles.**—On September 13, 1913,<sup>4</sup> the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union was considering the bill H. R. 7837, the currency bill.

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<sup>1</sup> First session Seventieth Congress, Record, p. 8440.

<sup>2</sup> The formal title of "Conference" is still in use.

<sup>3</sup> First session Sixty-third Congress, Record, p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> First session Sixty-third Congress, Record, p. 4903.

During general debate on the bill, Mr. Charles H. Dillon, of South Dakota, in discussing the attitude of the caucus of the majority party toward the pending legislation, included as a part of his remarks the following:

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS RULES.

PREAMBLE.

In adopting the following rules for the Democratic caucus we affirm and declare that the following cardinal principles should control Democratic action:

- (a) In essentials of Democratic principles and doctrine, unity.
- (b) In nonessentials, and in all things not involving fidelity to party principles, entire individual independence.
- (c) Party alignment only upon matters of party faith or party policy.
- (d) Friendly conference and, whenever reasonably possible, party cooperation.

RULES.

1. All Democratic Members of the House of Representatives shall be prima facie members of the Democratic caucus.

2. Any member of the Democratic caucus of the House of Representatives failing to abide by the rules governing the same shall thereby automatically cease to be a member of the caucus.

3. Meetings of the Democratic caucus may be called by the chairman upon his own motion, and shall be called by him whenever requested in writing by 25 members of the caucus.

4. A quorum of the caucus shall consist of a majority of the Democratic Members of the House.

5. General parliamentary law, with such special rules as may be adopted, shall govern the meetings of the caucus.

6. In the election of officers and in the nomination of candidates for office in the House, a majority of those present and voting shall bind the membership of the caucus.

7. In deciding upon action in the House involving party policy or principle, a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a caucus: meeting shall bind all members of the caucus: *Provided*, That said two-thirds vote is a majority of the full Democratic membership of the House: *And provided further*, That no Member shall be bound upon questions involving a construction of the Constitution of the United States or upon which he has made contrary pledges to his constituents prior to his election or received contrary instructions by resolution or platform from his nominating authority.

8. Whenever any member of the caucus shall determine, by reason of either of the exceptions provided for in the above paragraph, not to be bound by the action of the caucus on these questions, it shall be his duty, if present, so to advise the caucus before the adjournment of the meetings, or, if not present at the meeting, to promptly notify the Democratic leader in writing, so that the party may be advised before the matter comes to issue upon the floor of the House.

9. That the 5-minute rule that governs the House of Representatives shall govern debate in the Democratic caucus unless suspended by a vote of the caucus.

10. No persons except Democratic Members of the House of Representatives, a caucus journal clerk, and other necessary employees shall be admitted to the meetings of the caucus.

11. The caucus shall keep a journal of its proceedings, which shall be published after each meeting, and the yeas and nays on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

**3610.** On February 27, 1919,<sup>1</sup> in adopting an order of business, the majority conference agreed to this resolution providing for conference rules:

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<sup>1</sup>First session Sixty-sixth Congress, Conference Journal, February 17, 1919.

## RULES OF PROCEDURE.

1. That so far as applicable and except as herein modified, the rules of the Sixty-fifth Congress be adopted as the rules for this conference.

2. That two hours be allowed for nominating speeches for the candidates for Speaker, the time to be equally divided between the spokesmen for the respective candidates for said office.

3. That nominating speeches for other offices be limited to one speech of five minutes for each candidate.

4. That all other speeches be limited to five minutes.

5. That upon the expiration of the one hour allowed for nominating speeches for Speaker, the roll shall be called, and the person receiving a majority of the votes of the Members elect of the Sixty-sixth Congress who are present and voting shall be the Republican nominee for Speaker of the House for the Sixty-sixth Congress.

6. The vote on nomination for all other offices shall be by acclamation, or by a rising vote, or upon the demand of one-fifth of the members present the roll shall be called, and the candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast for any of the offices enumerated in the foregoing order of business shall be the Republican nominee for such office. The chairman, in behalf of the conference shall present to the House of Representatives the nominees selected by the conference.

**3611. Under the recent practice the selection of floor leaders is announced in the House.**

On April 15, 1929,<sup>1</sup> the first day of the session, the Speaker having been elected and having taken the oath of office, Mr. Willis C. Hawley, of Oregon, chairman of the majority caucus, addressed the Chair and said:

Mr. Speaker, the Republican caucus of the House has reelected Hon. John Q. Tilson, of Connecticut, majority leader for the Seventy-first Congress.

Mr. David H. Kincheloe, of Kentucky, announced:

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic caucus, I announce that the caucus has selected Hon. John N. Garner, of Texas, as minority leader for the Seventy-first Congress.

Apparently this was the first occasion of the official announcement of the selection of party leaders in the House.

**3612.** On December 7, 1931,<sup>2</sup> on the first day of the session, following the election of the Speaker, Mr. William W. Arnold, of Illinois, chairman of the majority caucus in the Seventy-second Congress, addressed the Chair and said:

Mr. Speaker, the caucus of the Democratic Members of the House has selected Hon. Henry T. Rainey, of Illinois, as majority leader for the Seventy-second Congress.

**3613.** On March 9, 1933,<sup>3</sup> at the organization of the House, Mr. Clarence F. Lea, of California, chairman of the majority caucus, announced:

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic caucus, I desire to announce to the House that at the recent meeting of the caucus, Hon. Joseph W. Byrns, of Tennessee, was selected majority floor leader for the Seventy-third Congress.

Thereupon, Mr. Robert Luce, of Massachusetts, announced:

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Republican conference, I wish to announce that the conference has selected Hon. Bertrand H. Snell, of New York, as minority leader for the Seventy-third Congress.

<sup>1</sup>First session Seventy-first Congress, Record, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>First session Seventy-second Congress, Record, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>First session Seventy-third Congress, Record, p. 75.

**3614. A discussion of the functions and duties of the majority and minority floor leaders.**

The rules contain no provision relating to the selection or duties of the party floor leaders, who are chosen by the caucus or conference of their respective parties.

On May 11, 1928,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Guy U. Hardy, of Colorado, in the course of remarks inserted in the Record, said:

The floor leader, especially the leader of the majority side, has much to do with the legislative program. The majority leader, of course, represents the majority on the floor. Motions he makes are usually passed. He endeavors to represent the majority view and the majority follow his leadership. He leads in debate on administration matters and gives the House and the country the viewpoint of his party on the legislative program.

The leader keeps in touch with proposed legislation, the status of bills of importance, with the steering committee of which he is chairman, and with the attitude of the Rules Committee. He confers with committee chairmen and Members in general. The majority leader often confers with the President and advises with him regarding administrative measures. He takes to the President the sentiment of the party in the House and he brings to the party in the House the sentiment of the President. The majority leader acts also as chairman of the committee on committees and of the steering committee. The majority leader at this time is John Q. Tilson of Connecticut. Other Republican floor leaders who have preceded Mr. Tilson are Nicholas Longworth, Frank Mondell, James R. Mann, Joseph G. Cannon, Thomas B. Reed, Nelson Dingley, William McKinley, and Sereno Payne.

The minority leader is Finis J. Garrett, of Tennessee. Other notable floor leaders on the Democratic side have been Champ Clark, Claude Kitchin, Oscar Underwood, and Samuel J. Randall.

**3615. A discussion of the duties and methods of selection of the party whips.—Mr. Hardy also discussed<sup>2</sup> the duties and personnel of the majority and minority whips and the methods of their selection, as follows:**

The office of whip comes to us from the British Parliament where the name has been used for some two hundred years. It is probable that every legislative body, as long as there have been such bodies, has had some person who has acted in this capacity.

The whip looks after the membership of his party and endeavors to have them present to vote on important measures. When the vote is close, he finds who is out of the city, and advises absentees by wire of important measures coming up.

There are hours of long debate when many Members do not feel it necessary to be present. The whip keeps informed on the daily program, and notifies the membership of his party. Occasionally Members' offices are notified by phone from the whip's office that "All Members are desired on the floor immediately."

The whip has also a duty to perform in connection with the White House. The President occasionally seeks information from the whip as to the sentiment of the House on important administration measures, about the prospect of passage of certain bills, and the whip naturally reflects the President's view about many things and is in a position to know the administration's policy.

The Republican whip was formerly appointed by the Speaker, but is now chosen by the party caucus. Hon. Albert H. Vestal, of Indiana, is serving as Republican whip at this time. Some others who have rendered distinguished service as Republican whip have been Thomas B. Reed; James Wilson, late Secretary of Agriculture; James W. Watson, now United States Senator from Indiana; James A. Tawney; and John W. Dwight. On the Democratic side William A. Oldfield, of Arkansas, is the party whip.

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<sup>1</sup>First session Seventieth Congress, Record, p. 8439.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

**3616. Members of the Republican committee on committees are selected by States and have a voting strength in the committee in proportion to the party membership of their respective State delegations in the House.**

On February 27, 1919,<sup>1</sup> in the majority conference, Mr. James R. Mann, of Illinois, proposed the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That a committee on committees be selected consisting of one Member from each State having Republican representation in the Sixty-sixth Congress, to be selected by the Republican representation from the several States, respectively, and that the voting strength of each member of such committee shall be the number of Republican Members of the House from his State.

The resolution was agreed to and is the first appearance of a provision for geographical representation on a committee charged with the selection of the standing committees of the House.

**3617. On The Democratic members of the Committee on Ways and Means serve as the committee on committees for their party in the House.**

**Nominations for assignments to the standing committees are made by the committee on committees which reports them to the caucus for approval and ratification.**

On April 9, 1921,<sup>2</sup> Mr. James F. Byrnes, of South Carolina, in the minority caucus, offered the following resolution which was agreed to:

*Resolved*, That the Democratic members of the Ways and Means Committee of the Sixty-sixth Congress, who are members of the House of the Sixty-seventh Congress, be nominated by acclamation as minority members of the Ways and Means Committee, and the minority members of the said committee shall constitute the committee on committees for the minority, with power to nominate for membership on the several standing committees of the House, the minority members of the Sixty-seventh Congress. That a report of such nominations shall be made to the caucus for its approval, rejection or amendment, and such committee shall have power to fill vacancies occurring during the Sixty-seventh Congress.

**3618.** On December 7, 1931,<sup>3</sup> at the organization of the House, Mr. Edward W. Pou, of North Carolina, offered a resolution providing for the adoption of the rules.

In the course of an informal discussion relating to the proposal, Mr. Fiorello H. LaGuardia, of New York, suggested deferring consideration of the resolution.

Whereupon, Mr. Henry T. Rainey, of Illinois, said:

I may say to the gentleman from New York that we are very anxious to elect the Democratic members of the Ways and Means Committee. It is our committee on committees, and I hope it can be done by unanimous consent.

**3619. Instance wherein the chairman of the committee on committees of the majority caucus, by direction of the caucus, proposed changes in the rules and the election of members to committees which were agreed to by the House.**

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<sup>1</sup>First session Sixty-sixth Congress, Conference Journal, February 17, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>Caucus Journal, April 9, 1921.

<sup>3</sup>First session Seventy-second Congress, Record, p. 12.

On January 4, 1932,<sup>1</sup> Mr. James W. Collier, of Mississippi, serving as Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and ex-officio chairman of the committee on committees of the majority party, offered a resolution providing for a change in the title of the Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries to the Committee on the Merchant Marine, Radio, and Fisheries, and the election of majority members to the new committee.

In the course of the ensuing debate, Mr. Collier said:

This is the unanimous report of the committee on committees.

Mr. Carl E. Mapes, of Michigan, inquired if he had consulted the chairman of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, which had at one time exercised a mooted jurisdiction over radio legislation.

Mr. Collier replied in the negative and Mr. Ewin L. Davis, of Tennessee, chairman of the former Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries, said:

If the gentleman will permit, I will say that the gentleman from Texas was present at the meeting of the caucus at which this change was unanimously adopted.

**3620.** On December 6, 1920,<sup>2</sup> Mr. Frank W. Mondell, of Wyoming, being recognized, said:

Mr. Speaker, by instruction of the Committee on Committees I present the names of seven Members to be elected by the House as new members of the Committee on Appropriations, to be assigned on that committee in the order indicated.

The Clerk read as follows:

To be members of the Committee on Appropriations:

Martin B. Madden, Illinois.  
Daniel R. Anthony, Kansas.  
Sidney Anderson, Minnesota.  
Patrick H. Kelley, Michigan.

John Jacob Rogers, Massachusetts.  
John A. Elston, California.  
S. Wallace Dempsey, New York.

To be assigned to the committee in the following order:

1. James W. Good, Iowa, chairman.
2. Charles R. Davis, Minnesota.
3. Martin B. Madden, Illinois.
4. Daniel R. Anthony, Kansas.
5. William S. Vare, Pennsylvania.
6. Joseph G. Cannon, Illinois.
7. C. Bascom Slemph, Virginia.
8. Sidney Anderson, Minnesota.
9. William R. Wood, Indiana.
10. Louis C. Cramton, Michigan.

11. Patrick H. Kelley, Michigan.
12. John Jacob Rogers, Massachusetts.
13. Edward H. Wason, New Hampshire.
14. Walter W. Magee, New York.
15. George Holden Tinkham, Massachusetts.
16. Burton L. French, Idaho.
17. John A. Elston, California.
18. S. Wallace Dempsey, New York.
19. Milton W. Shreve, Pennsylvania.
20. Charles F. Ogden, Kentucky.

The motion was agreed to.

On July 21, 1921,<sup>3</sup> when the Journal had been approved, Mr. Mondell asked for recognition and said:

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the action of the majority of the Committee on Committees, I present the following resolution.

<sup>1</sup> First session Seventy-second Congress, Record, p. 1222.

<sup>2</sup> Third session Sixty-sixth Congress, Record, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> First session Sixty-seventh Congress, Record, p. 4170.

The Clerk read:

*Resolved*, That Martin B. Madden, Member of Congress from Illinois, be, and he is hereby, elected chairman of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

The resolution was agreed to without debate or division and Mr. Madden, the second ranking majority member on the committee, was chosen chairman.

**3621. Origin and history of the first elective steering committee in the party organization of the House.**

**Provision for steering committee to be nominated by the committee on committees and elected by the party conference.**

**The floor leader is ex-officio chairman of the steering committee.**

On February 27, 1919,<sup>1</sup> the majority conference, in defining the duties of the committee on committees, agreed to a resolution providing for the creation of a steering committee in the following terms:

The duties of the committee on committees shall be:

1. To select the Republican members of the standing committees of the House.
2. To select a steering committee of five members.
3. To select a whip, who may appoint assistants.
4. To select a floor leader, who shall become ex officio chairman of the committee on committees and chairman of the steering committee.
5. To report its action to a Republican conference.

Provision for the steering committee has been continued through each succeeding Congress without change in its duties or the manner of its selection, and without other modification except an increase from time to time in its membership. It is now composed of nine members in addition to the chairman, and with the change in the control of the House at the opening of the Seventy-second Congress, was retained as a part of the minority organization.

**3622. A majority steering committee was created in the Seventy-third Congress consisting of 15 elective Members elected by geographical groups sitting separately and voting by zones.**

**The Speaker, floor leader, chairman of the caucus, and chairman of the Rules Committee are ex officio members of the steering committee.**

**The States are grouped by zones for the purpose of providing a geographical basis of representation on the steering committee.**

**The steering committee is not responsible to the caucus, and the election of its members, individually or collectively, is not subject to caucus ratification or rejection.**

**Members of the steering committee are directly responsible to the membership of the zone from which elected and are subject to recall at any time.**

**The chairman of the steering committee is elected by the committee and is ineligible to succeed himself.**

**The steering committee meets at the call of the chairman or on the call of three members of the committee.**

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<sup>1</sup>First session Sixty-sixth Congress, Conference Journal, February 27, 1919.

A resolution<sup>1</sup> of the majority caucus of the Seventy-third Congress provided:

*Resolved*, That in the Seventy-third Congress a Democratic steering committee be created as follows:

First. The chairman of the Democratic caucus of the Seventy-third Congress shall select a committee of 12 Democratic Members of the Seventy-third Congress, who shall divide the United States into groups of contiguous States, creating not less than 9 nor more than 18<sup>2</sup> groups, having particular reference to similarity of interest and also taking into consideration as far as may be possible Democratic representation and population.

Second. When said grouping shall be completed the Democratic membership of each group shall meet in conference and select its own member of its own group of the Democratic steering committee.

Third. Any group may, however, before the end of the session of the Seventy-third Congress, recall by a majority vote of the particular group, its member of the steering committee and elect another member in his stead for that group, and this power shall be continuous.

Fourth. The Speaker of the House, the majority leader, the chairman of the caucus, and the chairman of the Committee on Rules shall be ex officio members of the steering committee.

Fifth. The steering committee shall meet and select its chairman, who shall be a member of the steering committee, but no ex officio member of the steering committee shall be eligible for the chairmanship of the steering committee.

Sixth. The chairman of the steering committee shall not be eligible to succeed himself in that position.

Seventh. The steering committee shall meet on the call of the chairman, but must meet when any three members of the steering committee request the chairman to call a meeting of the committee.

Eighth. The functions of the steering committee shall be that each member shall keep in touch with his own particular group and consult with them as to important legislation which may be under consideration, and the steering committee shall ascertain what support can be obtained from the Democratic membership on any proposition of party policy, shall iron out difference in the different sections of the United States in order that the administration may be advised fully as to the position of the Democratic membership in the House on any legislation it may propose and shall discharge such other duties which may be from time to time assigned to them by the Democratic administration.

The resolution was adopted without change at the organization of the majority caucus for the Seventy-fourth Congress.<sup>3</sup>

**3623. Differences of opinion as to party policies are submitted to the steering committee for determination.**

**The steering committee frequently holds hearings before reaching a decision on questions of policy.**

On January 24, 1920,<sup>4</sup> the House was considering the diplomatic and consular appropriation bill in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

<sup>1</sup> Caucus Journal, April 12, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> The States are grouped in 15 zones, as follows: 1, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island; 2, New York; 3, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware; 4, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina; 5, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida; 6, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana; 7, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky; 8, Ohio, West Virginia; 9, Indiana, Michigan; 10, Illinois, Wisconsin; 11, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota; 12, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma; 13, Texas; 14, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico; 15, California, Washington, Oregon.

<sup>3</sup> First session Seventy-fourth Congress, Caucus Journal, Jan. 2, 1935.

<sup>4</sup> Second session Sixty-sixth Congress, Record, p. 1999.

In response to a reference by Mr. Claude Kitchin, of North Carolina, the minority leader, to the majority steering committee, Mr. Frank W. Mondell, of Wyoming, the majority leader and ex officio chairman of the steering committee, explained:

We have a steering committee. The chairman of the various committees of the House, after having given careful consideration to the matters that come before their committees, very frequently say to the Speaker or to the chairman of the steering committee, or some member of it, "We have some matters with regard to which there is some difference of opinion as to the proper policy to follow. We are trying to carry out a policy of economy. We want to provide properly for the public service, but we want to cut out all unnecessary appropriations, and the members of our committee would like to take up with the steering committee and with the Speaker, and with such other members as you see fit to invite in, the general questions of policy before our committee." We frequently have conferences thus suggested. We have done that with regard to every appropriation bill that has been presented to the House thus far. That policy will be followed with regard to other appropriation bills, not doubt. The conference not only takes in the members of the committee having the matter in charge, the members of the steering committee, and the Speaker but generally chairmen or members of other committees interested in the carrying out of the general policy and having to do with legislative and appropriation matters somewhat akin to those under consideration. And after full consideration we have always reached a unanimous agreement. It is not a matter of a showing of hands with the idea of finding out whether there is a preponderance of opinion on one side or the other; but after all have discussed the matter, frequently, not once but a number of times, there is eventually a unanimous agreement.

We keep at it until there is a unanimous agreement as to the general policy that ought to be followed. That is what we ought to have had here years ago. It is the best way to legislate and appropriate—that is, to bring the membership of the House together frequently in groups, first one and then another; bringing in those who desire to be heard, those who are particularly interested in the matter before us, those who have a special responsibility with regard to the general policy of the party, and finally coming to an agreement as to what we shall do. The steering committee has never told any committee what it should do, what it could do, or what it could not do, and has no thought of doing anything of the sort. But I am thankful that out of this policy of cooperation and coordination and constant and frequent conference we are able to secure an agreement as to what should be done.

**3625. The majority steering committee in the Sixty-fifth and Sixty-sixth Congresses consisted of five members.**

**The steering committee was nominated by the majority committee on committees and elected by the party conference.**

**The membership of the steering committee is subject to recall whenever the conference determines it is not representative of party sentiment in the House.**

**The leader serves as chairman of the steering committee which meets on call.**

On April 27, 1920,<sup>1</sup> during consideration of the soldiers' compensation bill in the House, Mr. Nicholas Longworth, of Ohio, replying to an inquiry as to the functions of the steering committee addressed to the House generally by Mr. Henry T. Rainey, of Illinois, earlier in the debate, said:

A word about the steering committee. I am, as the gentleman from Illinois has said, a member of it. I am also a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, which is drafting this soldiers' legislation, and a member of the committee on committees, which created them both. I

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<sup>1</sup>Second session Sixty-sixth Congress, Record, p. 6177.

ought to be competent, therefore, to know just what the steering committee has had to do with the taxation and any other features of this bill.

Now, first let me correct the misapprehension that the steering committee is a boss on this side of the House. On the contrary, we are the mere legislative agents and servants of the majority. We were elected unanimously, and we can be removed tomorrow if we fail to be representative of the mind of the majority. That we are still here is proof of the fact that, so far at least, we have done fairly well in crystallizing the thought of the majority into legislation.

I will candidly admit, that I had some doubt when the steering committee was first formed as to whether it was sufficiently representative. When it came time to organize this House I made just as hard a fight as I knew how upon two propositions: First, to enlarge the steering committee; and, second, to modify in some respects the seniority rule.

My thought in regard to the steering committee was that it should consist of nine rather than of five members, so that it might be more representative, geographically, and in cleavage of thought, of the body of the majority. The majority of the conference, however, thought that inasmuch as the committee was apt to be called together at any time, practically, of the day or night, a committee of nine would be unwieldy, and they defeated our proposal, so that the committee was left at five.

**3626. The majority steering committee in the Seventieth Congress.**

On May 11, 1928,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Guy U. Hardy, of Colorado, in the course of a speech inserted in the Record under leave to extend remarks, included the following:

An influential factor in government is the steering committee. It exerts a powerful influence but makes no effort to exhibit power. It works along diplomatic lines to feel out and consolidate sentiment for administration measures and procedure. It meets at the call of the chairman, and considers the welfare of the Government from the party point of view. It advises with the White House, the chairmen of important committees, the party leaders, and the Rules Committee. It helps to iron out differences, and to formulate the majority program in the House. The chairman of the Steering Committee is the floor leader. When the committee meets the Speaker sometimes and the chairman of the Rules Committee usually are invited in for consultation. Other members of the committee are:

George P. Darrow, Pennsylvania; Edward E. Denison, Illinois; Nicholas J. Sinnott, Oregon; Allen T. Treadway, Massachusetts; Walter H. Newton, Minnesota; Homer Hoch, Kansas; Frederick R. Lehlbach, New Jersey; S. Wallace Dempsey, New York; Royal C. Johnson, South Dakota.

**3627. The patronage of the House is distributed through a patronage committee nominated by the committee on committees and elected by the majority caucus.**

**Chairmen of committees control the patronage of their respective committees and do not participate in the general distribution.**

**The patronage of the House, exclusive of the committee assignments, is divided as equitably as may be among the majority Members exclusive of chairmen, the amount assigned to the individual Member varying with the size of the party majority.**

**Employees designated for appointment shall be competent, and are subject to removal by the committee for cause, or by the Members appointing them, at will.**

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<sup>1</sup>First session Seventieth Congress, Record, p. 8439.

On May 9, 1911,<sup>1</sup> Mr. John C. Floyd, of Arkansas, from the Committee on Accounts, by direction of that committee, presented a report<sup>2</sup> on a resolution vacating offices and employments in the service of the House, and quoting the following sections from a resolution adopted by the majority caucus for the Sixty-second Congress:

SEC. 3. That the Democratic members of the Committee on Ways and Means be, and they are hereby, instructed to nominate to the caucus for its action a committee of three members, to be known as the Committee on Organization, who shall have charge of the proper distribution of all of the appointive places in the House organization as provided herein, except the cloakroom men and such other places as are by law or resolution to be filled by the minority. And that said committee shall distribute said appointive places amongst the members of the various State delegations, exclusive of committee chairmen having patronage as under section 4, giving to each State the proportion in number of places and aggregate salaries thereof, as nearly as may be done, which its Democratic delegation bears to the entire Democratic membership of the House, excluding such chairmen, leaving to the individual members of the several State delegations or the several State delegations the nomination of persons to the places to which such State shall be so entitled; Provided that each member from a State shall receive, so far as practicable, a fair and equal proportion of the patronage to which his State is entitled; and said committee to have entire charge of the adjustment of such appointive places after the nominations have been made to said committee by the various State delegations; and the several elective officers of the House shall appoint only such persons to fill the various appointive offices as shall have been named by the said Committee on Organization, provided that the elective officers shall not be charged to any Member or delegation.

SEC. 4. That in the distribution of patronage, the clerk, assistant clerk, janitor, messenger, or other employees of each standing committee shall be charged to the chairman of the committee, who shall have the right to appoint the same by and with the approval of his committee; and that such chairman shall receive no other patronage until every other member shall have been given the opportunity to name the occupants of positions, whose salaries shall equal those of the persons so appointed by the respective committee chairmen.

**3628.** On March 19, 1918, preceding the opening of the Sixty-sixth Congress, the following letter was dispatched to majority Members elect:

DEAR SIR: The Members nominated by the committee on committees, under the instructions of the Republican conference of February 27, as the Republican steering committee, were instructed by the committee on committees to consider the question of patronage with a view to its equitable distribution, having especial regard for efficiency and the proper conduct of the business of the House.

The steering committee will recommend that the general patronage of the House, after eliminating that of committees, certain positions in which the incumbents' past services seem to warrant their retention and positions not heretofore deemed to be a part of the general patronage, be distributed through and by State delegations whose members are not chairman of committees, upon the basis of about \$1,800 per Member.

The steering committee finds that 266 positions will be available, the aggregate salaries of which amount to \$330,000, to be apportioned among 179 Members through their respective State delegations. Accordingly, for instance, your State will be entitled to patronage amounting to \$——, distributed among —— Members who are chairmen of committees.

It is suggested by the steering committee that, in order to be in readiness to assume control of the House and be prepared for the prompt dispatch of business when an extra session shall be called, Members entitled to patronage confer as early as possible with their colleagues upon the subject in order that delegations may be prepared to submit their recommendations before or at

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<sup>1</sup>First session Sixty-second Congress, Record, p. 1148.

<sup>2</sup>House Report No. 25.

the time of the assembling of Congress. All letters of inquiry and recommendations agreed upon should be addressed to Wm. Tyler Page, Republican nominee for Clerk of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

For your information there is inclosed a statement showing the offices or positions in the House of Representatives and their statutory salaries, to which the plan above mentioned applies.

In addition to such salaries the law, effective July 1st next, provides a bonus of \$240 for the next fiscal year. This bonus, however, is not included in the committee's basic computation of \$1,800 per Member.

Inviting your earliest possible consideration of this important matter,

Very truly yours,

F. W. MONDELL,

*Temporary Chairman, Committee on Committees.*

**3629.** On December 15, 1931, following the change in the control of the House in the Seventy-second Congress, majority Members received the following:

DEAR COLLEAGUE: The patronage committee has assigned to you your quota of patronage with the following conditions:

First. That those selected by you shall be placed on the pay roll on either the 15th or the 1st of the month.

Second. That any person assigned to you may be removed by you at any time you see fit.

Third. That the committee reserves the right to remove any person for incompetency or misconduct.

Fourth. Should you be assigned more than your quota, the committee reserves the right to reduce this amount, but hopes that it will not be necessary to do so.

Fifth. Patronage is assigned for the Seventy-second Congress only. If the Democratic majority is increased at the next election it will probably be necessary to rearrange assignments so as to take care of the new Members.

Your quota is as follows: ———.

When you so desire, please give me the name of the person or persons you wish to have placed on the pay roll in writing. The committee desires to express appreciation for the splendid spirit of cooperation that has been manifested by the Members. We have done the best that we could to satisfy every person, and hope that these assignments will be satisfactory.

Very sincerely,

JAMES V. MCCLINTIC, *Chairman.*