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Considerations on Committee Independence

The Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs of the United States House of Representatives in the 1980s

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Stanley Craig Buchanan
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This work is dedicated to the memory of my paternal grandmother,
Mary Virginia Arnn Buchanan (1878–1967).

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Abstract

Three schools of thought have emerged among scholars of legislative committees within the last generation or so to explain the policy-making activity of legislative committees. Each school assumes that legislative committees are powerful influencers of policy but regards them as agents working on behalf of certain principals.

One school sees committees as agents of the whole legislature, or parent chamber. The second regards committees as agents of political parties organized within the legislature. The third and largest school holds that congressional committees and their members labor as agents of outside interests. Committees that are agents of outside interests are referred to as "independent" committees.

The thesis of this dissertation is that legislative committees operate independently of both their parent chambers and their party caucuses. This notion is examined through an investigation of the activities of the Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs of the House of Representatives (BFUAC) from 1981 through 1990. The theory of committee independence is discussed. Five indicators of committee independence are developed and examined within two theoretical frames. Four of the indicators are tested within the principal-agent frame: committee self-selection, district characteristics, ideological differences with the House as a whole, and partisan differences. Weak to moderate support for the independence theory is found. The fifth indicator, control of legislation, is tested within what is referred to as the policy-process frame. Two case studies are presented. In the first case, support for BFUAC as an independent committee is found. The second case disputes the thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

The Study of Committees in the Process of Government

Three schools of thought have emerged among scholars of legislative committees within the last generation or so to explain the policy-making activity of legislative committees. Each school assumes that legislative committees are powerful influencers of policy but regards them as agents working on behalf of certain principals. One school sees committees as agents of the whole legislature, or parent chamber. The second regards committees as agents of political parties organized within the legislature. The third and most influential school, however, holds that congressional committees and their members labor as agents of outside or "independent" interests. These interests press committees toward policy commitments that may be at odds with the desires either of the whole chamber of the legislature or of legislative parties and thus can are said to operate independently of the house.

This study tests the theory advanced by this third school through the study of one committee of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, during the decade of the 1980s.

Are Committees Independent?

Woodrow Wilson's (1885) dictum concerning the work of Congress—that the work of Congress's committees *is* the work of Congress—is as true in the 1990s as the day he wrote it. Committees have been a central organizational feature of both the House and the Senate for many decades. Several generations

of political scientists have concerned themselves with the behavior of legislative, and especially of congressional, committees. Their work makes the study of legislative committees a major theme within the discipline. (See the outline of committee studies in appendix A.)

A reading of that extensive literature on congressional committees reveals an important assumption about legislative committees–that committees do not act on their own behalf and that, in fact, it would be impossible for them to do so. Instead, it is widely assumed, congressional committees act on the behalf of certain constituencies—or principals—for whom the committees act as agents. Scholarly arguments arise, however, over which constituencies (or principals) committees serve. As indicated above, three possible constituencies or principals have been identified.

First, it is argued, committees may serve as agents for the whole membership of the House in which they are located—either the House of Representatives or the Senate. The idea that committees work for the whole House (or the floor, or the parent chamber) is bound to the notion that it is the floor, not the committee, that is ultimately responsible for making government policy. In committees the legislature has created isomorphs of itself, "little legislatures" (George Goodwin, Jr. 1970). Committees are more efficient than the floor in dealing with the vast amounts of legislation that pour through system because they are smaller than the legislature itself and because they address themselves to specific types of policies. Their members therefore acquire more expertise within committee on certain policy topics than non-committee members are able to gain. The floor depends on committees for their best judgment regarding certain policies because the floor cannot possibly consider in

detail every piece of legislation submitted to it. Yet it is the constitutional duty of the floor, not of the committee, to set policy. So in this view the floor tries to pick committees whose attitudes and actions mimic those of the whole House. A second view of committee service is that they serve as agents of political parties. Usually, distinctions are made between national Democratic and Republican Parties and congressional parties, or the party caucuses within each house of Congress. Each house has a Democratic and a Republican caucus. The idea that committees work for the party caucuses of their particular house is tied to the notion that parties are responsible for implementing policy promises they make during election campaigns. As agents of congressional parties, according to this second view, committees are bound to carry out partisan mandates within their own policy bailiwicks. Carrying out the party's policy program within committee in turn helps insure the return of majority party members to their seats in Congress.

The third view of committee agency is that committees work for interests outside their own legislative branch. Those interests may exist within other parts of the government or outside the government altogether. The idea that congressional committees work for government and nongovernment groups outside their parent chamber is closely bound to the notion that the primary interest of members of Congress is re-election. Pleasing certain groups who are powerful locally in the members' home states or districts eases members' passage to re-election. Once satisfied that their members of Congress are working on their behalf, these groups support the re-election efforts of these incumbents, and re-election becomes more likely.

Alliances with elements of the executive branch may also aid members in re-election attempts. The federal bureaucracy is responsible for the dispensing of billions of federal dollars. Channeling those dollars toward projects in members' home districts bolsters the odds for re-election. And committees share common interests with the other body in a bicameral legislature or with committees within that body with whom they may work in tandem toward the common goals of constituency service and re-election.

When committees work for outside or "independent" interests, they are said to be "independent" committees. The terms *independence* and *independent committee(s)* are used often in this dissertation. Although this use is conventional, the convention is somewhat misleading. It is clear from the description above that "independent" committees are not really independent, but simply act as the agents of principals outside their own chamber. But for the lack of a better term, this convention will be maintained throughout this dissertation.

The prevalence of this third notion should come as no surprise. It is closely related to pluralism, which for several generations has been a leading theory of American government. The theory of pluralism arose with Arthur F. Bentley ([1908]1935) and is supported by David B. Truman (1951) and a host of others. Pluralist theory promotes the idea that the government is much more than the sum of the activity of government institutions. Government is a process in which the institutions of government—such as standing committees—combine with nongovernmental groups and institutions—interest groups, pressure groups, special interests, even subnational governments and their agencies—in the making of national policies. Americans are well served by this process, pluralists hold, because all Americans belong, officially or not, to

one group or the other—or to many groups. All Americans, therefore, are represented within the process.

One manifestation of pluralism in government is the existence of so-called "iron triangles," or "subgovernments" (Emmette S. Redford 1969). Subgovernments are alliances of the various committees of Congress with special interests and interested elements of the executive branch—bureaucracies. The members of these alliances share certain interests, and their agreements produce policies that serve these common interests. Committees aim to produce policies that appeal to special home constituencies. Those interests then aid in the re-election of committee members (David R. Mayhew 1974).

This view is at the heart of this paper, which begins with the thesis that Congressional committees are indeed independent in the conventional use of the term. It is assumed at the outset that the principal concern of committee members is re-election, that committees ally themselves with interests outside their chamber to accomplish this principal goal, and that committees are more likely to be independent and less likely to work for floor or for party.

This thesis acts as a kind of null hypothesis. That is, there should prove to be no difference between the results of this study and the results of so many studies that have gone before, studies from which the thesis is derived, studies that have supported the pluralist view. What will be remarkable about this study will be any differences that emerge between what this study reveals and what findings are expected, given the thesis.

But before differences between independent committees and committees tied to the party caucus or to the floor can be discussed, criteria for committee independence must be established.

What are the indicators of committee independence?

First, in order for a committee to act independently, committee posts must be self-selected. Members choose to sit on certain committees, in the main, to enhance their chances of re-election. The re-election of individual members is the concern of neither floor nor party. Those institutions are interested in broader national or ideological issues. The ability of floor or party caucus to scramble members' committee positions would indicate that floor or party control committees for their own interests. This notion is alien to the idea that legislative committees are independent. Those who believe committees to be independent hold that, once appointed to a committee position, a committee member "owns" the position. The committee post becomes his "property." Any abrogation of this "property right" by floor or by caucus is a breach of the committee's independence. In practice, according to the notion of committee independence, members hold their places on committees of their choosing until they either leave Congress or voluntarily move to another committee.

A corollary of the criterion of self-selected committee assignments is the appointment of committee leaders by seniority. Party caucuses have traditionally appointed committee leaders—committee chairmen of the majority party and ranking minority leaders of the minority party—early in each new congressional session. But within this tradition, according to the notion of committee independence, party caucuses invariably acknowledge members' seniority rights. The most senior majority party member of the committee ranked by committee seniority standing is appointed chairman. The most senior minority party member of the committee is appointed ranking minority member. Again, a

breach in the seniority right—for example, the appointment of the third most senior member in rank as chairman—is a breach in committee independence.

A second indicator of committee independence involves the socioeconomic characteristics of districts from which committee members are elected. Members of independent committees are mainly concerned with re-election, and re-election is won by pleasing their home constituencies. Concern for local issues, then, binds members of each committee to maintaining the independence of these committees. It insulates them, in the main, from the larger concerns of floor or of party, and it separates committee members from the activities of other committees, whose concerns they do not share. It follows that the districts represented by members of a given committee have certain socioeconomic characteristics in common--and these will differ from those of districts represented by members of other committees. For example, members from vast districts in Western states do not choose to sit on committees such as the Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs (hereafter referred to as the BFUAC), whose concerns are mainly urban. Instead they choose seats on the Agriculture or the Interior Committees, whose activities more closely parallel the interests of their constituencies.

A third indicator of the independent status of committees is the presence of ideological differences between committee members and other members of the chamber. Members of committees acting as agents of the floor represent the entire spectrum of views present in the chamber, and no ideological bias exists among committee members. According to the idea of committee independence, however, members of independent committees do indeed exhibit ideological bias. The bias is significant. It may be detected within committee as an

inclination toward selection of members from certain regions of the country, and it may be spotted on the floor within voting patterns maintained by committee members.

A fourth indicator of the independent status of committees is the existence of partisan differences between committee members and other members of their party caucuses. Native to the independence theory is the idea that committees are not inclined to act at the behest of legislative parties—the Democratic and the Republican caucuses. The surest indicator of partisanship is party-line voting. Party-line voting by committee members both in committee and on the floor is an indication that partisan concerns are overriding constituency concerns. Independent committee members, on the other hand, vote on the basis of constituency or other outside interests. These considerations, which may contradict partisan aims, become apparent in the failure of committee members to vote with members of their party either as a committee caucus or on the floor itself.

Finally, independent committees are powerful committees, and their power is exhibited through their ability to control the course of legislation through both committee and parent chamber. All other considerations to the contrary, committees that cede control of legislation to the floor or to the party caucus are dependent upon, not independent of, those bodies. Once control over legislative policy making is compromised by chamber or by caucus, committees cease to be independent. The interests that once looked to the committee as the principal organ of policy making would then look elsewhere.

These five indicators, therefore, are marks of committee independence: the self-selection of committee posts; distinct socioeconomic characteristics of

committee members' districts; ideological and partisan differences between committee members and other members; and the ability of the committees to control the flow of legislation. Now that they have been stated and clarified, they must be applied to an actual case. First, however, some limits must be drawn.

Parameters of This Study

It is not within the scope of brief studies like this one to examine all congressional committees across the entire breadth of their existences. The aim of this study is much more limited—to present a thoughtful examination of one congressional committee over a relatively brief span of time. The results of such a study will not shake the theoretical pillars of the discipline. but they may add some small portion of evidence to confirm or deny certain theoretical concepts about congressional committees.

This examination is limited to one committee of one house of Congress—the House Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee. It is also limited to ten years beginning in January 1981 with the Ninety-seventh Congress and ending in January 1991, when the One Hundred and First Congress rose for the last time. (This decade is referred to herein as "the 1980s," even though it includes 1990 and omits 1980.)

Committees of both houses of Congress have been subject to scholarly review, but the most intense scrutiny seems to have been directed at committees of the House of Representatives. There are good reasons for this scholarly bias toward the study of House committees.

The Senate is a more prestigious body, considered the "higher" legislative body. Its members represent entire states rather than smaller, less populated

congressional districts, and the Senate contains fewer members than the House. The rules of the Senate, accordingly, reflect a kind of enlarged individualism in their regard for the rights of each individual senator to have his say. Each senator is allowed almost unlimited debate on any policy matter. These characteristics of the Senate and its members confound the ability of committees to control the flow of the policy debate either in committee or on the floor.

In the Senate, therefore, the institution of the committee is made to serve the interests of the individual senator. But the House is different. The House of Representatives is a much more rule-bound organization. The average House member enjoys less prestige than even the most junior of his Senate colleagues, and junior members typically wield little clout either on the floor or in committee. Long-lived senior members are especially powerful within the committee chamber. There they display their vast expertise and may at times virtually control the debate.

In addition to limiting individual initiative within the policy-making arena, institutional factors augment the power of House committees. The House is much larger than the Senate. It must, almost perforce, rely heavily on its committees to perform the complicated tasks that are required to prepare legislation for final debate and enactment. In addition, House rules strictly control debate on the House floor. Typically, on the floor, only certain committee members, or interested members of the House leadership, are permitted to debate or offer amendments to legislation crafted in committee. There is little tolerance for individual initiative on the floor once a bill has been reported out of committee to the whole House. Bills are much more likely to be changed or amended on the floor of the Senate than on the floor of the House.

All of these indicators point to the fact that committees are more powerful within the House than within the Senate. The stamp of the standing legislative committee on the legislative process is more pronounced within the House. Consequently, it has been a simpler task for scholars to draw out lines of power and responsibility regarding federal policy making to and from House committees than to and from Senate committees.

On these grounds, this study is limited to the House. It is also limited to one committee, the BFUAC, for good reason. First, the BFUAC has not been the subject of a monograph, or a single committee study, for some time. The most recent work specific to the BFUAC is probably that of Lester Salamon, Robert Fussfeld, Michael Massey, Nancy Masuelli, and Kerry Vandell (1975). But Salamon and his colleagues paired the BFUAC with its banking committee counterpart in the Senate. Their work was a product of the Ralph Nader organization and was consequently somewhat biased in its approach and reproachful in its tone toward the BFUAC. A more balanced view is called for.

Second, there has been a general lack of such single committee studies in the discipline over the past several years. They have gone out of style in scholarly circles, pushed aside by scholars like Roger H. Davidson (1976), Glenn R. Parker and Suzanne L. Parker (1985), and Steven S. Smith and Christopher J. Deering (1990), who prefer to produce studies of multiples of committees or of the committee system.

One reason multiple committee studies have flourished is that computers have enhanced the ability of scholars to store, retrieve, and process the huge masses of data such studies generate. Multiple committee studies also amplify the ability of the scholar to generalize about the work of legislative committees.

But what may be missed by such broad generalizations are details that may be significant within the limited confines of one committee's activities, but which may not apply to other committees. More importantly, single committee studies may identify variables important to committee activity that broader studies ignore. In general, the lack of empirical descriptions of single committees' activities may deprive us of specific knowledge upon which to base further research.

This study, then, represents a deliberate return to a mode of study of legislative committees that has been for the most part abandoned over the last generation in favor of a different approach. The intention is that a dissertation examining the BFUAC only, within the universe of House committees and employing scholarly standards, will serve the very useful purpose of examining in singular detail what has not been so examined for some time.

Theories and Methods

The research question addressed by this work is this: Was the House Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee independent during the decade of the 1980s?

A common analogy may explain the approach taken here to answering that question. The BFUAC may be likened to a tree in a forest, which represents the realm in which federal policy is made. It contains all the other institutions—the other trees—active within the policy-making realm.

In studying this policy-making forest, the scholar has two choices. He or she may study an individual tree, carrying away a great deal of knowledge about that individual and learning little about the rest of the forest. (But the

information this one scholar develops may serve to help others develop theories about the life and growth of other trees.) On the other hand, the scholar may choose to examine all the trees in the forest. In doing so, he or she may arrive at generalizations that apply to that singular tree and to all the others as well.

Both methods of examination are used in this dissertation to develop a view of the BFUAC both as an individual and as a member of a larger system. Two theoretical frames are constructed, and the two parts of this study are developed within these frames. The first focuses primarily on the committee (the tree itself) and its role in Congress. The second focuses on the committee's activity within the policy-making process (the tree within the forest).

The first frame may be referred to as principal-agency theory. The idea it contains has already been presented. It is that committees do not labor on the behalf of their institutional selves, but on behalf of other interests or institutions—the floor, the party caucus, or outside interests. That is, committees serve as agents for principals. In chapter 1, the theory of principal-agent relationships is presented. An empirical study of certain questions that arise from the application of the theory developed in chapter 1 begins with chapter 2. The answers to these questions will help determine the independent status of the BFUAC in the 1980s.

Briefly, chapters 2, 3, and 4 answer a series of questions, based on the five indicators of committee independence. Were BFUAC members' rights of seniority and property violated by the House during the 1980s? Did the congressional districts of BFUAC members contain socioeconomic variables distinct enough to set them apart from the districts of other members? Did BFUAC members act apart from other members on the floor of the House, as

independent members would act, or did they act in concert with other members regarding policy concerns expressed by the floor? Finally, were BFUAC members motivated by partisan and ideological concerns? The answer to each question will either support or fail to support the independence thesis regarding BFUAC in the 1980s.

The second frame may be referred to as the policy-process frame. The policy-process frame enables a search for the fifth indicator of committee independence, the ability of BFUAC to control the flow of legislation within its policy-making purview. Within the policy-process frame, two theories are presented, and one is then tested against the other. This approach potentially complicates the assessment of the results. But it may help answer the research question and also challenge some broadly held assumptions regarding the place held by BFUAC within the policy-making arena.

There are several mature theories used to explain policy making within the federal government. Perhaps the most widely used is that of Theodore Lowi. Lowi (1972) holds that policy drives politics and that specific policies produce specific kinds of politics. Lowi posits the existence of three policy types—redistributive, regulatory, and distributive. (He suggests a fourth, but for reasons discussed in chapter 5, it is disregarded in this study.)

How do congressional committees fit into Lowi's theoretical scheme?

Distributive policies are rather low-level policies fashioned chiefly within congressional committees. The rewards of distributive policies are diffused only within the narrow confines of the interests served by the committees who parent them. Debate rarely escapes the committee room. The floor passes bills containing distributive policies almost routinely—simply acting as a rubber

stamp for committee-written bills. The executive takes little notice of them.These are the policies often thought of as products of self-serving "subgovernment" pacts among committees, elements of the bureaucracy, and private interests.

The production of regulatory and redistributive policies, in Lowi's construct, involve both more policy players and more powerful ones.

Regulatory policies, Lowi says, are usually made by the floor itself. This is because the effects of regulatory policies are more widespread than those of distributive policies. Nationally effective regulatory policies, policies whose tides affect nearly all members' districts, naturally draw the attention of members outside the committees that originate the legislation. Committees serve a relatively less significant role in regulatory policy making because regulatory policies are often hotly contested on the floor of both houses of Congress. Executive agencies are also involved in making regulatory policy—although not at the highest level—an occurrence which pushes congressional committees farther into the background.

Committees serve an even less meaningful role in the making of what Lowi terms redistributive policies. Redistributive policies are policies that are truly national in scope and effect. They influence the activities of national groups, "peak" interests, such as the elderly, the poor, and ethnic and racial minorities. They are crafted only at the highest level of the policy-making process. They involve the President and his advisers, leaders of Congress, and leaders of the interests effected. In short, whatever influence congressional committees may have over redistributive policies is minor because of the presence of more powerful players on the policy-making field.

The problem with Lowi's scheme is its inevitability. According to Lowi, congressional committees are powerful and independent players when they deal with distributive policies. They slip into the background of regulatory and redistributive policy making. One of the three policy groups—they are described in chapter 4—that fall under the purview of the BFUAC is housing. According to Lowi, housing policy is redistributive policy. If he is correct—and many scholars assume he is—then federal housing policy is made only at the highest levels of the government and that the BFUAC plays a small role in making federal housing policy. In other words, when it comes to making housing policy, BFUAC could not possibly be an independent committee. Rather, it is called upon to craft housing legislation in certain ways by more powerful players, who may then alter the policy design as they see fit.

This dissertation aims to challenge Lowi on this point. Indeed, to support the thesis—that BFUAC acts as an independent committee—Lowi must be challenged. But to do so requires a theoretical base from which to launch the challenge. T. Alexander Smith (1982) provides just such a base. Smith turns Lowi's assertion on its head by claiming that politics is determined not by policy type, but by politics. The importance of Smith's argument to the thesis of this paper is that Smith's theory allows the BFUAC to act as an independent agent—although it may act as well as an agent of the floor or of the party caucus—thus enabling the Lowian knot to be cut.

A full explanation of the policy-process schemes of Lowi and Smith and the contrast between these two approaches are offered in chapter 5. Chapter 5 also includes a defense of the use of the case-history method that is used in chapters 6 and 7. These two chapters contain evidence to support the notion that

housing policy is not necessarily redistributive in nature and that the BFUAC may act independently when producing housing policy. In other words, chapters 6 and 7 entail the search for the fifth indication of committee independence—that committees control the flow of legislation. The evidence comes in the form of case histories describing housing policy making during the debates over the housing bills of 1983 and 1990.

Another limitation applies only to the second half of this dissertation: chapters 6 and 7 involve housing policy only, and housing policy is only one of the three policy sets that fall under the authority of the BFUAC. (The other two are the regulation of banking and financial institutions and the production of federal urban development policies.) But the this dissertation limits its scope to housing policy for two reasons. First, a finding that housing policy alone is not necessarily redistributive in nature will provide enough evidence to challenge Lowi and help confirm the thesis of committee independence. Second, there are the constraints of the dissertation itself to consider. The addition of case studies of BFUAC-made banking policy made during the 1980s alone would more than double the size of the dissertation. Such an addition would require a description of BFUAC's role in developing the government's approach to the savings-and-loan scandal of the late 1980s. That subject alone is large enough and important enough to fill several books.

Three tasks are now complete. First, a thesis has been produced—that legislative committees are independent agents. Second, a research question has been developed: Was the BFUAC an independent agent during the 1980s? Third, five indicators of committee independence have been produced; these stimulate questions about BFUAC activity in the 1980s that the remainder of this

dissertation will attempt to answer. The reader has also been presented with a rough outline of the remainder of this study. The discussion now turns to principal-agency theory, and the study begins in earnest.

CHAPTER ONE

The Principal-Agent Model and Legislative Committees

Models are commonly used by political scientists to explain complex political phenomena. Within the community of legislative committee scholars, three schools of thought have evolved regarding the constituencies of legislative committees. Each school has developed a formal model to explain its version of committee activity. The dominant school holds that congressional committees agents work for their own interests and that these interests may be, and usually are, independent of partisan or floor considerations. Others see committees as agents either of congressional parties or of the floor (or parent chamber, or house) as a whole.

Scholars who see committees as independent agents believe that committees are able to control policy within the areas of their jurisdiction, that committees have themselves become "little legislatures." Those who take this position believe that committee seats are assigned on demand—that members who desire a seat on a certain committee are usually assigned that seat and that they retain those seats as long as they want them. This is the property right norm. Since committee seats essentially become possessions of individual members, neither floor nor party may bring much influence to bear on individual policy preferences. For that matter, since committee members are socialized to accept committee norms and receive biased information, their views come to represent those of the committee, not necessarily those of the institution or of the party.

Members of these independent committees are independent only of internal forces in the house, not of outside powers. (The contradiction between the conventional use of the terms *independence* and *independent committee* and the apparent meaning of the term *independence* is explained in the introduction, above.) Their principals may be constituents in committee members' districts. Or they may be interest groups, campaign contributors, or other groups with an interest in committee policy making. Principals of independent committees may even include the executive branch—the President and his advisers and/or elements of the federal bureaucracy—and elements of the other house of the legislature whose interests parallel those of the committee in question. Scholars who hold the independence view see the committees as centers of institutionalized parochial activity such as logrolling and porkbarreling. Scholars who have formalized this argument recently include Barry Weingast and William Marshall (1988), Kenneth A. Schepsle (1986), and David P. Baron and John A. Ferejohn (1989).

Other scholars—recent members of this group include Arthur Maas (1983) and Keith Krehbiel (1990)—argue that committees are not independent of the floor at all, but are agents of it. In this view, both chambers of Congress use committee systems to develop specialists in policy areas. Relying upon the policy expertise of committee members alleviates uncertainty within the policy-making process. Of course the parent body may choose to reject the policy outcomes produced by committees and may even take the drastic steps of altering committee jurisdictions or restructuring committees in some other way. Committees may even be abolished or re-formed in order to provide information to the floor more efficiently.

A small third group of scholars, the most notable and most recent of whom are probably Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins (1993), have renewed interest in the connection between congressional parties and congressional committees. They argue that legislative parties control the committee assignment process and the legislative agenda. If this is so, then committees are agents of party caucuses, not of the floor. And, since the majority party dominates policy making, then committee-made policies reflect majority party opinion.

Let us turn now to a discussion of the theory of principal-agent relationships in general and of the idea that House committees serve as agents of one of these three principals.

Relations between Principals and Agents

According to the principal-agent model, society may be defined by a series of relationships between individuals who are buying services, known as principals, and those who are selling them, agents. Agents perform services, and principals may purchase those services from agents. If agents for some reason fail or refuse to continue their services, principals may turn to other agents. On the other hand, agents may stop performing services for principals who fail to pay them.

The assumption is that the agent-principal relationship mutually satisfies needs and requirements of both parties in the relationship. No such relationship exists, however, if the agent cannot be replaced or if the agent is dependent on the principal. If the agent cannot be replaced, the agents may demand any price for services rendered. If the agent is dependent on the principal and may not

leave, the principal may set the terms of the contract to fit only his or her desires. That is to say, there is no principal-agent relationship when either party may not elect to abandon the contract. When neither party may leave, the relationship is not a contract, but an example of one individual dominating another.

Reasons for principals to seek out and use the services of agents abound. Principals may lack information to perform certain services for themselves, they may not have the expertise, or they may not be sufficiently specialized. Although the client-attorney relationship is probably the most often cited example of the principal-agent relationship, many other examples may be found. For example, the relationships between pugilists such as Mike Tyson and professional boxing promoter Don King are principal-agent relationships, as are the relationships between actors and their theatrical agents. And organization theorists often explain legislative committee activity in terms of the principal-agent model, thus bringing the model into the scope of this dissertation.

The most notable problem within the relationship that must be explained here is the problem of shirking, or moral hazard. Shirking is the predilection of agents to perform tasks or engage in activity not in the interests of their principals. A certain amount of shirking is almost certainly tolerated by principals, because acquiring the services of new agents is expensive. Also, principals who remain ignorant of agent activities thereby reinforce the tendency to shirk and raise the cost to themselves. The most important consideration for the principal in the contract, therefore, is how to monitor agent activities. The amount of agent shirking is related to how closely the agent's actions are monitored and their understanding of the repercussions of their shirking.

The principal question organization theorists address is the question of how the principal attenuates the expenses that may result from agent shirking. Theorists concerned with legislative committees agree that principals employ at least one of three methods to prevent the moral hazard, although principals may employ them separately or simultaneously at one time or another. First, a principal may engage as an agent a committee with similar preferences. Second the principal may design a contract with the committee-agent that will accomplish the principal's goals. Third, the principal may monitor the activities of the committee-agent closely.

The first option, hiring agents with similar preferences, contains its own hazards. Aspiring agents may claim they prefer the principal's point of view when in reality they have other views they want to press. To prevent agents from acting on their own agendas when they are hired, principals may choose to coax agents into the advocacy of the principal's views by coaching the agent into altering his point of view. On the other hand, even agents whose preferences differ from those of the principal may choose to represent the principal faithfully. For example, the American military has usually carried out the orders of its civilian commanders even when its ranking officers disagree with the orders given.

Principals may also prevent shirking by fashioning a contract that fulfills the agent's objectives. But costs to the principal may be too high to tolerate, because benefits accrued by the agent for faithful performance of the contract may supplant the goal of the principal in the contractual arrangement. For example, a principal-boxer hires Don King to promote the boxer's career. The contract provides King with 80 percent of the boxer's winnings. The cost is

probably too high for the boxer if his goal is to reach a position of financial independence similar to that achieved by, say, Gene Tunney.

Finally, principals may monitor their agents, although this too may be expensive as well as difficult. It may be difficult because the agent may possess more information than the principal' such a situation is referred to as information asymmetry. The boxer in the example above may simply not know enough about the world of boxing to assess whether King is doing his job. The boxer may independently hire an accountant to keep tabs on his percentage of his winnings. But the accountant himself may shirk by either doing poor work or by allying himself with King for a price, thereby creating a contractual relationship between himself and a second principal.

Models of legislative committees as agents of parties, of the floor, or of outside interests all rest on different assumptions regarding committee preferences, incentives offered to committees by principals, and the ability of principals to understand the information passed on by their agent-committees.

Committees as Agents of Forces outside the House

The idea that congressional committees act independently of either floor or party may be essential to the understanding of the dynamics of American pluralist thought. (That this is so may be supported by simply reviewing the number of scholars who hold the committee independence view.) As explained in the introduction, this dominant view promotes the idea that committees serve as agents for principals outside Congress rather than of the floor or the internal party caucuses and that principals' policy preferences may not coincide with those of the floor or the parties. (Again, committees acting on behalf of outside

principals are not then truly independent; independence in this context refers to independence from forces within the parent chamber.) It follows that if committee members are agents of powers outside the parent chamber, they too may have policy goals and preferences that do not coincide with those of the floor.

An interesting feature of the committee independence model is that, although committee members may have preferences that lie outside the mainstream of the views of the floor, intracommittee policy views may themselves be homogeneous. For example, the Agriculture Committee may be composed entirely of pro-farm, Southern and Midwestern members of both parties whose policy views nicely coincide.

On the other hand, members may gather into polar policy groups within committees. As Richard E. Fenno, Jr. (1973), describes it, the Committee on Education and Labor was composed at the time of his study into labor liberals and right-to-work conservatives. The result was an ideologically polarized committee. The committee's decisions were methodically and systematically biased. Within a polarized committee, both the majority and minority may hold positions so extreme that the median position may become that of the majority caucus.

The view that independent policy-making authority is the result of logrolling, a practice in which most members of the floor engage, is held by several generations of scholars—Wilson (1885), Ralph K. Huitt (1946), Fenno (1973), Mayhew (1974), and Schepsle and Weingast (1987). Logrolling occurs when members trade committee memberships and the influence those memberships have over particular domains of public policy. Weingast and

Marshall (1988) assert that, since this exchange is an institutional norm, members have no need to renew the terms of the exchange every Congress.

This arrangement removes the ability of either floor or party to enforce their own policy preferences on committee members. Members outside the committee room simply are not willing—nor are they able if they want to maintain dominance in their own policy areas—to interfere with committee policy making within acknowledged committee domains. Moreover, once safely entrenched within committees of their own choosing, committee members begin to internalize committee norms, and their policy preferences begin to be shaped by their own committee service (Fenno 1962).

Of course independent committee preferences are molded by outside pressures, as well as by forces from inside the committee. Scholars have observed and described the relationships among elements of subgovernments (Redford 1969)—one element of which is the committee—for decades (J. Lieper Freeman 1955; Lowi 1969; Randall B. Ripley and Grace A. Franklin 1984). Committee biases are also reinforced by constituencies which are themselves molded by local traditions and a host of socioeconomic conditions peculiar to members' district. For example, a Southern conservative member of the BFUAC from a largely rural district may find explaining to his constituents a vote for the housing bill of 1990, which increased federal housing subsidies, difficult. A Minnesota liberal Democrat would not have the same difficulty.

Universally recognized norms of deference to and specialization by House committees create major policy implications. Observation of these norms virtually insures that committees dominate the policies within their domains. (Note that Barbara Sinclair [1989] observes that these norms may have been

diluted in the Senate, but they certainly have affected the House during most of this century.)

Floor rules and norms also favor committee dominance of policy. Members lack staff resources, for example, to monitor work done by committees outside the members' recognized policy domains. As a result, outside members have little information with which to challenge committee decisions. But the sharpest weapon within the committees' quiver may be the gatekeeping powers afforded them by the floor.

The gatekeeping weapon may be wielded in different ways. Bills referred to committees may simply be killed outright within their chambers by their refusal to report bills out onto the floor. Other members must take extraordinary measures to force comatose legislation out from under committees whose members do not favor that legislation. Or bills may be controlled through conference committees, which are ad hoc committees composed of members of both chambers.

Conference committees exist to smooth out differences between House and Senate versions of legislation covering the same topic. For example, both House and Senate may approve a housing bill in a given year, and the two versions will inevitably differ in some respects, but the Constitution requires that both chambers pass identical legislation. It is the job of the conference committee to combine the two versions into a single bill. Once the bill is approved by the conference committee (the bill is revised "in conference"), then the House and the Senate vote on the same bill. (Lawrence Longley and Walter J. Oleszek 1989).

Gatekeeping occurs on conference committees because members of the House committee on a certain topic tend to be assigned to the conference

committee on the same topic. They can then prevent non-committee members from altering bills forged within the committee precincts. At the same time, unwanted floor amendments may be removed during conference by committee members on guard to enforce committee policy-making privileges (Schepsle and Weingast 1987).

The very design of the standing committee assignment system also draws members away from floor or party policy preferences. For example, the "property right norm," the practice that guarantees reappointment of members to their favored committees, does little to prompt members to desire other assignments. Chairmanships, ranking minority positions, and other committee leadership positions such as subcommittee chairmanships, are allocated on the basis of members' seniority within their committees. Once a member transfers, his seniority within his new committee returns to zero. So members rarely desire transfers unless they are able to transfer "up" into rare openings on such prestige committees as the Committee on Ways and Means. For the most part, once a member begins to climb the ladder of committee seniority, he or she has little incentive to move to another committee. His or her position is secure from demands of party and floor.

Committees as Agents of the Floor

In another view of committee agency, committees are seen as agents of their parent chamber. Committees act to further the policy goals of the floor, and may not act either as partisans or as independents. There are historical justifications for this view.

According to George B. Galloway (1953), bills arrived at their committee destinations during the Jeffersonian period replete with specific instructions from the floor regarding the committees' expected disposition of the legislation. Lauros G. McConachie, writing near the turn of this century (1898), believed despite Wilson's earlier (1885) assertion of committee independence that committees were still directed by the floor. (See appendix B for a fuller explanation of the historical development of standing committees in the House of Representatives.)

Later scholarship (Maas 1983; Krehbiel 1990) also supports the idea of committee deference to the wishes of the floor. Both Maas and Krehbiel argue that committees are appointed by the parent body to provide expertise to the floor. This provision of expertise affords the floor the best method of making good public policy.

This view is clearly a rejection of the pluralist view of policy making. Pluralists see the state and its institutions as maintaining a level playing field on which policy battles are fought out by various interests. Maas (1983), however, holds that the state, not factions outside the government, determines public policy, and that every member of the House is involved, and wants to be involved, in making each policy. Although committees develop expertise, this expertise does not allow them to dominate policy. They do not do so because what the legislature contributes to the political process, it contributes as a whole. Maas (1983) compares legislative committees with bureaus within the executive branch. Bureaus do aid executive policy making, but they are not ultimately responsible for it. In the same way, committees do aid in legislative policy making, but they do not bear the ultimate responsibility for making it.

Although committees may not dominate policy making in this model of principal-agent relations, they are still vital to policy making. Committees serve critical informational needs and provide policy expertise as well. Once provided with policy information through the expert channels of the committee system, the floor may transform policies from piecemeal into unambiguous national programs. However, committees may shirk their responsibilities and fail to provide what the floor created them to provide. Committees may attempt to act independently on the behalf of their own members, although Maas (1983) contends that the parent chamber may effectively stop committees from challenging policy decisions made on the floor.

Krehbiel (1990) thinks that the House may use the appointment process and other tools to discourage shirking by committees. The floor accomplishes this by appointing members to committees whose preferences are, on the whole, generally those of the floor. When committee policy preferences resemble floor policy preferences, the floor has insured deference on the part of standing committees to policies made on the floor.

Maas and Krehbiel agree that appointing members in this way leads to heterogeneous committees whose members, representing all possible floor policy viewpoints, provide the floor with as much information as it needs to control its committees. Also, a committee whose policy preferences are similar to those of the floor will usually act in concert with the floor's wishes. It does so because its processes are more likely to be calculated and plotted when all viewpoints are represented and must be consulted. Costs to the floor for monitoring its committee agents are therefore low.

However, the ability of the floor to appoint representative committees is limited by the presence of several factors. Appointments are made necessarily without knowledge by the floor of what legislation committees will come to consider. Also, the floor may not know all it needs to know about prospective committee members; it needs to know their preferences in order to create representative committees. Members may intentionally misstate their views to procure a coveted committee seat. Finally, reassigning members from one committee to another is a difficult proposition for the floor. If members are reassigned too often, they will be unable to develop the policy information expertise required by the floor. On the other hand, veteran committee members long steeped in the property-right norm may buck floor preferences and turn maverick. So the fact that it is able to make changes in committee membership incrementally is a handicap in creating representative committees.

Another factor that may prevent the creation by the legislature of representative committees is the presence of a multidimensional policy grid within the jurisdiction of many committees. The BFUAC, for example, not only makes federal housing policy, but also is charged with regulating and overseeing the nation's banking and financial institutions. Although housing and banking experts share some knowledge in common, members may tend to concentrate on one area or the other. The floor may therefore find it itself faced with appointing a representative committee along several dimensions. It may not be able to agree on just what a representative committee looks like. Even at that, it is possible that no such representative committee can be assembled or that the committee, once assembled, may use the confusion created by the uncertainty to escape possible floor sanctions.

Maas thinks that the floor uses certain tools to prevent committees from acting against the chamber's interests. The most powerful tool the floor may use in enforcing its wishes is the requirement that the full floor vote on all bills. This requirement provides all members with information about committee legislative productions and forces committee members to take into account the views of the floor.

This may not be enough, however, to motivate committees to move entirely within the policy grounds desired by the floor. Making policy, after all, is just one aim of committee members. Members may also use committees as forums to claim and justify certain positions, especially with an eye toward re-election (Mayhew 1974). Committee members may decide to position themselves to one side or the other of the floor's mainstream.

Forcing committees into floor-orthodox policy positions may cost the floor more than it is willing to give. In the House, the floor may discharge bills from committee, suspend the rules, or create special rules to circumvent contrary committees. But given the nature of the issue, the regularity of the issue's appearance on the floor, and the floor's preferences on the issue, the floor may simply allow the committee to have its way with certain unrepresentative measures.

The idea of the floor as committee principal attracts those scholars, like Joseph C. Cooper (1977), who see Congress as a rational, goal-oriented actor. Cooper argues that when change outside the institution challenge the ability of the House to reach its policy goals, changes occur within the institution as well. Change would not occur if the House were not singularly rational, or if it was

dominated by a system of independent committees following committee members' policy goals.

Cooper (1970) also argues that the evolution of the early House was directed in such a way as to increase the committee of the whole's ability to process the increasing flow of information that passed through its portals. As the floor grew, it became a more sophisticated processor, and part of this sophistication was the growth of the committee system. With committees threatening independent action, the House was forced to structure committees so that their policy offerings were commensurate with the floor's desired outcomes. Still, one must note that, as engines designed for lawn mowers may be retrofitted to power motor scooters, a committee system designed to benefit the floor may actually empower other policy actors.

Committees as Agents of Parties

The third model of committee agency—that committees are agents of party caucuses—has recently been revived. This model portrays committees representing and deferring to their party caucuses because of members' concern for re-election and because the electoral success of their party means majority status for members. Majority status brings with it more opportunities for party adherents to influence policy.

The contemporary scholar perhaps most closely associated with the party-as-principal model is Mathew D. McCubbins, who in collaboration with Gary W. Cox (Cox and McCubbins 1993) and D. Roderick Kiewiet (1985, 1991) has asserted that the role of parties in committee policy making is much more central than other scholars have recently suspected. Although the findings of

McCubbins and his colleagues seem to fly in the face much recent scholarship, they are supported by classic electoral behavior studies such as that of Angus Campbell (Campbell et al. 1960). Campbell and his collaborators claim that partisanship has been an important variable in determining the outcomes of American elections since the end of World War II. Cox and McCubbins (1993) test the importance of partisan electoral behavior and come to a conclusion similar to Campbell's. In addition, several other scholars (Joel H. Silbey 1967a; Brady 1973 and 1988) have found some support for a committees-as-party-agents model similar to the one advocated by McCubbins and his colleagues.

McCubbins and his colleagues assert that members do believe that election results turn on party records. Other scholars have offered support for that position. Both Morris P. Fiorina (1981) and Gary C. Jacobson (1987) present rationales for thinking that caucuses may dominate committees. Fiorina holds that voters actually evaluate parties and their platforms during elections (Fiorina 1981). Jacobson (1987) believes that challengers, incumbents, and contributors all review voter evaluations and judge members' chances of re-election accordingly.

Since re-election hinges on partisan electoral outcomes, party caucuses are able to use committee assignments to reinforce party agendas on committee calendars. Caucuses try to prevent shirking by creating delegations on committees with policy preferences similar to their own.

An interesting feature of the McCubbins (Cox and McCubbins 1993) party-as-principal model is that party delegations in committee tend to be less moderate, and by no means more moderate, than the caucuses themselves. The danger of creating two moderate contingents within the committee structure from the party's points of view is that policy positions taken within committee

ranks may not be in the interests of either party caucus. For example, a BFUAC consisting of moderate Republicans and centrist Democrats could produce a bipartisan coalition that would ignore the more radical policy prescriptions of either party. So committees are seeded with party policy outliers and are always "stacked in favor of majority party interests" (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2). What makes this stacking difficult is the old problem of multiple committee jurisdictions. It may be impossible for party caucuses to find anything other than moderate committee delegations for each committee.

Cox and McCubbins (1993) also argue that partisan delegations in committees are presented with incentives to prevent their shirking. These incentives are based on the members' desire to keep committee seats or to win more electorally advantageous seats on prestige committees such as Ways and Means. Members who fail to hold to the party line in committee may find their committee seats in jeopardy or may be refused promotion to prestige committees. For example, Democratic Representative Phil Gramm of Texas was removed from his seat on the Budget Committee in 1981 after he displayed his disaffection with Democratic policies by tattling to the opposition. However, he later switched parties and was returned to the committee.

Parties choose party leaders in the form of committee and subcommittee chairs and ranking minority members to accomplish two tasks: they monitor committee activity and they try to prevent shirking by other members. Leaders who control the formal levers of committee power are able to keep members toeing the party line in committee. Leaders may also use informal measures, such as visits to districts during re-election campaigns and help in raising funds, to bait the hook of party loyalty.

McCubbins and others who have developed the model of party dominance of committees are swimming against the currents of modern and traditional congressional scholarship. Although Angus Campbell et al. (1960) and others suggest that parties make a difference within the electorate, few scholars would agree with McCubbins that parties are really able to work the pedals of congressional dominance. Most recent scholars would probably agree with Wilson:

> There is within Congress no visible, and therefore no controllable, party organization. There is always a majority and a minority, indeed, but the legislation of a session does not represent the policy of either; it is simply an aggregate of the bills recommended by Committees composed of members from both sides of the House (Wilson, 1885, 99).

Congressional parties have two weaknesses that prevent them from exercising anything like sure control over committee activity. First, there are few penalties to punish shirking by members in committee. Second, parties are often divided internally. Members do not really fear they will be deprived of their committee seats, which they hold tenaciously via the property right norm. They are therefore able to pursue policy ends other than those their caucuses advocate. Party divisions compound that problem by preventing caucuses from using those means of discipline that are available. Egregious conduct like Gramm's is rare, and any conduct less appalling from the viewpoint of the caucus would probably go unpunished in terms of committee seats and tenure.

Conclusion

The common assumption of the three models presented in this chapter is that committees are powerful and that a principal-agent relationship does exist

between certain other interests--whether the floor, the party caucuses, or outside interest--and the committees; in other words, the committees are powerful and they do work for somebody. If this is true, the question of whom they work for has profound policy implications. It is evident that committee action in the real world of Washington politics is much less tidy than committee theorists would have us believe, but these three concepts remain a standard point of entry into a discussion of the role of any particular legislative committee.

CHAPTER TWO

Seniority and the Property-Right Norm: Leadership Changes and Membership Movement

To ask who controls committee assignments is to pose a central question in the debate over committee agency. If assignments are controlled by party caucuses or by the floor, then committees themselves are likely to be party- or floor-controlled. According to the "independent committee" school of thought, however, committee assignments are self-selected—selected by the individual members themselves rather than by the party or the whole house. And if assignments are then approved by other members who themselves benefit from self-selection, then committees are likely to act independently of those bodies. The use of seniority to promote leaders and the use of the property-right norm to hold seats for members who want to keep them are two variables that are central to the "independence" argument.

According to scholars who believe House committees to be independent, committees promote members to leadership within their ranks through right of seniority. Ultimately, the most senior members attain chairmanships, ranking minority seats, and other positions of importance within their committees.

Independent committees are also likely to allow members to keep their seats on the committees of their choice as long as they are re-elected—this practice of independent committees is usually referred to as the "property-right norm." Among independent committees whose members practice promotion by seniority and membership through the property-right norm, party and floor

concerns become secondary to the concerns of members, whose primary interests lie outside the House. However, seniority and the application of the property-right norm are practiced in a House in which not all committees are equally regarded.

This is the first of two chapters that focus on committee assignments and their effect on the BFUAC in the 1980s. First, typologies of House committees are discussed. Next, seniority and the property-right norm are examined as they apply to movement, promotion, and tenure on House committees. Finally, the discussion turns to the evidence regarding violations of seniority and the property-right norm on the BFUAC during the 1980s and what this may mean in terms of the independence of congressional committees.

Committee Typologies

Fenno (1973) establishes that members strive to gain power, to get re-elected, and to make good public policy. He styles committees in the House according to their ability to help members achieve those goals. Power in the House, said Fenno, is best achieved through membership on one of the exclusive or "power" committees—Rules, Ways and Means, Budget, and Appropriations. (Budget is a relative newcomer.) Policy and constituency, or re-election, goals may be achieved through membership on committees of the members' choice. A few committees appeal to almost no members because membership of those committees brings neither power nor the ability to make good policy nor the ability to perform re-election work or constituent services. Assignments on these committees are usually not actively sought.

The working division of committees within the House supports Fenno's hypotheses. The Democratic majority has within recent memory divided standing committees into two groups, exclusive and nonexclusive (table 2-1). Republicans follow a similar practice. Exclusive committees are Fenno's "power" committees. Members assigned to exclusive committees as a rule do not sit on other committees, whereas members who sit on nonexclusive committees may be assigned more than one seat. New members usually must settle for seats on nonexclusive committees. Many members, moreover, are never assigned to exclusive committees, and must be content with the power they accrue through advancing seniority on nonexclusive committees such as the BFUAC. For all but the most precocious new members, seats on the House's four exclusive committees are not immediately within reach. But new members may eventually be achieve a position of power within policy and re-election committees through accumulation of seniority and use of the property-right norm.

Several committee typologies have been produced since Fenno published his generalized typology of House committees. Scholars who develop committee typologies typically examine data produced by committee requests and by personal interviews to determine why members seek to sit on certain committees. Although they may reach slightly different conclusions about committee groupings and terms, committee typologists continue to find evidence to corroborate Fenno's findings about the goals of members.

Typologists find that seats on the exclusive committees of the House—Ways and Means, Rules, Appropriations, and Budget—are invariably more dear to members than seats on other committees because of the power positions on those committees devolve upon their members. A seat on an

exclusive committee—the typologists call them prestige committees—translates into power within the House, and typologists agree with Fenno that power is a common goal of House members.

Members of prestige committees are in positions to influence a broad range of House-made federal policies. Members of other committees routinely deal with members of prestige committees as superiors. However, standing committees not ranked among the prestige committees are also valuable to members for reasons that relate to the other two goals first recognized by Fenno—re-election and/or constituency service and the making of good public policy.

Table 2-1 in appendix C offers a comparison between committee typologies developed by Bullock (1976), Smith and Deering (1990), and Jerry D. Stubben (1989). Note that all three typologies suggest scholarly agreement on the attraction to members of the BFUAC—members see BFUAC membership as a chance to make good public policy. Also note that the making of good public policy is not usually posited as the goal of members by the independent-committee school of thought.

David E. Price (1992) validates the typologists' observations with his comments on his own choice of a BFUAC assignment. Price acquired BFUAC membership as a newly elected Democratic representative from North Carolina in 1987. The BFUAC was his second choice. His first preference was a slot on the Energy and Commerce Committee. Price explains,

> I fairly quickly concluded, after looking at the available alternatives...that [BFUAC] was the most attractive backup possibility. North Carolina is a major banking state, and the committee seemed poised to tackle important banking issues in the One Hundredth Congress. The committee also is responsible for housing policy, an area in which I had some experience and considerable interest (Price 1992, 45).

Seniority and the Property-right norm

Seniority is ranked in a dual fashion in the House, with party seniority rolls kept both for service within the House and for service on committee. However, with the exception of the speakership and a few other positions of leadership within caucus and floor, committee seniority trumps seniority within the body. Seniority within committee means promotion to ranking positions on committee and subcommittee, whereas long-serving members of the floor who move from one committee to another find themselves reduced to the most junior rank on their party's contingent in the new committee. (They retain their seniority rankings within the House, however.) This practice of erasing committee seniority of members who change committees encourages members to remain with their original committees. There, as they gain seniority, they automatically move upward toward positions of leadership within their committees.

The property-right norm concedes to each member the right of perpetual reappointment to the committee seat or seats he currently holds. Members of the lower ranks are guaranteed their customary seats on the committees of their choice until they move to another committee or until they leave the House. Since the two-tiered seniority system plunks committee movers down on the end of their new committees' seniority lists, members rarely choose to move unless they are able to improve their positions within the House. Improvement usually means a move up to a prestige—an exclusive—committee. Improvement may also mean—although this is less desirable improvement—a move over to a

committee of equal rank whose areas of policy concerns fit more closely the members' constituency, re-election, and/or policy agendas. For example, Representative Price may have abandoned the BFUAC early in his tenure if a seat on the committee of his original first choice, Energy and Commerce, had become available to him.

Gary Cox and Matthew McCubbins (1993) compare this right of automatic reassignment to academic tenure, although they point out that members of Congress, unlike academics, have to perform no tasks to qualify for reassignment to their customary seats.

Scholars who maintain that congressional committees are independent actors within the policy universe point to evidence that seniority is central in determining promotion within the committees. It is widely acknowledged that House committee chairs and ranking minority members were chosen almost strictly by seniority between 1911 and 1974. (See appendix B). Since 1975, according to some observers, power has been more dispersed within the House or more concentrated in the hands of party—as opposed to committee—leaders. But seniority still assumes a prime importance in determining committee rank and committee assignments. Scholars writing before 1975 tend to view seniority as paramount in the reckoning for committee slots and leadership positions, although that view began to be challenged after 1975.

Barbara Hinckley (1971) found that seniority was the most important variable in the selection of House committee chairmen. Earlier, Nelson W. Polsby, Miriam Gallaher, and Barry Rundquist (1969) found that the House had violated the seniority rule in the choice of committee chairmen only five times from the Eightieth Congress through the Eighty-eighth Congress. Each violation

was compensated when the member in question was transferred to a committee seat with equal or greater prestige. Michael Abram and Joseph Cooper (1968) found a similar lack of seniority violations within the ranks of six committees they studied from the Eightieth Congress through the Eighty-sixth Congress. In fact, they found no violations at all within House committees during the period studied.

Cox and McCubbins' (1993) findings, however, deviate from the earlier evidence on the effects of seniority on committee leadership and of the property right on committee tenure. They point out that earlier research dwelt on violations of seniority only in those cases dealing with chairmen or members in line for committee chairs. Cox and McCubbins produce evidence of no fewer than 25 violations in seniority from the Eightieth Congress through the Ninety-fourth Congress (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 54). Thirteen of those occurred during the Ninety-fourth Congress.

Beginning in 1975, the ranks of the majority party in the House were infused with the Watergate Class of Democrats, a reform-minded bunch. One of the committee reforms instigated by the new House Democrats was to transfer the membership assignment power from the Ways and Means Committee, who had held that authority in 1911, to the majority party's Steering and Policy Committee. Steering and Policy was larger than Ways and Means and included within its own membership the Speaker and other party leaders, as well as a contingent of members appointed by the Speaker (Price 1992). (Also in 1975, the Democratic caucus ousted no fewer than three long-standing committee chairmen. One of those, Representative Wright Patman [D-TX], was the bank-hating populist Democratic chairman of the BFUAC.)

Regardless of the changes that occurred in House committee assignments since 1975, seniority remains an important ingredient in determining tenure and securing leadership positions for committee members. Representative Marvin Leath (D-TX) learned that lesson in the early 1980s when he challenged Representative Les Aspin (D-CO) for the chair of the Armed Services Committee and lost.

If committee tenure, ranking, and leadership are governed in the main through right of seniority and the property-right norm, then party and caucus are relieved—or deprived—of much say in the business of committee policy making. Independent committees are autonomous, their chairmen powerful, and their members under no pressure to conform with the policy wishes of the parent chamber or of their party. If this is so, committees are certainly agents of neither floor nor party, because neither body is able to discipline the committees of the House—there is no contract between them. Instead committees take their policy cues from outside the House altogether, and pursue the policy, constituency, and re-election concerns of their members independently of the concerns of House or party.

Was this indeed true in the BFUAC in the 1980s? This chapter seeks to resolve that issue by examining changes in membership and leadership during the decade in question. In particular, two questions will be answered:

First, was leadership within the BFUAC during the 1980s determined by right of seniority, or did other variables affect leadership decisions? According to the thesis of committee independence, seniority should have overridden the concerns of floor or caucus about leadership of the BFUAC. The proposition

tested here is that leaders of the BFUAC were chosen strictly by seniority during the 1980s.

Second, did BFUAC members keep their slots on that committee until they chose to leave, or did violations of the property-right norm occur among BFUAC rank and file? Again, the independent-committee thesis holds that members' property rights are not violated. The second proposition tested in this chapter, therefore, is that violations of the property-right norm did not occur for BFUAC members during the 1980s.

Trends in Leadership for the BFUAC

Although Representative Wright Patman was no longer a member of the BFUAC during the period of the present study, elements of his tenure as committee chairmen are instructive concerning committee seniority and leadership both in the BFUAC and in Congress.

Patman was first elected by his Texas constituency to Congress in 1928 and remained in Congress until 1977. During the final years of his congressional tenure, he was the elder statesman of the House as well as chairman of the BFUAC. As a House member Patman was a maverick, and as a chairman he was a dictator. But he is probably most vividly remembered for his fierce opposition to the American banking establishment. Patman was an unreconstructed populist. He was one of a breed who, late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries had objected in Congress with voice and with vote to control of the country's financial policies by large Eastern interests. The heart of Patman's and populism's objections to the concentration of so much power in so

few hands was its ruinous effects on the lives of the small business people and farmers who by and large filled the ranks of the populist movement.

Patman's own early career in Congress demonstrates that forces other than self-interest and seniority can help determine who sits on committees and how leadership is chosen. Because of his interest in banking issues, Patman sought BFUAC membership from the outset of his congressional career, but he was unable to procure a seat on the BFUAC until 1937, at the beginning of his fifth term in Congress. According to Salamon et al. (1975, 32), Patman's way to a seat on the BFUAC was blocked by the allies of banking interests in Congress, who managed to deny Patman a seat on the BFUAC for eight years, despite the appearance of several vacant seats within the BFUAC's ranks.

Once on the committee, moreover, Patman's hopes of taking the committee chair were disappointed because of the difference in his seniority rankings: he ranked lower in committee rankings, by comparison, than he did in seniority rankings within the Democratic caucus. In 1943, the chair of the BFUAC was left vacant by the death of Representative Henry Steagall (D-AL). The chairman's mantle was then passed to Representative Brent Spence (D-KY). Spence was junior to Patman in House seniority—Spence joined Congress in 1931—but Spence was senior to Patman within BFUAC ranks and so inherited the chair. Patman did indeed finally become chairman in 1926, but only after enduring 20 years as simply the ranking member of his party on a committee chaired by a junior House member.

Predictably, Patman's tenure as chairman of the BFUAC was strongly marked by the chairman's vendetta against banking interests. This antibank animus later broadened into attacks on other organizations that Patman thought

held sway among the elite; his attack on nonprofit foundations in the 1960s is an example. Eventually, according to Salamon et al. (1975), his maverick ways, his steadfast opposition to innovations in federal banking and housing policy, and his treatment of housing legislation in the early 1970s insured his removal, which took place despite his seniority. In 1975, during the purge of Democratic chairmen in 1975, early in the Ninety-fourth Congress, Patman was forced to relinquish the chair of the BFUAC. He was at the time of his demotion the most senior member of the House. (He was granted the chair of a subcommittee as a sop, but he left Congress at the end of the Ninety-fourth Congress.)

Patman's successor as chairman was Representative Henry S. Reuss (D-WI), whose succession was in itself another breach of seniority. In January 1975 he was elevated to the chair by the Democratic caucus. The scion of a Milwaukee banking family, Reuss was commonly believed to have been the only one of the small group of senior BFUAC members who could hold his own in policy disputes with Patman. In elevating Reuss to the chair, House Democrats not only demoted the dean of their delegation, but also passed over two other BFUAC members who were themselves more senior than Reuss. These were Representatives William A. Barrett (D-PA) and Leonor K. Sullivan (D-MO), the only woman on the committee in 1975.

The next change in committee leadership took place in 1981, beginning the period under study here. The change proved to be another deviation from the rule of seniority.

Representative Reuss remained as chairman of the BFUAC through the Ninety-sixth Congress. In January 1981, he chose to step down from the BFUAC's chair to accept the chair of an ad hoc panel, although he retained his

BFUAC membership. Reuss was listed as the ranking majority member, and his name appeared just below that of the chairman on lists of committee members. (By this time, Representatives Barrett and Sullivan had departed Congress.)

The next most senior member of the majority after Reuss was Representative Fernand J. St Germain (D-RI), who was seated as chairman in 1981. Without Reuss' continuing presence, St Germain's ascension to the chair of the BFUAC would have held to the rule of seniority. As it was, the move had the effect of assigning a leadership position to a junior member. Although Reuss stepped down voluntarily and the move was made amicably, the relative committee status of Reuss and St Germain in 1981 was similar to that of Patman and Spence before 1963.

The next change in the chairmanship of the BFUAC followed a normal course, if following the rule of seniority could by this point be said to be normal for the BFUAC. During the 1988 elections, Chairman St Germain's campaign for re-election was ensnared in scandal and he was defeated. (St Germain's defeat marked the first time in living memory that a chairman of the BFUAC had lost his chair to electoral defeat.) When the Democratic House majority caucused in January 1989, senior member Henry B. Gonzalez (D-TX) was promoted to the BFUAC chairmanship. He held it until the Democrats lost their majority in Congress after the elections of 1994.

The rule of seniority may have been the rule applied by the House to the assignment of other committee chairmen in the 1980s; one cannot generalize from the case of one committee. Nevertheless, only one of the two BFUAC members who held the gavel during the 1980s was promoted strictly according to the rule of seniority. And it appears that Gonzalez' promotion due to seniority

was, for the BFUAC, the exception rather than the rule. Chairman St Germain was promoted to the chair when Chairman Reuss stepped down. While Reuss still sat on the committee during the Ninety-seventh Congress, his last term, a junior member held the gavel. Reuss himself had been promoted to the chair over the heads of three senior members, including former chairman Patman. Patman had taken the gavel only in 1963, after a 26-year tenure on the BFUAC, while a junior Democratic colleague (as well as a Republican colleague during that party's majority in the House in the 1940s and 1950s) had sat in the chair.

Meanwhile, the ranking Republican minority seat on the BFUAC was regularly occupied during the 1980s by the most senior Republican committee member. Two members occupied the seat just to the chairman's left—the ranking minority member's seat during the period. Both were Ohioans. The first was Representative J. William Stanton (R-OH). Stanton stood seventh in seniority among House Republicans in 1981 and ranked first among the nineteen Republicans on the BFUAC. When Stanton retired after the Ninety-seventh Congress adjourned, the Republican caucus made the move dictated by the right of seniority. It promoted Representative Chalmers Wylie (R-OH) to the ranking minority position in the Republican ranks of the BFUAC.

Membership Movement in the BFUAC, 1981–1990

The discussion now turns to the issue of the movement of members within the ranks of the BFUAC, that is, among members below the rank of chairman and ranking minority member. All members of the House who sat on the BFUAC during the period under study must be scrutinized. The 84 such members can be divided into two groups, veterans and leavers. Veterans include

those members who began committee service before or during the 1980s, from the Ninety-seventh Congress through the One Hundred and First Congress. Leavers are members who began service before or during the period studied and left committee service some time before January 1991, the terminal month of the One Hundred and First Congress.

The task here is to determine whether any of the members who left committee service were deprived of either seniority or property rights regarding their seats on the BFUAC. Each such abrogation of the property-right norm is counted as a violation. A violation is an indication that forces outside the committee are acting to interfere with seniority and with the property-right norm—and that the committee's independence in maintaining seats for its members has been compromised.

Committee leavers are distributed among seven categories: those who were defeated, those who left due to redistricting, those who retired, those who ran for another federal office, those who ran for state office, the few who died, and those who moved to another committee. Among these seven categories of leavers, only those members counted among "moved to another committee" remained in Congress. Within this last category, members who moved to an exclusive, or prestige, committee are not considered to be the victims of violations of seniority or the property-right norm. Those who are moved to any other committee, however, have had their property rights violated. (Refer to table 2-1 for committee typologies.) The assumption is that members who move to prestige committees prefer that assignment to keeping their seats on the BFUAC.

Membership data are included on tables 2-2 and 2-3 (found in appendix C). The information found in these two tables is taken from the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* for each of the five Congresses that met during the period under study. Table 2-2 lists the names, states, political parties, and districts of all 84 members of the House of Representatives who sat on the BFUAC during the 1980s. Table 2-3 lists all members who left BFUAC service for one reason or the other.

Members Who Were Defeated

Eleven of the 33—one-third of the members who left, or about 20 percent of the total number of House members who were also BFUAC members—were defeated for re-election during the ten years under observation. Of these eleven, five, or nearly half, were defeated after just one term in Congress and on the BFUAC. A sixth member served just two terms.

Representative Joseph Dio Guardi (R-NY) of New York's Twentieth District and Representative John Grotberg (R-IL) of Illinois' Fourteenth District held office and seats on the BFUAC only during the Ninety-ninth Congress. Representative Ed Weber (R-OH) of Ohio's Ninth District and Representative James Coyne (R-PA) of Pennsylvania's Eighth District sat in Congress and on the BFUAC only during the Ninety-seventh Congress. (Another Representative Coyne, William Coyne (D-PA), a Democrat, served on the committee from Pennsylvania's Fourteenth District.) Representative Thomas Swindall (R-GA, Fourth District) served only during the One Hundredth Congress. Representative Bill Patman (D-TX), the son of the former BFUAC chairman, was

elected from the Fourteenth District of Texas for the Ninety-seventh and the Ninety-eighth Congresses only. He was a BFUAC member both terms.

The other five members of the BFUAC who were defeated during the 1980s served somewhat longer than the six members just named. Representative George Hansen (R-ID) of Idaho's Second District, Representative Thomas Evans (R-DE), who was Delaware's at-large representative in the House, and Representative Jerry Patterson (D-CA) of California's Thirty-eighth District all held their seats in Congress and on the BFUAC for five terms. Both Patterson and Hansen failed election to the Ninety-ninth Congress in 1984. Evans followed them in defeat off the committee and out of Congress two years later.

Two other members of the BFUAC were defeated during the 1980s. The first was Representative Joseph Minish (D-NJ) of New Jersey's Eleventh District, who was defeated in 1984 at the end of the Ninety-eighth Congress. The second, and the most notable member to lose his job during the 1980s, was Representative St Germain of Rhode Island's First District. St Germain was defeated in 1988 while running for a seat on the One Hundred and First Congress (1989–91). Both of these members had served more than 20 years in the House of Representatives when they were forced out. Minish was defeated for a twelfth term and St Germain for a fifteenth. Minish was third in seniority on the BFUAC at the time of his defeat and chairman of the General Oversight and Renegotiation Subcommittee of the BFUAC. St Germain was first in seniority and chairman of the BFUAC.

Four of the defeated members were Democrats. The four included the chairman, St Germain (D-RI), who was defeated for re-election in 1988. The three other Democrats defeated were Joseph Minish (D-NJ), Jerry Patterson (D-CA),

and Bill Patman (D-TX). The seven defeated Republicans were Joseph Dio Guardi (R-NY), Ed Weber (R-OH), John Grotberg (R-IL), James Coyne (R-PA), Thomas Swindall (R-GA), George Hansen (R-ID), and Thomas Evans (R-DE).

Members Who Left the BFUAC

The next group to consider is the group of ten members who were neither defeated nor moved to another committee, but left the BFUAC under other circumstances during the 1980s. These circumstances can be divided into five categories: death, running for another federal office or for a state office, redistricting, retirement, and movement to another committee.

Only one member of the BFUAC died during the 1980s. Representative Stewart McKinney of Connecticut's Fourth District, who passed away during the Ninety-ninth Congress, was the first congressman known to have died of complications of illness caused by AIDS. He had first been elected to the House for the Ninety-second Congress. The year 1971, his first year of service in the House, had also been his first year on the BFUAC.

Four members ran for another federal office or for a state office and left the House of Representatives and the BFUAC during the 1980s. Representative Ed Bethune (R) of Arkansas left the House to run for the Senate and lost. He had begun BFUAC service upon his election to the Ninety-sixth Congress, beginning in 1979. Bethune last sat on the BFUAC during the Ninety-eighth Congress (1983–1985). Representative Stanley Lundine (D) of New York's Thirty-fourth District left the BFUAC after the One Hundredth Congress (1987–1989) to run for state office. Lundine had served on the BFUAC since he arrived in Congress in

1977 for the beginning of the Ninety-fifth Congress. Representative Jim Mattox (D) of Texas's Fifth District ran a successful race for state attorney general in 1982 after serving three terms on the BFUAC and in Congress—the Ninety-fifth through the Ninety-seventh Congresses (1979–1983). Representative Buddy Roemer (D) of Louisiana's Fourth District left the House after the One Hundredth Congress to run for governor of his state. He had first been elected to the House of Representative in 1983 (Ninety-eighth Congress).

Two BFUAC members were forced out of the House after the 1980 Decennial Census when their state legislatures merged their former districts with those of other representatives. Representative David Evans (D) of Indiana's Sixth District and Republican Representative James Blanchard (R) of Michigan's Eighteenth District were both removed from Congress via this route. Evans had served only three terms, from the Ninety-fourth Congress through the Ninety-seventh Congress. Blanchard had entered Congress in 1975 and served four terms in Congress and on the BFUAC.

Three BFUAC members retired during the 1980s. Republican Representative George Wortley (R) of New York's Twenty-seventh District retired after the One Hundredth Congress. He had begun BFUAC service in 1981 after his election to the Ninety-seventh Congress. Representative Ron Paul (R) of Texas' Twenty-second District retired in 1985 after the Ninety-eighth Congress. He had served three terms in Congress. Representative Stanton of Ohio's Eleventh District retired after the Ninety-eighth Congress (1983–1985). Stanton was the senior BFUAC retiree of the 1980s. He had served 20 years in Congress, beginning with his election to the Eighty-ninth Congress, which convened in

1965. At the time of his retirement, Stanton was the ranking member of the Republican contingent on the BFUAC.

Members Who Moved to Other Committees

The final group of nine members who left the BFUAC during the 1980s are the most important to this discussion. These nine are those who remained in Congress but were placed on other committees.

The first BFUAC member to leave its service during the 1980s to work with another committee was Representative Steny Hoyer (D-MD) from Maryland's Fifth District. At that point he had been a member of Congress for just one term, the Ninety-seventh Congress, from January 1981 through January. He was appointed to the Appropriations Committee beginning with the Ninety-eighth Congress in January 1983. At that time, Representative Hoyer was one of a group of representatives ranking 52 out of 54 spots on the seniority list of House Democrats. He was quite junior to have attained such a major post with only two years' service in the House.

Two more members moved to other committees after the Ninety-eighth Congress (January 1983 through January 1985). Beginning with the Ninety-ninth Congress in January 1985, Representative Mike Lowry (D) of Washington's Seventh District was seated on the Budget Committee and Representative Bill Lowery (R) of California's Forty-first District moved to the Appropriations Committee.

Lowry was one of three representatives from the state of Washington, two Democrats and one Republican, to sit on the BFUAC during the 1980s. He was

also one of two congressman from that state to move from the BFUAC to a prestige committee during that time. (The other was Representative Rod Chandler (R-WA). Lowry was moved to the Budget Committee in 1985, at the beginning of the Ninety-ninth Congress. During the previous Congress, he had been a member with middling seniority, ranking 134 of 244 in the Democratic caucus. (The Democrats had adjusted their ranking system beginning with the Ninety-eighth Congress so that junior rankings were given much higher numbers than they had been assigned in previous Congresses.)

Lowery of California, a Republican representing a San Diego area constituency, moved to the Appropriations Committee in 1985 for the Ninety-ninth Congress. Lowery had ranked 104 of 143 rankings in the Republican caucus in the Ninety-eighth Congress.

Three BFUAC members left for other committees after the Ninety-ninth Congress, which ended in January 1987.

Representative Chandler of Washington's Eighth District was the second of Washington's representatives to move from the BFUAC to a prestige committee during the 1990s. Chandler joined the Committee on Ways and Means beginning with the One Hundredth Congress in 1987. Chandler was one of only thirteen Republicans on Ways and Means in that session, and during his first term of service there he was the junior member of Ways and Means' Republican contingent. As a member of the BFUAC during the previous Congress—the Ninety-ninth—Chandler had been ranked 109 out of 177 on the Republican's seniority list and had been the fifteenth ranking member of the nineteen Republicans on the BFUAC.

Pennsylvania elected two representatives named Coyne to Congress during the 1980s, and both of them saw service on the BFUAC. Republican Representative Jim Coyne of Pennsylvania's Eighth District was defeated in 1982, at the end of his first and only House term. Democratic Representative William J. Coyne of Pennsylvania's Fourteenth District, a Pittsburgh area constituency, remained on the BFUAC from the Ninety-seventh through the Ninety-ninth Congresses (1981 to 1987). He was promoted to Ways and Means for the One Hundredth Congress, beginning in 1987. William J. Coyne was another congressman of middling ranking promoted to a prestige committee. He stood 141 of 257 Democratic rankings during the Ninety-ninth Congress.

Democratic Representative Jim Cooper of Tennessee's Fourth District moved from the BFUAC to Energy and Commerce beginning with the One Hundredth Congress in 1987.

The final three members of the BFUAC to depart its ranks for service on other committees during the 1980s were Representatives Jim Kolbe (R-AZ), Alex McMillan (R-NC), and Thomas Manton (D-NY). All three last served the BFUAC during the One Hundredth Congress (January 1987 through January 1989) and departed beginning with the One Hundred and First Congress (January 1989 through January 1991). Kolbe departed the BFUAC for a seat on Appropriations. McMillan and Manton departed the BFUAC for service on Energy and Commerce—the second and third BFUAC member (after Cooper) to make that move during the 1980s.

Assuming that the committees of the House are independent and that neither floor nor caucus may violate the property-right rule of committee appointments, the committee moves of eight of the nine BFUAC members who

left the BFUAC for other committees during the 1980s are explained almost pro forma. Hoyer, Kolbe, and Lowery were promoted to seats on Appropriations, a prestige committee. Chandler and William Coyne were rewarded with seats on Ways and Means, another prestige committee. Lowry was given a seat on Budget, a third prestige committee. Each of these seats was a promotion and an ostensible reward. Former BFUAC members who stepped up to one of these seats immediately gained prestige that BFUAC membership could not attract.

Two of the members who moved to Energy and Commerce, Cooper and McMillan, seemed to have had agendas that were served by the change.

Cooper of Tennessee represented a district that included Oak Ridge, the location of a federal nuclear facility since the 1940s. His district was also served by the Tennessee Valley Authority, an autonomous federal agency created during the Roosevelt Administration whose main business has become the generation of electric power for several Southern states, including Tennessee. Many of Cooper's constituents owed their economic well-being to the Knoxville, Tennessee, based agency.

McMillan had become one of three North Carolinians on the BFUAC during the One Hundredth Congress when Representative Price was added to its ranks. McMillan's move to Energy and Commerce, however, gave him the distinction of holding the only North Carolina seat on that committee, which under the chairmanship of John Dingell (D-MI) had managed to bring a great deal of the business of Congress under its umbrella. (It also left two other North Carolinians still sitting on the BFUAC.)

There is no such obvious explanation for Representative Manton's to Energy and Commerce. His is the only move that doesn't clearly support the

second hypothesis, that the right of BFUAC members to keep their places on the BFUAC as long as they were in Congress unless they could move to a better assignment.

Conclusion

Promotion through seniority and maintenance of members' seats on the BFUAC as if those seats were members' property certainly constituted the norm on the BFUAC during the 1980s, but there were exceptions.

The movement of former chairman Reuss to a subordinate—although ranking—position during the Ninety-seventh Congress placed Reuss in exactly the relationship the former chairman Wright Patman had occupied with another chairman before Patman became chairman in 1963. Reuss voluntarily stepped down from the chairmanship in order to perform service on another committee, but his move nevertheless falls within the definition of violation of seniority rights.

It is possible that during the normal operation of Congress, seniority and the property-right norm are routinely observed. However, when the confluence of several more powerful forces is brought to bear on the members moving within and among committees, seniority and the property-right norm may be demoted to lesser consideration. The vagaries of the appointments of Patman, Reuss, and St Germain may give credence to such an observation. Nevertheless, the bulk of the evidence presented in this chapter seems to support the thesis that the BFUAC was an independent committee during the 1990s.

CHAPTER THREE

The Local Connection: The Influence of District Characteristics on BFUAC Assignments

The first indicator of the independence of legislative committees is that committee seats are self-selected. Committee members control their own committee assignments via the property-right norm, and seniority determines selection of committee leaders. Chapter 2 revealed that both the property-right norm and seniority of members of the BFUAC were generally respected during the 1980s. The evidence indicates that, for the most part, neither party caucus nor parent chamber interfered with BFUAC members' right of self-selection during the period studied.

The second indicator of committee independence has to do with the socioeconomic characteristics of members' districts. According to independence theory, the members of an independent committee do not fear censure from either party or parent chamber; the censure they fear is electoral defeat at home. They may act in spite of the desires of caucus and of parent chamber, but they will do their best not to spite their constituencies, the principal for which they act as agent. Much of what they do in committee will be calculated to win votes at home. And the folks at home are sure to have certain expectations of their representatives in the House—expectations that are based on the socioeconomic characteristics of the district.

Because re-election and pleasing their constituencies is a primary goal for members of independent committees, new members of these kinds of

committees choose seats on committees whose policy tasks are recognized as helpful at home. Performing, explaining, and taking credit for work done in committee in turn helps members with re-election because important sectors of the members' district are concerned with the social and economic ramifications of that committee work.

Citing an earlier example, Representative Price of North Carolina chose a seat on the BFUAC because he recognized the influence of the commercial banking establishment in his district and in his state. During re-election campaigns, Price could cite his work on the BFUAC as helpful to his district.

If this connection between committee assignments and re-election exists, it follows that members elected from districts with similar socioeconomic profiles are likely to find their way onto the same committee—a committee where they will be able to perform services for those districts. A further assumption is that the socioeconomic characteristics of districts of members on each committee will be distinct from the socioeconomic characteristics of the districts of members from other committees. This last assumption, according to Cox and McCubbins (1993), is extremely important but rarely challenged. It is challenged in this chapter.

The question addressed here is whether BFUAC constituencies were socially and economically distinct enough to have constrained their members of Congress to seek out seats on that committee during the 1980s. If the BFUAC was independent during the 1980s, then it should be possible to isolate districts served by members sitting on the BFUAC from other constituencies by relating the effects of BFUAC policy-making activity to constituency concerns. This may

be done easily enough by comparing certain social and economic variables of BFUAC members' districts with those of other members' districts.

Such as comparison represents a marginal departure from the mainstream of recent committee literature. But this tack is taken for a good reason. That there are differences among social and economic characteristics within congressional constituencies is a large piece of the foundation of the entire theoretical structure of the independent-committee school of thought. The independent-committee thesis explains little if there are no differences among districts that elect members to the House of Representatives.

Some work has been done in the past comparing district differences, but little effort has been made to replicate or build on Kenneth A. Schepsle's (1978) initial work concerning differences among districts. This lack of effort may be an indication of the difficulty of securing reliable district-based data. However, the United States Census Bureau provides masses of socioeconomic data for each congressional district. That this data is commonly available and easily obtained should not militate against its use as long as Census Bureau data is employed to challenge theoretical statements regarding committees.

The lack of effort to produce work on the differences among congressional districts may also be an indication of scholarly inertia. The assumption among scholars seems to be that there is little variation among the data that is available. The further assumption is that a small amount of variation reveals insignificant, or nonreportable, results. The objection to this line of thinking is that results based on sound theory, whether or not they support the researcher's hypotheses, are still results. Theory drives data. If theory is not supported by results, it may be tested again. But scholars should be prepared to

make their findings known, whatever they are, if they in fact do believe in the underlying sense of the theory and method they employ.

It is true that district variables change more rapidly today than they did 35 years ago. State legislatures have routinely acted to redistrict after every decennial census since *Baker v. Carr* (1962). But postcensus redistricting still allows members a window of at least five Congresses, or ten years, if they remain in office, to accommodate their work in Congress and in committee with the needs of their constituents.

What follows in this chapter is a review of the relationships between BFUAC committee membership and the socioeconomic variables of districts BFUAC members represent. The review presents a record of the BFUAC's policy prerogatives as they have developed since the 1930s. Along the way, groups whose interests are served by BFUAC policy prerogatives are identified. This process provides a basis upon which to build a description of BFUAC committee constituency needs. Measures are to be drawn for each identified policy group from 1980 Census data for the Ninety-eighth Congress through the One Hundred and First Congress. Then, a series of difference of means tests is applied to the measures to allow differences between BFUAC districts and all other to be discerned.

BFUAC Policy Sets

The Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs of the House of Representatives is, according to the 1985 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* (41-G), responsible for the following federal policies:

> Banks and banking, including deposit insurance and federal monetary policy; money and credit; currency; issuance and redemption of notes; gold and silver; coinage; valuation and revaluation of the dollar; urban development; private and public housing; economic stabilization; defense production; renegotiation; price controls; international finance; financial aid to commerce and industry.

BFUAC responsibilities are, using a term applied again and again to the BFUAC and most other so-called policy committees, multidimensional. In point of fact, the BFUAC's policy making is three-dimensional—as reflected in the committee's threefold title.

The first set of BFUAC responsibilities, which primarily have to do with the availability of money and credit, were assigned the House Committee on Banking and Commerce when the House first authorized its existence in the nineteenth century. The BFUAC began to accumulate its second set of responsibilities, concerning the housing industry, during the 1930s. At that time, Congress and the Roosevelt Administration worked to shore up the construction industry by making it more attractive for banks to offer, and for middle- and low-income families to afford, loans for decent housing. Oversight for housing programs begun during the New Deal devolved upon Banking and Commerce (now BFUAC). The third set of responsibilities was taken up by the BFUAC in 1949, when Congress made urban renewal a part of national policy (and of the national vocabulary). By 1975, the BFUAC's responsibilities regarding housing and community development, that is, its second and third sets of responsibilities, had come to be regarded by the House as pulling as much policy weight as those regarding banking and finance. The committee was renamed Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs in a move that was probably well overdue.

First Policy Set—The Availability of Money and Credit

The first set of BFUAC responsibilities has to do with making available supplies of money and credit to persons and businesses in the United States. It includes two major components: the regulation of American banking, credit, and financial institutions and the oversight of the Federal Reserve Board and of the monetary policies that agency formulates.

Regulation of Credit and Financial Institutions. The responsibility of making credit policies involves the BFUAC in the regulation of the American banking establishment, which encompasses five groups of institutions. These are federally chartered commercial banks, state chartered commercial banks, savings institutions such as savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, and other corporations engaged in the trade of finance.

The most powerful group within the federally regulated banking establishment consists of the nationally chartered commercial banks. These institutions are members of the Federal Reserve System, which was created by Congress in 1913. Commercial banks are institutions whose basic function has changed little since the early days of the Republic: to provide Americans with money, the basic stuff of exchange. Federally chartered banks within the Federal Reserve System are protected by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

A second group of institutions to fall under federal banking regulations are state banks. Congress first established the National Banking System in 1863 with an eye toward the universal federal regulation of banks (Ned Eichler 1989). The move failed. The states retain their own systems of banking regulations to this day.

Some state-chartered banks have become members of the national system as well. Their depositors are protected by the FDIC. A second group of state banks are not members of the national system but have voluntarily become members of FDIC. A small third group of state banks volunteer neither for Federal Reserve membership nor for protection of deposits through FDIC.

Nationally chartered commercial banks, along with state-chartered commercial banks, hold the lion's share of the assets of private financial institutions in the United States. But several other kinds of businesses engage in federally regulated banking and financing activity and constitute a third group of federally regulated banking institutions. These are savings banks and savings-and-loan associations. (Both are referred to here as "savings institutions.")

Savings institutions were meant originally to provide interest-paying savings plans as alternatives to the practices of commercial banks. Commercial banks have always preferred to do business with large-scale, short-term depositors on whose accounts little or no interest is paid. The rationale behind the creation of savings institutions, on the other hand, was to attract deposits by paying interest on the funds of small, long-term depositors. This practice was meant to appeal to small businesses and individuals. (Personal savings accounts became so popular that commercial banks added the savings feature to their limited offerings for small customers.) Savings institutions dedicate a large part of the funds deposited with them to home mortgages. This activity brings them within the purview of the BFUAC's federal housing policy agenda, the second dimension of the BFUAC's responsibilities. Regulated through many of the same channels as the commercial banks, savings institutions are insured by the

Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC), another creation of the New Deal.

The fourth and a fifth groups of BFUAC-regulated financial institutions are insurance companies and pension funds. The structures and functions of these businesses are more like those of banks than the casual observer might think. Insurance companies and pension funds do not compete directly with banks and with savings institutions, whose business depends on personal deposits. Instead, insurance companies and pension funds obtain money through premiums paid by individuals or through automatic deposits by unions or companies on behalf of individuals. Yet insurance companies and pension funds share at least two practices with banks: They loan money to large corporate clients, and they serve as sources of savings for individuals' funds.

The sixth group of federally regulated banking institutions is composed of corporations whose tradition business interests are not financial but who took their places beside more traditional financial institutions following bank deregulation in the eighties. There also exist smaller regulated elements of American finance, also subject to BFUAC regulation. These include finance companies, investment corporations, and credit unions.

Oversight of the Federal Reserve. The second major component of BFUAC's first policy set (making money and credit available to individuals and businesses) is the committee's oversight of the activities of the Federal Reserve Board and its twelve regional Federal Reserve Banks.

The Federal Reserve (or the Fed) ultimately controls the supply of credit in the United States. It does this in three ways. First, the Fed sells and purchases federal government obligations. Second, it determines proportion of total

deposits that commercial banks must keep on hand as a reserve against withdrawals. The proportion so set aside is referred to as the reserve requirement. Finally, the Fed sets the discount rate—the rate at which commercial banks can borrow money from the Fed. These three powers in combination allow the Fed to determine the amount of reserves available to banks and to regulate the amount of credit available within the American economy.

The BFUAC does indeed oversee the operation of the Fed and has the authority to develop a system of banking regulation. To say that the BFUAC controls the Fed and its activities, however, would be to misstate the case. The Fed was set up by Congress to operate outside the political system; it was chartered as an independent agency in order to insulate decisions regarding the monetary policies it makes and enforces from the short-term demands of politics. Today the Fed still conducts business as an independent regulatory agency. It is run by a seven-member board of governors chosen by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Members of the board of governors are appointed for fourteen-year terms, so the governors' control of the Federal Reserve System spans the terms of seven Congresses and several Presidents. The presidents of the regional Federal Reserve Banks are chosen by the people who run large banks in their regions of service. So the individuals who control the source of credit in the United States remain at a certain distance from political control, including that of the BFUAC.

The relative independence of the Federal Reserve Boards limits the BFUAC's ability to affect federal monetary policies. Nevertheless, the BFUAC's responsibility to oversee Federal banking and finance policies quite naturally

attract the interest of some of the most powerful and well-heeled American corporate interest groups—national and state commercial banks, savings and loans and savings banks, insurance companies, and union pension funds.

Second Policy Set: Housing for the Poor and the Middle Class

The second set of federal policies falling within the orbit of the BFUAC has to do with distribution of capital for private and public housing. Like the first set, this second set of policies contains two elements: housing policies for the middle class and housing policies for the poor.

Housing for the Middle Class. Mortgage insurance constitutes the most venerable element of this credit distribution set of BFUAC . Mortgage insurance began during the New Deal era as an effort by the federal government to make decent housing available to middle-income and lower-middle-income families.

Congress created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) through the Housing Act of 1934 at the behest of President Roosevelt. The Housing Act of 1934 signaled the first major effort of the federal government to help revive the ability of American families to purchase and keep their homes. The policy innovation of mortgage insurance created and maintains at least four possible constituent groups for the BFUAC: middle- and lower-middle-class families, commercial banks, the construction industry, and the real estate industry.

The first constituency group targeted for help were middle- and lower-middle-class families who because of the Great Depression had lost their ability to buy homes. Commercial banks of that era still followed their pre-Depression tradition of requiring large down payments for housing loans—up to one-third

of the value of the home. Banks also charged residential home buyers higher rates of interest than they charged their large commercial customers. Mortgage investments, because of their long-term, low-yield nature, were not attractive investments for most commercial banks. (The rise of savings and loans during the first of this century did ameliorate this situation somewhat.)

The Depression, however, had deprived people of their savings and banks of assets. It had robbed most middle- and lower-income families of the ability to make the traditional, unattractive home-buying arrangements. And it had created conditions that caused the banks that remained solvent to become even more conservative in their lending practices.

Once established, the FHA began to alter the traditional arrangements by providing low-interest, long term, low-down-payment, insured loans to American families. These features of FHA-insured mortgages opened the housing market to middle- and lower-middle class purchasers who would otherwise have had to make do by renting or leasing living space or living doubled-up with the families of their parents or other relatives.

However, as perhaps David B. Truman (1951) first said, large, unfocused groups like "the middle class" are not sufficiently organized to make specific demands on the governmental process. In this case, although middle-class home buyers may appreciate and take advantage of FHA loans, most of them probably do not associate the availability of such loans with BFUAC policy making or even with Congress. However, mortgage insurance policies do catch and hold the attention of several other smaller, organized, and important constituencies who track BFUAC committee activity. The most important of these are probably commercial banks.

FHA policies expanded the loan market of banks by making housing loans more attractive and affordable to potential home buyers and helped banks by providing security for mortgage loans. The FHA, then and now, performs this task by insuring mortgage money lent by the banks and other financial institutions. The risks of nonpayment by the mortgagee and of foreclosure are assumed by the federal government. In turn, lenders are assured of profit on their mortgage investments. This assurance increases the attraction of providing mortgage credit to first-time home buyers.

The third constituency, besides the middle class and commercial banks, who benefit from FHA mortgage guarantees is the construction industry. The National Housing Act of 1934, which created the FHA, was meant to return construction to economic health as well as to provide families with opportunity to purchase their homes or provide banks with insurance for mortgages. the housing construction industry "is one of the first to suffer during an economic downturn" (Harold Wolman 1971, 26). Recessions drive up interest rates and cause banks to pursue more profitable investment measures. Marginal investments such as mortgages are spurned by such nervous bank managers, and high interest rates makes home buying unattractive to potential mortgagees. The demand for houses is thus reduced, and home construction plummets. This was certainly true in the days of the Great Depression. And economic downturns still hurt the construction industry today. But FHA mortgage insurance has probably laid a floor below which new housing construction does not dip.

The fourth constituency group whose financial health was improved through FHA mortgage security policies was the real-estate industry. The ability of realtors to sell houses is manifestly tied to the ability of people to buy them.

With the rise of the number of people who were able to buy houses, concurrent with the rise in the willingness of banks to lend money in the form of mortgages, the marketing realm of the real-estate industry was expanded.

Housing for the Poor. A second element of the BFUAC's set of housing policies is housing for the poor.

FHA mortgage insurance was originally intended to fill the housing requirements of all families whose incomes placed them within, or slightly below, the middle class. It was not set up as a source of providing housing for the poor, nor did it function that way. Even with FHA insurance, traditional banks would not depart from their time-tested criterion of loaning money only on the basis of "economic soundness," families living in low-income areas usually failed to receive the same kind of consideration for FHA loans extended to middle-class neighbors purchasing housing in the suburbs. Poor American families were not good risks for money loaned by conservative bankers, especially under the more liberal terms extended by FHA.

The FHA's attitude in these matters toward mortgage insurance has been similar to that of the traditional banks. Wolman explains the posture of FHA on housing loans made to the poor.

> FHA, which operates on a decentralized local basis, has developed quite good relations with local financial institutions, and its lending policy reflects the same conservative direction that characterizes its clientele. Because of this, it has gained the reputation of an institution not readily sympathetic to the needs of the poor (Wolman 1971, 27).

Federal housing assistance in the form of mortgage insurance was denied in the main to families living at or near (what we now refer to as) the poverty line. Other means of providing decent housing for the poor had to be developed.

In 1937, Congress established the United States Housing Authority (USHA) within Title 42 of the United States Code to perform that duty by providing "financial and technical assistance to communities in their efforts to secure decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families in the lowest income groups" (*Congressional Digest* June/July 1961, 167). (An earlier federal public housing effort, established in 1933, was actually run by the Public Works Administration [PWA].)

Congress did not provide mortgage subsidies to banks for impoverished families, nor did it create a national bureaucracy to administer federal public housing projects directly. Instead, Congress through USHA launched an alliance with local public-housing agencies. The purpose of this federal-local partnership was to make decent housing available for families whose incomes were low enough to prohibit them from obtaining either conventional or FHA-backed loans from banks. Low-income families' housing problems were met through a series of policies that, in, the main kept the publicly housed poor out of the suburbs and in the projects.

The USHA loaned money on long terms to local housing agencies. The money was used by those agencies to finance projects for housing the poor. The USHA subsidized public housing further by paying local housing authorities the difference between the rent that would have to be paid to keep the loan amortized and the rent the lowest income group could pay.

In 1947, the USHA was renamed the Public Housing Administration (PHA) and consolidated into the Housing and Home Finance Agency with other agencies, including the FHA. (Refer to Title 5, paragraph 501[a] of the United States Code for details of the reorganization scheme). These changes were all

part of President Truman's Reorganization Plan Number 3, submitted to Congress under the authority of the Reorganization Act of 1945. But the new PHA continued USHA's activities with Congress's blessing.

The 1937 act stimulated the construction of 114 thousand public housing units across the nation, a total far smaller than expected by proponents of the program in Congress. The entrance of United States into World War II probably reduced the number of public housing units that it was possible to construct. However, public housing efforts rose dramatically from 1941 to 1945. The Lanham Act of 1940 provided federal funds for the construction of housing for people engaged in national defense activities. The implementation of this act caused a huge increase in public housing during the war.

In 1949, Congress authorized another 810 thousand public housing units. They were to be constructed over the next six years, through 1955. At the same time, Congress set aside $12.3 billion to help local authorities fill that authorization. But when the United States entered the Korean War, President Truman asked Congress to scale back its support of public housing so that it could commit more national resources to the war effort. By 1957, as it turned out, just 195 thousand public housing units had been completed under the 1949 law (*Congressional Digest*, March 1959, 72).

Still, Congress remained committed in one way or the other to providing housing for the poor through the 1950s. But its efforts to do so were redoubled during the era of the Great Society. Congress added a program of rent supplements to the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965 to satisfy the wishes of President Lyndon Johnson. Rent supplements were to aid those families who "were unable to obtain adequate private housing for rents which

were equal to or less than one-quarter of their incomes" (*Congressional Quarterly Almanac* 1965, 358). The rent supplement program altered the definition of "poor" to include the physically handicapped, the elderly, families displaced by government action (through urban renewal), or occupants of substandard housing.

The Housing Act of 1968 provided subsidies to reduce the cost of FHA mortgage payments for qualified applicants to the equivalent of 1 percent interest. (The results of this subsidy scheme were referred to as Section 235 subsidies.) The percentage was later raised to 4 percent. This program was virtually abandoned by the Nixon Administration in 1973 (Valerie Karn and Harold Wolman 1992, 89).

Section 235's equivalent in the rental market was the Section 236 mortgage subsidy program. Developers were asked to pass mortgage cost savings on to poor tenants in the form of lower rents. The Section 236 program also ceased operation during the 1970s.

However, Section 202, a program for housing the elderly poor, remained in operation. Through the terms of Section 202, the federal government directly subsidizes developers of housing for the elderly, thereby eliminating the extra process of dealing with a commercial bank through the FHA process. Since the government is able to borrow at lower rates than private sector lenders, developers realize a small break in mortgage rates through this route.

The largest subsidy program to encourage private development of housing for the poor is the Section 8 program. Section 8 replaced an earlier model, the Section 236 program, in 1974. Under the provisions of Section 8, housing developers acquire land and build apartments. The government agrees

to make payments that guarantee the developer (or owner) full occupancy of his properties at market rates for the duration of the contract. The tenants now pay 30 percent—up from 25 percent in the 1970s—of their income toward the rent, with the government paying the balance.

President Nixon stated his support of public housing and federal housing policy for the poor early in his administration, but the programs began to come under critical fire by the Nixon Administration in the early 1970s. President Nixon accused federal public housing programs of practicing discriminatory selectivity among the poor. He also cited it for the unwonted destruction of older, still-useful structures. But despite President Nixon's criticism, Congress reauthorized and re-funded traditional public housing in the Housing Act of 1974, the first such act since 1968. (See the discussion below of changes toward community development policies made in 1974). Congress not only began the Section 8 rent subsidy program at that time; it also re-funded housing for the poor with $1.225 billion dollars. As it turned out, 1974 saw the last major reworking of federal policy toward housing for the poor until the 1980s.

By the period of this study, then, the BFUAC presided over a federal housing establishment for the poor that had expended several billion dollars of federal funds to house several million poor families in several hundred thousand public housing units spread throughout hundreds of communities in all but a few states of the Union. What constituencies should these activities have brought into the BFUAC's fold?

Besides the poor themselves, there are several powerful constituencies that BFUAC members have to consider as they calculate housing policy. First,

BFUAC members have to take into consideration the views of state and local governments in considering policies regarding housing for the poor.

State legislatures had to choose to join the federal programs to house the poor. Most states contain concentrations of poor urban populations, and most states signed on. But the benefits may not have been so clear-cut for the nation's city governments, and several shades of support for housing for the poor existed among local government officials.

At the beginning, federal dollars spent to build new attractive housing (combined with slum clearance and urban renewal, discussed below) must have seemed like heavenly manna to the urban authorities who were ultimately responsible for local public housing activities. However, the delight of local governments over federal millions for housing the poor may have waned after the officials of some cities discovered that other cities were realizing more benefits.

To begin with, older, urban—as distinct from suburban—cities, especially in the Northeast and Midwest, were the main beneficiaries of federal policies to help house the poor, simply because they were home to more of the poor. The populations of newer cities were more thinly settled within their the still-expanding suburbs, and suburban populations were more likely to be middle class. These suburban newcomers could not expect as much federal help as their older neighbors. Although Houston, Dallas, Sacramento, and Phoenix stood to gain some help in housing their poor, New York, Chicago, Boston, and Detroit stood to gain mightily (Roger Dilger 1982). And cities with both significant urban and significant suburban populations had to balance the distinctly

different needs of their inner city populations, largely minority and poor, with the needs of their suburban populations, largely middle class and white.

City governments may also have been ambivalent about federal housing for the poor simply because the activity called on them to become junior partners with the federal government. This partnership constrained local authorities to expend a great deal of resources—financial and otherwise—in activities generally regulated by an agency of the federal government. This tension between state and local views and federal policies is probably as old as the Constitution. But when the federal hand held the carrot—financing for housing for the poor—out to local governments, most of the local mules chose to go ahead and bite.

Despite the variance of opinion and attitude that state and local governments may have held toward federal housing policies for the poor, the program was largely supported by local governments that received federal housing aid. By the 1980s, states, counties, cities, housing authorities, and other legal bodies had come to form constituencies with vested interests in the continuance of federal housing for the poor.

A second constituency favoring housing for the poor is the construction industry. The billions of dollars sent down by the federal government to construct housing for poor families constituted a boon to the construction industry, just as FHA mortgage insurance was meant to be. Although industry leadership steadfastly opposed public housing as a "socialist" scheme through the 1950s, they had dropped most of their opposition by the 1960s, as federal dollars continued to be doled out in large lumps (Wolman 1971). Construction companies and the people who worked for them, had become constituents of the

BFUAC through the FHA expansion of middle-class home owning. Construction was bound again to the BFUAC through its oversight of federal policies regarding housing for the poor.

Another group that initially opposed federally aided housing schemes for the poor was one of the groups favored by the FHA schemes for housing the middle class. This group was the real-estate industry.

Realtors objected to federal housing for the poor because the poor were consumers of private housing that had been abandoned by the middle class. In a process dubbed "filtering," older residential areas of cities passed from the hands of middle-class families through a series of progressively poorer hands. At the ultimate stage of this process, what had once been sturdy middle-class neighborhoods had been relegated to neglected slums, inhabited by the poor, and owned, in the main, by absentee landlords.

Realtors probably profited in one way or the other through the stages of the filtering process in many American cities, but their official objection to federal housing projects was ideologically based. Walter S. Schmidt, a Cincinnati realtor and president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards when he spoke these words, said in 1935:

> Housing should remain a matter of private enterprise and private ownership. It is contrary to the genius of the American people and the ideals they have established that government become landlord to its citizens.... There is sound logic in the continuance of the practice under which those who have initiative and the will to save acquire better living facilities and yield their former quarters at modest rents to the group below (Keith 1973, 33).

Although realtors have by and large dropped their fierce opposition to public housing, they still do not support it as strongly as they support FHA mortgage insurance.

Third Policy Set: Slum Clearance, Urban Renewal, and Community Development

A third set of BFUAC policy responsibilities embraces the federal effort to improve the infrastructure of the nation's urban places. Businesses and families resident in urban areas benefit from BFUAC policies that make credit available and that provide avenues for its distribution—both for the purpose of urban improvement.

The Housing Act of 1949 launched the federal government into an era that lasted for nearly three decades—an era of what the act called "slum clearance." Congress placed a more positive emphasis on the program in 1954 (Housing Act of 1954) by replacing the term "slum clearance" with "urban renewal." Many of the elements contained in urban renewal and other housing programs were collapsed into the Nixonian Community Development Block Grant program in 1974.

Slum clearance and urban renewal were ambitious schemes to stop social decay by removing what was believed to have been its cause—urban blight. Crime, illegitimacy, the decay of the family, and a host of other social problems were blamed on people's living conditions. The argument was that once decent habitats were provided for people living in blighted areas, many of these problems could be controlled or would cease to exist altogether.

The Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA), the precursor of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), was charged with carrying out the program through loans and grants to local redevelopment authorities. Like public housing, urban renewal was to become a federal-local

partnership. The Housing Act of 1949 authorized $500 million in federal grants and $1 billion in loans to local authorities to launch the program. Federal grants were to cover up to two-thirds of the net cost of redevelopment projects. The law obliged local governments to meet the other third of the cost. Local authorities could provide their share either in cash or in what has been come to be called "in-kind" contributions. Examples of local in-kind contributions toward urban renewal are donations of land, construction of public works, and the labor of city employees (*Congressional Digest* June/July 1961, 169).

The Housing Act of 1954 amended the 1949 law to make a variety of federal help available to cooperating communities. Federal aid to cities for urban-renewal activities included planning and survey support, capital grants, various forms of technical aid, and the provision of other grants-in-aid designed to ease the strain of urban renewal on the structures of local governments.

Urban renewal after 1954 took on three programmatic elements. The first element was preventing slum development through neighborhood conservation and housing-code enforcement. The second involved rehabilitating existing structures and neighborhoods that were held to be worth saving. The third involved clearing out structures and neighborhoods deemed to be decayed beyond repair.

By 1964, nearly 1,500 urban-renewal projects were in some stage of development, and by 1965 the cabinet-level Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had been established to oversee housing issues. At the same time, however, the progress of urban-renewal activity had slowed under a constant fusillade of criticism launched by its opponents in and out of government. Critics mocked urban renewal's efforts to rehabilitate urban social

arrangements as futile. Public-housing projects that replaced slums cleared by urban renewal, they said, often turned out to be institutionalized, sterile, and unhealthy places for children to live. Besides, it was said, there was never enough new public housing to replace the old slum dwellings local urban-renewal officials had pulled down. Many slum dwellers were simply forced to leave, although some of them did receive federal help for relocation. They congregated elsewhere to recreate the conditions once found in their old neighborhoods.

Often, critics continued, the process of blight was actually magnified by urban renewal because property owners were unwilling to spend money on improving property that would eventually be demolished by "the federal bulldozer." And historic buildings were often destroyed despite their significance, although the National Park Service became involved to advise local officialdom of the whereabouts of historically significant dwellings (*Housing a Nation,* 15).

The passage of the ill-fated Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 sounded the death knell for urban renewal. The 1966 act's Model Cities Program proved to be an expensive fiasco. It was designed to "model" new urban areas for the nation in a few cities. But it was disastrously expanded to include more than 100 urban sites, and it collapsed of its own weight. At the same time, the HUD personnel who oversaw the Model Cities program were accused of depriving local authorities of control. The program's budget was soon cut, and the program itself was ended.

The Model Cities disaster brought urban renewal down with it. After the passage of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the term

"urban renewal" generally disappeared from the vocabulary of federal policy makers. It was replaced by the term "community development" or, just as likely, CDBG, the acronym for the Community Development Block Grant program.

Early in January of 1973, President Nixon had HUD Secretary George Romney call a moratorium on all new commitments for subsidized housing and urban-renewal programs so that Romney's department could make recommendations for major changes in housing and urban programs. Those recommendations reappeared in the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The act carried the spirit, if not the entire body, of President Nixon's 1974 housing proposal into legislative reality. The new housing law consolidated ten categorical urban development programs and other housing programs into the community development block grant structure and gave the new creature life as of the first day of 1975. The law authorized $8.6 billion for the program through 1977. Cities with populations of 50 thousand or more or urban counties with populations of 200 thousand or more were automatic grantees. The 1974 housing law entitled cities and urban counties to 80 percent of the authorized funds, but 20 percent of the funds were earmarked for communities outside Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) and for states themselves to use to benefit families in rural areas. A formula based on population, overcrowding, and poverty (which was weighted twice) determined the exact dollar amounts that would be awarded to cities and counties in metropolitan areas.

This formula, because of its emphasis on poverty, essentially rewarded old urban centers of the Northeast and Midwest. It became a strong point of contention between congressional representatives from the nation's Snowbelt

and Sunbelt sections during the fight over HUD reauthorizations in 1977. (See Dilger [1982] for a summary of the split.)

Theory and Methods

The answer to the question, "What socioeconomic characteristics distinguish BFUAC districts from other House districts in the 1980s?" is fairly simple once the preceding description of the federal banking and housing establishment is taken into account.

First, BFUAC members' districts should tend toward higher percentages of poverty among its resident families.

Although the poor may not have fared as well by housing and community development policies—the second and third sets of BFUAC policies—as the advocates of those policies had hoped, the achievement of decent housing for families living in modest circumstances was still a primary goal of most of these policies and programs. States and cities applied for federal help on the basis of the poverty and depressed living conditions of their citizens. And the attempt to renew urban areas was made with the intention of curing many of the social ills visited upon the poor. Advocates of urban renewal even hoped to cure poverty itself.

The Housing Act of 1954 began to include other client groups with the poor—the aged, veterans, and so forth—within the urban development scheme. And as Wolman (1971) observes, the eventual beneficiaries of housing for the poor turned out largely to be members of minority groups, a development which had not been foreseen by the advocates of federal housing policies during the

New Deal. All of these groups, it would seem, would constitute a constituency pull on an independent BFUAC.

It is true that FHA mortgage guarantees—the first set of policies described above—were aimed at the middle class. This fact would seem to add a mix of motives to BFUAC constituencies, pitting the interests of poor householders against those of middle-class homeowners. However, note that FHA-insured mortgages were usually claimed by first-time home buyers. Note also that Congress has traditionally set upper limits on the cost of the housing FHA loans are allowed to insure, so that FHA mortgages still tend to benefit families toward the lower end of the income scale. The weight of public housing and community development policies, added to FHA mortgage loan guarantees, tends to tug at BFUAC members from the lower end of the American income scale.

The Census Bureau provides the number and percentage of households living in poverty by district. This measure is used here to test the constituencies of BFUAC members.

A second characteristic that should distinguish BFUAC constituencies from those of other members would be a higher percentage of people employed in the banking, finance, and real-estate industries.

Banking, real estate, and other firms that are concerned with financing housing and community development or that are regulated by federal rules sifted through the BFUAC committee are traditional and powerful movers and shakers in their home communities. They have access to lines of influence and are able both to finance and to influence enterprises outside their own realms.

Their numbers in a given community are easily traced through Census Bureau Data.

More importantly for this study, banks, savings and loans, real-estate firms, and insurance companies may employ large numbers of people. These workers become members of the communities in which their employers wield so much power. Although people working in these industries may not compose a large percentage of the total work force, their wealth and consequent influence in their communities is likely to outstrip their numbers. They compose, it is assumed, a constituency whose preferences members of Congress must take into consideration when those members are making committees choices in Washington.

A third distinguishing characteristic of BFUAC constituencies should be a higher number of single-unit family dwellings. This is a way to measure the influence of the construction industry in a given district.

The initial thrust of New Deal housing policies through FHA mortgage-loan guarantees was to revive the American construction industry while making homeowners out of Americans who could not otherwise afford their own dwellings. (It has often been observed that the New Deal was meant to save capitalism by regulating it.) This policy remains near the center of any federal housing activity.

The housing acts of 1949 and, especially, of 1954 explicitly directed the federal government to work with local authorities and through private means to rebuild and restructure American communities. This government housing policy was meant to build a floor under the American construction industry, upon whose health many other ancillary businesses depended and in whose employ

many Americans labored. This idea was so internalized by American industry that economic downturns, even through the 1980s, were likely to provoke cries to improve FHA mortgage rates and to authorize more money for public housing. This was often done in the guise of an "emergency housing bill." (See the case history of the 1983 housing bill in chapter 6.) But it is usually the emergency affecting the construction industry that is implied by the term.

The Census Bureau does not conveniently provide a measure of the number of people per district employed in the construction trade, as it provides for people employed in banking and finance. A measure of housing starts could serve. However, housing-start statistics are provided by local governmental units (such as cities or counties), by Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs, once SMSAs), or by states; none are provided by the congressional district. Although housing activity is recorded by district, it often cannot be used because of changes caused by redistricting, by alterations in Census Bureau definitions, and the like.

Using the number of single housing units to measure the influence of the construction industry within a district makes some intuitive sense. The number of single housing units is increased by public and private efforts, both of which are influenced by builders determined to stay in business. The number of single family units remains smaller, however, when alternative dwellings, such as trailers, are used to house families. There are also fewer single unit structures when large institutions, such as military bases or universities, are present within the district's borders and make their own provisions for housing their clients.

The fourth socioeconomic characteristics that should distinguish BFUAC districts from the districts of other members is population density. Because

banking, construction, and real-estate interests could be expected to be concentrated in urban areas, congressional districts of BFUAC members in the 1980s should contain more people per square mile than the districts of non-BFUAC members.

Two of the three sets of BFUAC policies, housing and community development, were aimed a improving conditions in urban areas. Although most FHA-insured loans are granted to families living in suburban areas (Wolman 1971), most of the remaining loans financed dwellings in urban areas. The weight of BFUAC policies, therefore, is felt heaviest in urban areas.

How can "urbanness" be gauged? Several useful measures are available.

First, a simple count of the numbers of incorporated substate governments within each congressional district could be considered to be a measure of the clout that large urban governments and their agencies can bring to bear on their representatives in Congress. The problem with this measure is that it may capture the effect of rural as well as of metropolitan pressures on congressional representatives.

Consider for example that Montana's First District in the 1980s contained 31 county and city units. They were mainly rural and small town in character. Missoula, the largest town, was home to 33,388 people in 1980; Broadwater County contained a mere 3,267 people in 1980 (*Congressional Districts in the 1980s*, 320). On the other hand, New Jersey's Fourteenth District, which lay just across the river from New York City, contained eight cities within parts of Bergen and Hudson Counties (*Congressional Districts*, 353). New Jersey's Fourteenth District was surely more urban than Montana's First, but this would not be evident from counting the numbers of local governments contained within the districts. (There

surely could be found both rural and urban districts with nearly identical numbers, which could further confound efforts to measure the likelihood of urban representatives sitting on the BFUAC.)

Second, counting the existence of one or more Metropolitan Statistical Areas within a congressional as a measure district could help capture the urban character of the district. But there are two problems with such a measure. Some congressional districts that are most rural and small-town in character still include MSAs or small pieces of them. For example, the Third District of Colorado, as it was configured in the 1980s, contained Pueblo, a city with a population of more than 101 thousand; this defined it within Pueblo County as an MSA. Pueblo is located in south central Colorado. But most of the Third District was spread over what is referred to as the western slope, the mountainous rural half of the state Its population was scattered among 29 counties, the least populous of which, Hinsdale County, contained 408 residents in 1980 (*Congressional Districts*, 91–2). Despite the presence of the Pueblo MSA, the district was obviously not a primarily urban one.

Another problem with measuring urbanness by counting MSAs is that the nation's population is largely contained within MSAs. The standard Census Bureau definition of an MSA in the 1980s included central cities with populations of at least 50 thousand persons and their neighboring suburbs. For example the sister cities of Temple, Killeen, and Belton in Bell County, Texas, and Copperas Cove in Coryell County, Texas, in the 1980s were seated within the Temple-Killeen (or Bell-Coryell) MSA. Most of Coryell County, however, is starkly rural, and its county seat, Gatesville, is home to fewer than 10 thousand people. Yet Coryell County—and rural parts of Bell County—are shown on

Census Bureau maps as parts of an MSA. By this measure, people who spend more time on tractors than in shopping centers may be defined as urban dwellers.

Using the presence of MSAs within districts as measures for urbanness, then, would present little variation. Most Americans live in one MSA or the other. Few districts could be found that do not contain MSAs.

One measure that would capture by inference the urbanness of a congressional district is the number of persons per square mile. This measure ignores political boundaries, so the assumption must be made that districts with an average of many people per square mile contain a goodly mix of local jurisdictions. That this measure does not introduce too great a leap of faith is demonstrated by New Jersey. New Jersey has the densest population of any state, making it by that measure the most urban of any state.

A final distinguishing characteristic of a BFUAC district would relate more specifically to the person of the representative from that district. It can be expected that members with some personal interest in the BFUAC policy matrix are attracted to seats on that committee and are more likely to seek seats on the BFUAC than on other committees.

This too makes intuitive sense. Members elected from districts with distinct socioeconomic characteristics are likely to have been products of the same forces that produced those characteristics. For example, members from districts that contain cities that are regional banking and insurance centers may be bankers or insurance brokers themselves because financial concerns are important to constituents of those districts.

Of course, not every member of Congress whose primary concerns in Congress are banking regulations are bankers. The most numerically dominant profession in Congress is that of the law. But members listed as attorneys may have vast experience in banking and finance. For example, BFUAC Chairman Reuss was one of a prominent Wisconsin banking family, but his profession is listed in *Congressional Digest* and in other sources as the law. Still, much of his congressional career was spent as a BFUAC member under the tutelage of Chairman Patman, whom he eventually succeeded as chairman.

On the other hand, people with professions tied to BFUAC policies may be forced through the weight of other constituency interests to find seats on other committees. For example, Representative Leath, who represented Texas' Eleventh Congressional District from 1979 to 1991, was a banker from Marlin, Texas, when he was elected to replace the venerable Representative Robert Poage (D-T) of Waco. Despite his banker's resumé, however, Leath sought a seat on the House Armed Services Committee. His district is the home of Fort Hood, located in Bell and Coryell Counties. In the 1980s Fort Hood was the largest base, measured by number of armed forces personnel stationed there, in the United States or in Europe. So many constituency interests were tied to the maintenance and welfare of Fort Hood that Leath abandoned his personal professional interest in favor of constituency interest.

Despite the presence of such exceptions, the argument made here, based on evidence, intuition, and earlier scholarship, is that personal and professional interests create a tendency for members to seek seats on the BFUAC. Kenneth Schepsle's (1978) contention that professional interests are strong indicators of committee membership is followed here.

In sum, five characteristics should distinguish independent BFUAC districts from others. The first is the level of district poverty, measured by the number of households living below the poverty line in 1980. The second is the size of the banking, finance, and real-estate industries in each House district, as measured by the percentage of employed individuals engaged in banking, finance, and real-estate work by district in 1980. The third distinguishing characteristic of BFUAC districts is the size and influence of the construction industry, measured by the number of single-unit dwellings by district in 1980. The fourth distinguishing characteristic is district urbanness, measured by persons per square mile in 1980. The fifth distinguishing characteristic is the representatives' personal and professional ties with the nature of the policies made by committee.

Now that measures for each of the socioeconomic factors that distinguished BFUAC districts in the 1980s have been chosen, they must be tested. Tests are performed on each measure for each Congress of the 1980s except the Ninety-seventh Congress (1981 to 1983).

The Ninety-seventh Congress is omitted primarily because of its proximity to the 1980 Decennial Census. The House of Representatives from 1981 to 1983 was still sitting under state reapportionment plans approved after the 1970 Decennial Census. It is likely that changes in Census Bureau definitions, the addition or subtraction of seats among states, and the general changes from redistricting plans made from one census to another would alter the meaning of results compared across decennial census lines. In addition, census data will often prompt changes in the configuration of a district, and every redistricting effort will alter the socioeconomic variables of the district. Most states'

legislatures have completed redistricting House districts by the first election after a decennial census—in this case, by 1982—although some states have not. (In the 1980s, the California legislature redistricted several times during the decade, and other states redistricted at least once after 1982. Every redistricting effort altered the socioeconomic variables of the district.)

The units of observation are the congressional districts in the Ninety-eighth, Ninety-ninth, One Hundredth, and One Hundred and First Congresses. (Delegates from United States territories or protectorates are not considered.) Information from the *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs* for 1983, 1985, 1987, and 1989 determines which members of Congresses obtained seats on the Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs for the Congresses listed just above. Each observation was coded "1" if the district's member sat with the committee; "0" if the member did not.

To measure the effects of poverty as an influence on the likelihood of a member's choice of a position on the BFUAC, the percentages of families in poverty by congressional district are used. The data are taken from publications of the U.S. Census Bureau containing social and economic data from the 1980 Decennial Census sorted by congressional district. Most of the data comes from *Congressional Districts in the 98th Congress.* But data are also taken from congressional district data gathered by the Census Bureau for subsequent Congresses through the One Hundredth Congress.

To measure the likelihood of the effects of the banking, financial, and real-estate industries on members taking seats on the BFUAC during the four Congresses under observation, information is taken from the same Census Bureau sources. The Bureau provides by district the numbers of individuals who

claimed to be working in banking, real estate, and finance on 1 April 1980. These figures are converted to percentages of employed people in each district, and those percentage is used as the measure.

The numbers of single-unit family dwellings, including apartments, are used to measure the influence of the construction industry by congressional district. These data, too, are taken from Census Bureau publications, as is information regarding the population density of districts.

Information concerning the professions of members of Congress is taken from another publication of Congressional Quarterly Press (CQ). (CQ publishes an annual volume entitled *Politics in America*, subtitling each volume with the year and the number of the Congress in session.) Missing information was cross-checked with another source, the *Congressional Staff Directory*, published annually by the Congressional Staff Directory, Limited. Each observation is coded "0" if it appears that the member would have no professional interest in a seat on the BFUAC, "1" if the member appeared to have professional ties with BFUAC policies.

Included as members who might have professional interests are those who listed themselves among the following professions: realtors, real-estate salesmen or investors; bank, savings-and-loan, and savings-bank workers or executives; executives of finance companies, pension funds, and insurance companies and corporations; and members whose work as local or state officials connected them professionally with banking, housing, or community development. This included such jobs as state finance officer or city planner.

Several methods are available to test for differences between BFUAC and non-BFUAC districts in each of the four Congresses observed. The most

sophisticated method in this case would be logistic regression. Logistic regression lends itself to the evaluation of models in which the dependent variable—membership on the BFUAC—may be expressed binomially as a "1" or a "0." The drawback to using logistic regression in this case, however, is that the BFUAC contains only about 10 percent of the total number of members for each Congress. Logistic regression tests for the effects caused by the independent variables on the dependent variable and expects to find an equal division of "1"s and "0"s. Since the actual number of independent variables labeled "1" is only about 10 percent, logistic regression is quite unlikely to produce results that are significant. In other words, to employ the method of logistic regression would prejudice the results by its very use.

Instead, a simple difference of means test is used here—in this case, a test of "Z" scores. The test compares the means of the BFUAC against the means produced for the rest of the House for each variable for each Congress. It tests the null hypothesis that there is no difference in means between the committee and Congress. When the hypothesis is confirmed, no significant difference in means exists, and it may be said that the BFUAC and the rest of Congress do not differ significantly on that measure. However, when the hypothesis is rejected, a significant difference between Congress and the BFUAC does exist.

There should be positive, significant differences in poverty, total housing units, employment, population density, and personal motivations between the BFUAC and the rest of Congress for each of the variables tested. Results that confirm these hypotheses will strongly support the independent committee theory. Results that fail to confirm the hypotheses will not support the theory

and leave the door open to supporting the idea that the BFUAC was an agent of party caucus or of the floor.

Results and Conclusions

If the BFUAC was an independent committee in the 1980s—independent, that is, from censure by chamber or by party caucus—then its members must have strong ties to agents (or groups) representing powerful socioeconomic forces within their districts. District measures that identify five such forces operating upon BFUAC members are suggested above. What answer do the results of testing those measures suggest to the question of whether BFUAC districts may be distinguished from other districts? (Refer to table 3-1.)

The first distinguishing characteristic is poverty, measured by the percentage of families living in poverty by congressional district. There is no significant difference across the four Congresses tested between the means of percent of families living in poverty in BFUAC districts and that of families in districts of other representatives. In fact, the direction of the difference is negative (-) in three of the four Congresses tested. This indicates that BFUAC members were usually elected from districts that were more affluent, not less affluent, than the districts of their fellow House members.

This result may be surprising to those who hold the view expressed by Salamon et al. (1975) that the BFUAC are members elected from urban districts peopled by low-income inhabitants of large cities. This assertion is not borne out here. It may be that a population living in poverty has neither the ability nor a base of resources to focus its representatives's attention on low-income housing issues. Or it may be that individual members from impoverished districts are

able to find other committees more closely concerned with the politics of poverty. What this means for the BFUAC within the understanding of principal-agency theory, however, is that in this area BFUAC members in the 1980s could be influenced by agendas promoted on the floor or within the party caucus. There appears to have been no countervailing influence from the community of the poor within BFUAC members' districts.

Yet another factor that should set districts of BFUAC members apart from other districts represented in the House was their urbanness, measured by population density. The results of testing the population density of BFUAC districts against the population density of other House districts reveals that in each Congress studied the population variable has a slight positive effect on the likelihood of BFUAC membership. Once again, however, none of the four results attains statistical significance.

There is a double implication regarding the committee agency question contained in the use of this variable. Urban settings are the more likely locations for many of the activities spurred by BFUAC housing policies, such as those represented by FHA mortgage guarantees and by public housing activity. Both middle-class home buyers and families living near the poverty line are more likely to be present in urban areas.

The first implication here is that BFUAC members are bound to the interests of these groups. The second implication is that BFUAC members represent interests of the many local governments and government agencies, such as housing authorities, that populate urban areas. The BFUAC as an independent agent could represent the interests of these groups in opposition to the interests of party or of parent chamber.

The results of the test on population density as a measure of urbanness, however, do not display a strong relationship between the variable and the presence of members on the BFUAC in the 1980s. In terms of principal-agency theory, then, BFUAC members may not have been sufficiently grounded in the interests of people seeking housing or of local governments who provide a number of federally aided housing and other urban services to separate the committee position on these matters from the position of either the floor or the party caucuses.

The fifth distinguishing characteristic of BFUAC districts in the 1980s that is suggested in the discussion above is that of the members' personal motivations. BFUAC districts should have produced members of the House of Representatives whose personal characteristics were unlike those of their fellow members and that matched the specific socioeconomic variables displayed by the districts they represented. Bankers, realtors, and former housing officials should have sought seats on the BFUAC. This does not appear to have been entirely the case.

There is a positive (+) relationship between the BFUAC members' personal characteristics and factors peculiar to BFUAC districts in each of the Congresses observed. This positive relationship is expected and supports in part Schepsle's (1978) contention that personal experience propels members toward seats on certain committees. However, the fit between BFUAC districts and their members does not attain statistical significance in any of the four Congresses.

A statistically significant finding covering this measure would have suggested that members elected from BFUAC districts would have had ties to their districts strong enough to have loosened any hold floor or caucus might

have had over their policy-making agendas in committee. Members without personal motivations may have been independent as well, but the presence of personal motivations among committee members would operate as a kind of intensifier of committee independence.

For example, a BFUAC member elected from a district where several large commercial banks are headquartered may favor a policy requiring a smaller reserve requirement for commercial banks. His party may favor no change in the reserve requirement. Chances are that he takes the position in favor of reducing the reserve requirement to please supporters at home and to help insure re-election, and this causes him to break with his party and to assume what is called in this dissertation an independent position.

But if that member had himself been a banker before entering Congress, the matter of reducing the reserve requirement may have acquired such dimensions in his own experience that he may get more deeply involved in the issue. He may actively lead the fight in committee to get it reduced. Or he may reintroduce the measure every session, despite its earlier lack of success. A committee full of such members is not just independent of party and floor, but intensely independent of them.

The results of the tests suggest some movement toward this intensification of feeling, but the movement is not significant enough to be remarkable.

So far, three of the five variables that were suggested as markers to isolate BFUAC districts from other districts do not entirely support the view of the BFUAC as an independent agent—that is, an agent of forces located in the districts of committee members. There is a detectable but insignificant relationship between a district's urbanness and BFUAC members' personal

characteristics and the presence of those members on the BFUAC. There is no relationship between BFUAC membership and the size of the population living in poverty in BFUAC districts.

But tests performed on the two remaining variables do support the view that there is a relationship between the socioeconomic variables of House districts and BFUAC membership, and they support it rather strongly. Tests here do endorse the independence thesis regarding ties between the BFUAC and the financial, real estate, and housing construction industries.

Positive, statistically significant differences of means exist between BFUAC members' districts and other districts in the number of persons employed in banking, real estate, and finance, as measured by the numbers of people employed in those industries within House districts. This finding indicates that as the population of such workers rises within a district, so does the likelihood that a district will be represented on the BFUAC.

What does this finding suggest regarding the agency of the BFUAC during the 1980s?

It means that there is a strong relationship between the status of a district as a leader in the finance and real-estate industries and the presence of its member of Congress on the BFUAC. This positive and significant relationship indicates that members were probably bound strongly to policy prescriptions regarding banking, housing, and community development favored by the banking and real-estate industries in their home districts. In other words, BFUAC members were equipped with compelling reasons to abandon floor or party stances on banking, housing, and community development policy in favor of policies that could appeal to their constituencies and help their re-election

efforts. This finding provides strong evidence that the BFUAC was an independent committee during the 1980s.

The evidence also indicates a strong relationship between the housing construction industry in members' home districts and their presence on the BFUAC. There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between the size of the housing industry in a representative's district, as measured by number of single-unit dwellings by district, and his or her membership on the BFUAC. The implication of this finding is similar to the implication of the finding regarding the real-estate and finance employment by district. That is, BFUAC members were independents regarding housing and community development policy. They could safely appeal to the interests of the construction industry, its peripheral industries, and the people it employed in their home districts without regard to censure by caucus or by floor.

Since a difference-of-means test was applied independently for each variable and for each Congress, no statistic such as R square is produced to describe the overall effects of the socioeconomic characteristics of the members' districts in combination with the variation of the dependent variable—membership on the BFUAC. However, there is enough evidence presented to enable the observer to generalize about districts that elect BFUAC members.

BFUAC members in the 1980s were elected principally from affluent suburban districts where there was a significant amount of activity in the financial, real-estate, and housing industries. Although this finding is not astounding, it should give some pause.

According to earlier research (i.e. Salamon et al.) the BFUAC was home to big-city liberals concerned with housing for the poor. That does not appear to have been so during the 1980s. The BFUAC has also been described as a "policy" committee whose members were more concerned with honing national policies regarding banking, housing, and community development and less concerned with logrolling on behalf of district constituencies. This assertion, too, seems not to stand up under scrutiny here.

It could be asserted, given these results, that BFUAC members could have been quite concerned for logrolling on behalf of the financial, real-estate, and housing construction industries in their home districts. The results of the tests support in part—and where they do support it, they support it strongly—the idea that the BFUAC was an independent committee in the 1980s.

CHAPTER FOUR

Ideological and Partisan Differences: The BFUAC and the House

If the BFUAC of the 1980s was an agent of constituency interests—an independent—then according to principal-agent theory the BFUAC could not have been an agent of the whole House or an agent of its legislative parties. The committee functioned instead as a part of a part of a system of subgovernments (or iron triangles) portrayed by Emmette Redford (1969), Theodore Lowi (1969), and many others as dominating congressional policy making.

The point may be emphasized further in the interests of clarity. If committees are independent agents, they are free from sanctions of either the whole House or, contrary to Cox and McCubbins (1993), of congressional caucuses. If the BFUAC was a part of a subgovernment in the 1980s, then it was neither an agent of the whole House, nor one of congressional parties, but independent.

As the two preceding chapters reveal, there is some confirmation that BFUAC members did represent a set of unique interests within their constituencies in the 1980s, despite changes in the preceding decade that strengthened party leadership's hand in the appointment of committee members. There are other indications, however, that the BFUAC committee was acted upon by forces that could not have originated from a set of constituency interests.

Here are the indications found so far that the BFUAC was autonomous

from control by House or by party.

The first piece of evidence found—in chapter 2—regarding the BFUAC's autonomy has to do with the property-right norm. Preservation of members' committee positions as their "property" is said to be a mark of committee autonomy. There was only one "violation" of the property-right norm of a BFUAC member in the 1980s, and it is open to reasonable doubt whether a "violation" is the proper description for that one particular change.

On the other hand, there was also evidence in chapter 2 that the BFUAC could have been at least partially controlled by forces within House or party. The BFUAC's chairmanship does not seem to have historically followed the "normal" pattern of chair appointments going to the senior member of the committee's majority party. It was probably not a surprise to observers when junior members were elevated to the chairmanship of the BFUAC in 1975 and again in 1981. In fact, given the history of the BFUAC's chairmanship since the 1930s, it could be argued either that the BFUAC was a maverick when it came to the appointment of new chairmen or that committee were rather more subject to the control of party or House than other committees. This pattern of raising junior members to the BFUAC chair indicates a lesser degree of committee independence.

In chapter 3, evidence indicates that members representing constituencies in which the construction, real estate, finance, and banking professions were strong were more likely in the 1980s to seek out seats on the BFUAC than other members were. This finding lends credence to the argument that BFUAC constituencies were in some way "different" than other congressional districts. There is little evidence, however, that constituency considerations other than

these motivated members to seek seats on the BFUAC. There is a reasonable theoretical tie between poverty and urbanness and BFUAC policy concerns, which is tested in chapter 3. Yet the test reveals no difference in the degree of poverty and urbanness between BFUAC districts and all other House districts. Chapter 3 also reveals that members' personal interest, or their training within professions tied to BFUAC policy making, seem to have no bearing on their decision to seek BFUAC membership in the 1980s, either.

The findings so far, then, both support and contradict the notion that the BFUAC may have been autonomous within Congress in the 1980s. So far, the answer to the central question posed at the beginning of this dissertation—was the BFUAC committee of the 1980s independent and autonomous—is "maybe."

This chapter is an investigation into two other questions posed earlier. First, was the BFUAC an agent of the parent chamber of the House during the 1980s? Second, was the BFUAC an agent of the legislative parties of the House during the 1980s?

If the BFUAC was an agent of the House, the committee should represent the views of the whole House without detectable ideological bias in the behavior of its members. If the BFUAC was an agent of congressional caucuses, on the other hand, the behavior of BFUAC members of either party should reflect the behavior of all the members of either party within the House.

This chapter follows two lines of inquiry. First, the question of the BFUAC as agent of the House is taken up. Then, the notion of the BFUAC as an agent of party caucuses is considered.

Two Dimensions of Ideology

Scholars have investigated the representativeness of House committees vis-a-vis the whole House along two dimensions, regional and ideological. In the interests of cross-study comparisons, that scheme is retained here as well.

Regional Differences

A regionally balanced committee represents the whole House. A regionally unbalanced committee—a committee, for example, with a greater proportion of Southern representatives than the Southern proportion in the whole House—is said to be unrepresentative of the whole House.

Theory underlying studies of regional imbalance on committees implies that states tend to evolve political cultures that distinguish them from the cultures of other states. Some states will evolve cultures similar to those of their neighbors, however, and the similar states, in combination, will exhibit features of regional political cultures. Members carry with them into the House ideological predispositions absorbed from the states and regions in which they live. Ideological predispositions taken from state and regional political cultures then reveal themselves in the behavior of members in committee and elsewhere (Daniel Elazar 1984; Ira Sharkansky and Richard I. Hofferbert 1969).

Many Southern states, for example, are thought to be bastions of economic and social conservatism. (V. O. Key's classic study of Southern politics [(1949)1984] is a common reference on this subject.) A committee with a predominance of Southern members, therefore, will be assumed to be more conservative than the whole House. Committees with many members from the

urban areas of Northeastern states such as New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, on the other hand, are thought to be more liberal.

Both of the above are hypothetical examples of regionally unbalanced, and therefore unrepresentative, committees. If committees are representative, and therefore true agents, of the House, they should be regionally balanced.

Ratings and Voting Scores

Ideological balance is commonly measured along the traditional liberal-conservative continuum. Ratings are compiled annually for all House members by interest groups such as Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), the Committee on Political Education (COPE), Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA), the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), and other groups.

Individual scores may be grouped by committee membership and compared against scores of the entire House or against the scores of other committees. Such comparisons distinguish committees dominated by liberal members from those with conservative biases and from those with a balance of conservative and liberal members.

Committees biased in one direction or the other away from the House mean are said to be unrepresentative of the whole House. The assumption is that they act independently. Unbiased committees are balanced ideologically and are said to be representative of the whole House. Ideologically balanced committees are more likely to serve as agents of the House.

Although interest-groups ratings are a standard means of investigating ideological bias among committees of the House, the use of such scores has been

criticized with good reason. The source of that criticism is reviewed later in this chapter.

Regional and Ideological Balance among House Committees

Studies having to do with regional balance among House committees and with their ideology may be divided into two classes: single-committee studies and plural-committee studies. This discussion begins with a review of the first class of studies—single-committee studies—which have been abandoned for the most part in favor of plural-committee studies. It then passes to a review of plural-committee studies themselves.

The traditional prestige committees of the House—Ways and Means, Rules, and Appropriations (Budget is a relative newcomer)—have attracted a great deal of scholarly attention and have been the subject of several single-committee studies regarding their ideological biases.

Manley (1970) says that both House Republicans and House Democrats regard appointment of members to the Committee on Ways and Means as something of an ideological exercise. Conflict is expected within the Ways and Means Committee room. A high degree of conflict is actually realized, says Manley, because Democrats invariably appoint liberals and Republicans invariably appoint conservatives to the House Rules Committee. Manley explains.

> Republicans appoint conservative party regulars to Ways and Means; liberal party regulars are elected to the Democratic side; after medicare [sic] became an issue, no Democrat who would not vote to report it stood much change of going on Ways and Means; for the Republicans, the contrary was true; for much of the post-1933 period the Democrats put reciprocal trade liberals on the Committee; the Republican contingent was the heart of protectionism in Congress; and in economic orientation the Republicans have a bias against government intervention, the Democrats a bias for it (Manley 1970, 45).

James A. Robinson (1963) describes the Rules Committee as a bastion of conservatism under the chairmanship of Howard W. Smith, a conservative Virginia Democrat, throughout the 1950s. Smith dominated the committee personally and ideologically. He successfully allied Southern, conservative Rules Committee Democrats with committee Republicans to defeat many proposals advocated by the more liberal Democratic House leadership. Smith's, and the conservatives', power on the committee was finally broken through a series of ploys initiated by Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas during the early days of the Kennedy Administration.

According to Spark M. Matsunaga and Ping Chen (1976), the Rules Committee during Representative Carl Albert's (D-OK) tenure as Speaker of the House had come to be dominated by Democratic liberals hand-picked by the Speaker, even before the Speaker had been given the right to hand-pick Rules members *ex officio* in 1974. Albert apparently designated liberal Rules Committee members from the liberal wing of the Democratic caucus of the House, but he did try to balance the committee geographically. For example, he nominated Representative Gillis Long of Louisiana, a Southern liberal "in the Hale Boggs tradition" (Matsunaga and Chen 1976, 53), to a seat on Rules. (Boggs was a Southern liberal and a member of Rules.) Albert also consciously chose replacements in order to balance the committee regionally. For example, Albert picked Representative Clem McSpadden of Oklahoma, a border state, to replace William Anderson of Tennessee, another border state. Representative Morgan Murphy, a Northern liberal from Illinois, was named by Albert to replace Representative Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, Jr., a Northern liberal from

Massachusetts, when O'Neill moved up into leadership ranks.

House Republicans are apparently much less geographically specific about their party's choices for Rules members. But as Manley (1970) and Fenno (1966) suggest in their respective studies of the Ways and Means Committee and the Appropriations Committee, the Republican leadership and membership on those committees during those years was ideologically homogeneous. Any Republican placed on the Rules Committee was likely to be acceptable to the conservative majority of Republican members. On the other hand, members of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce (now Energy and Commerce) were a much more heterogeneous group. According to Price, the Energy and Commerce Committee was more representative of the whole House than the Rules Committee. Commerce members "are rather scattered in their regional and group ties, and they tend toward `moderate' voting" (Price 1975, 11).

Andree E. Reeves (1993), in a recent study of the Education and Labor Committee covering the Eighty-second through the Ninety-eighth Congresses (January 1951 through January 1985), found the committee dominated by members from Middle Atlantic and East North Central States. (Reeves details membership by regions fixed by the Census Bureau.) Reeves reports that members from Middle Atlantic States—New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey—at no time composed less than 22 percent of Education and Labor's membership during the course of 35 years. They often held a third, and during one Congress nearly a half, of the Committee on Education and Labor's seats.

This regional dominance was the result of the Democratic majority during most of those 35 years. Many of Education and Labor's members represented

big-city, blue-collar, unionized districts in the states mentioned. Republican Education and Labor members tended to represent East North Central or upper Midwest, constituencies. Using interest group scores compiled for the period (ADA, AFL-CIO, ACA, COPE and others), Reeves also determines that both Democratic and Republican committee members were somewhat more liberal throughout the period studied than the whole House.

The advantage of single-committee studies such as those cited above is the ability to study committee makeup in depth and detail. Those scholars who analyze House committees in multiples (plural-committee studies), however, are better able to make more general statements about ideological bias within the entire system of House committees.

Fenno (1973) considers six committees in the Eighty-fourth through the Eighty-ninth Congresses by region. He finds only one committee, Ways and Means, that is consistently balanced regionally. The other five committees in his study are regionally unbalanced in some fashion. He finds that the Committee on the Interior is predictably overbalanced with Western representatives. The Post Office Committee is overrepresented by Southern and Eastern members. Members from Eastern and Western regions dominate Education and Labor, and the Midwestern members overrepresent their region on the committee on Foreign Affairs.

In the same work, Fenno (1973) looks at the ideological representativeness of the Appropriations, Education and Labor, Foreign Affairs, and Post Office Committees. He finds Appropriations more conservative than the whole House, although he discovers that Education and Labor and Foreign Affairs, are more

liberal. The Post Office Committee, he says, is more or less balanced, with a slight tilt toward conservatism.

Goodwin (1970) uses a four-way regional pattern (South, Midwest, East, West) to overlay the membership of thirteen House committees upon the membership of the whole House from the Eightieth Congress through the Ninetieth Congress. He finds that the South is overrepresented in the memberships of the Agriculture Committee, the Rules Committee, and the Committee on the District of Columbia. The East is overrepresented on the BFUAC and the Judiciary Committees of the House. The Midwest is overrepresented on the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUAC), and the Committee on the Interior is dominated by Western members.

Merchant Marine and Education and Labor are dominated by members from both coasts, with the South and the Midwest underrepresented in the membership of each. On the other hand, Eastern and Midwestern representatives tilt the memberships of Foreign Affairs and Government Operations toward the so-called Rustbelt (the older industrialized states in the North and the Midwest).

Goodwin (1970) also finds that five of the committees he investigates are dominated by liberals—BFUAC, Education and Labor, Foreign Affairs, Government Operations, and Merchant Marine. Of the rest, Agriculture, Armed Services, District of Columbia, and HCUAC are dominated by conservatives. Appropriations, Post Office, and Veterans Affairs memberships are found to be balanced ideologically.

Three more recent studies—Hinckley (1983), Krehbiel (1990), and Cox and McCubbins (1993)—do not investigate regional representativeness, but

compare ideological representativeness of various House committees. The results of these more recent studies are compiled and compared in table 4-1.

Hinckley's study is of the Eighty-first, the Ninety-first, and the Ninety-fifth Congresses. Krehbiel examines committees from the Ninety-sixth through the Ninety-ninth Congresses. Neither Hinckley nor Krehbiel presents difference of means tests. Cox and McCubbins produce rankings based on the usual testing of difference of interest-groups scoring means, but they use another process as well. This is Poole and Rosenthal's (1985) Nominal Three-Step Estimation (NOMINATE), which locates members' positions within a spatial dimension derived from the scaling of all nonunanimous roll-call votes taken during a session of Congress (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 72).

Cox and McCubbins find an overall ideological balance among the committees of the House, a finding they use to support their theory of party power in that body. While their traditional interest-group scores indicate that Education and Labor, Foreign Affairs, and Government Operations are liberal committees, their NOMINATE scores find only slight liberal tilts in Education and Labor and Government Operations. NOMINATE scores indicate that Foreign Affairs was balanced, not liberal. Just two of the committees Cox and McCubbins study, Agriculture and Armed Services, tended to tilt to the right both regionally and ideologically. Using both methods, they find that the remaining committees are fairly balanced ideologically.

Hinckley and Krehbiel produce findings that differ both between themselves and with Cox and McCubbins' findings.

Generally, for those committees that the three works investigate in common, Hinckley's conclusions are more closely related to those of Cox and

McCubbins than to those of Krehbiel. Hinckley does find a few more committees biased in the liberal direction than Cox and McCubbins do. On the other hand, Krehbiel sees ideological tilts on the Government Operations, Merchant Marine, Post Office, and Veterans committees that Cox and McCubbins do not detect.

Regional and Ideological Balance on the BFUAC

The work of Salamon et al. (1975) is the sole major single-committee study of the BFUAC, its members, and its activities. But the BFUAC is a major House committee and has been in part the subject of several plural-committee works.

Salamon and his colleagues (1975) find that BFUAC members in the 1960s and the 1970s were elected in the main from central-city or suburban districts. Beyond that, Salamon ascertains that BFUAC membership is regionally concentrated. New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey in the Northeast; Texas in the South; and California in the West are said to provide the greatest number of members. Goodwin (1970), in his study of thirteen House committees, comes to a similar conclusion about the BFUAC's regional representation. He states that, for the earlier period of his study, BFUAC membership is tilted toward overrepresentation by Eastern members.

Salamon et al. (1975) also regard the BFUAC as ideologically more liberal than the whole House. They report ADA and AFL-CIO scores that are significantly higher, and ACA scores that are significantly lower, than averages for House members. Salamon et al. use interest-group scores and the results of interviews to rate the BFUAC along the liberal-conservative continuum. Out of 37 members sitting on the BFUAC during the Ninety-second Congress, they identify nineteen liberal voters—one Republican and eighteen Democrats.

Thirteen more members are conservatives—nine Republicans and four Democrats. They group the remaining five members—four Republicans and one Democrat—in a swing-voting category. Their reason for using this "swing vote" delegation is obscure. Added to the conservative minority, these five members could not carry any vote if the liberal majority voted en bloc. Regardless, Salamon et al. consider the BFUAC a liberal committee.

Although Goodwin (1970) and Hinckley (1983) agree with Salamon regarding BFUAC's Eastern liberal slant, authors of later studies (Krehbiel 1990; Cox and McCubbins 1993) disagree.

Krehbiel finds a conservative majority filling BFUAC seats from the Ninety-sixth to the Ninety-ninth Congresses. Cox and McCubbins' findings regarding the BFUAC are split by the methods they employ. Using traditional interest-group scores, they find the BFUAC a conservative committee. Using the broader index created by NOMINATE, they find the BFUAC to be ideologically balanced.

The thesis of this study is that the BFUAC was an independent committee throughout the 1980s. If this was so, the results regarding BFUAC regional representation and ideology should present a similar picture of the BFUAC to that presented in the literature just reviewed. If the committee was an independent during the 1980s, it should have been unbalanced both regionally and ideologically in the congresses of the 1980s. Note, however, that it must be confirmed only that regional and ideological bias existed. It is irrelevant to the thesis whether the BFUAC is a liberal or a conservative committee. It is only necessary to confirm that the committee differed from the House in some way.

It would be tempting to concur with the weight of scholarly opinion—the BFUAC in the 1980s was a liberal committee tilted toward Eastern representation. However, as Reeves (1993) points out, membership changes across congresses may alter regional and ideological biases of committees. A look at the results of studies in chronological order suggests that alterations may have occurred in the balance to the BFUAC during the 1980s that changed the liberal committee of the 1960s and 1970s into a more conservative one in the 1980s.

There are two reasons for believing that representativeness and ideology may have changed in the BFUAC over the decade of the 1980s.

First, the Reagan Administration was unalterably hostile to federal housing programs and community development. (President Reagan and HUD Secretary Samuel R. Pierce even lobbied for reductions in federal support for the popular FHA middle-class mortgage insurance.) That opposition was somewhat successful. With the reduction of federal presence in housing for the poor and the further reduction in the number of federal dollars available for community development, the allure of federal dollars to be routed into big-city constituencies would gradually pass away. Urban members new to Congress, as well as those looking to move from one assignment to another, would begin to look for committees with more constituency-based policy concerns.

Second, the effects of the savings-and-loan crisis that occurred toward the end of the 1980s on BFUAC membership must be taken into account. The need to focus primarily on the committee's banking policy set may have tended to make liberal, big-city membership on the BFUAC more problematic. Left-of-center members with constituency-based social concerns would tend to shy away from

the complex, and often arcane, convolutions of savings-and-loan and banking regulation, which took up so much of the committee's time toward the end of the decade.

The most likely hypotheses, then, regarding BFUAC geographical and ideological representativeness, are these: First, as committee membership changed and expanded during the 1980s, the BFUAC became less Eastern and more Western and Southern. Second, the committee moved ideologically from a stance that was generally more liberal than the whole House to a position that was more conservative.

Findings supporting these hypotheses would support the independence thesis as well. Remember that to find the BFUAC independent, it is only necessary to demonstrate that the committee was regionally and ideologically unlike the House as a whole.

Party Control of House Committees

A review of the last generation of committee studies reveals little discussion of the role of political parties in the policy-making business of House committees. This is because scholars have generally found that neither House committees nor their members have had reason to fear censure by House party caucuses, in or out of committee. According to conventional wisdom, House members form ranks strictly along party lines only over two issues: organization of the House, including its committees, and support of the party's presidential candidate during an election. The real policy tasks done by committees, the conventional wisdom continues, are left unregulated by legislative parties once the job of organizing committees early in each Congress is completed.

Key (1964) provides a typical explanation of the failure of House party caucuses to control House committees once the committees have been organized.

> The powers enjoyed by committees and by committee chairmen point to a basic problem in legislative management. A first essential in the execution of a [party] program in the general weal is the power to batter down the more outrageous demands of narrow interests. The strategic advantages enjoyed by [committees and committee chairmen] handicap efforts in that direction (Key 1964, 672).

Frank J. Sorauf adds that, unthreatened by forceful sanctions wielded by their party caucuses, members may "freely vote against the party's platform, majority, or leadership" (Sorauf 1968, 672) in the House. The party leadership nearly always concedes to the needs of members who plead constituency interests above party mandate. Members risk penalty by their party only when they undermine the candidacy of their party's presidential nominee.

Scholars agree that the President's positions often indicate partisan policy preferences and that members in House and committee look to the President for policy cues. For example, Bond and Fleisher (1990) assert that partisan support in Congress is important in explaining the policy success of both majority and minority presidents. But presidential direction is thought to be usually indirect. Sorauf (1968) describes the relationship of legislative parties to the President.

> The President's wishes and influence are often funneled through his party's leaders; they confer with him and carry his proposals and battle plan to the Congress and they accept his initiative—they are often called "his" leaders in Congress. What appeals the congressional leadership makes to party loyalty to the party of the legislature [are] to the symbols of party unity and to the necessity of preserving a responsible and constructive "image" of the party. Their success is usually limited and personal, for behind the spurs to party loyalty there are very few sanctions. So long as local voters control primaries and general elections and the seniority system controls entree to the major positions of congressional influence, the party apparatus in the two houses of Congress will be without control over the uses of legislative power (Sorauf 1968, 335).

On the other hand, as Allan P. Sindler (1966) points out, American political parties are not just players on the margin of the congressional arena. The median positions of Democrats and Republicans in the House differ, and they differ along lines "consistent with the popular image of the parties" (Sindler 1966, 85). Sindler also indicates that the best predictor of legislators' alignments concerning one policy or the other is their party label. Members of the House vote far more often with other members of their own party than they do with members of, using the British phrase, "the party opposite." This observation is supported by George C. Edwards III (1984), who makes a similar assertion.

Sindler also observes that the president's party in the House is much more likely than its adversary to be unified. Its legislative unity, he says, is an indication of the force of the policy direction supplied by the President.

Generally, then, scholars support the notion that parties in the legislature differ somewhat by ideology, voting patterns, and presidential support. But there is little support for the idea that the traditional organization of the House by its party caucuses, and especially the caucuses' organization of House committees, has much impact on the habits either of House members in general of House committee members. The President's leadership, it is agreed, has some impact on members' behavior, but election and constituency concerns are far more predictive of members' behavior than presidential requests. In other words, House committees are not likely to serve as agents of their party caucus, but of outside interests—they act independently.

The typical approach to gauging party influences in the House is to look not at institutional pressures on members from party caucuses or from the administration, but at members' voting behavior on the floor. Members voting

with the majority of their party on a majority of votes are assumed to more likely to be party loyalists than members who cast their votes less than half the time with a majority of their party. Members voting more than half the time for or against the President's indicated position on legislation are said to be supporters of the President.

Floor voting is not necessarily an indication of member's partisan behavior in committee, but it is generally assumed that members' committee behavior mimics partisan floor behavior. (Committee voting records, which should provide a more accurate view of party support within committee, are difficult to obtain, and have only recently become available, comparatively speaking. The recent standard for committee voting studies is Parker and Parker's [1985] description of factions in House committees. However, the Parkers' concern is with factional, not partisan, voting groupings.) Members who support their party on policy issues on the floor are likely to support their party on policy issues in committee. Members who support the President on policy issues on the floor are likely to support him on policy issues in committee.

Members of the President's party support his positions and those of other members of their party for several reasons. These have been articulated by Bond and Fleisher (1990).

First, members of the same party have to answer to similar constituency and electoral concerns; they may occupy, as well, common ideological ground. Second, members of the President's party have to run for re-election on their own, but also on the President's, record. This gives members a stake in presidential success. Third, despite the electoral diversity represented by either party, party members share an attachment to a common symbol or symbols

linked to their party. Finally, the President still has at his disposal certain political resources—"patronage, influence over the distribution of `porkbarrel' programs, and control over campaign resources" (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 16)—that he may use to reward his supporters in Congress.

Until recently, scholars examining voting trends in the House have reached similar general conclusions—that party voting has been declining in the House for some time, and that partisanship in the House declines as party voting declines. For example, David W. Brady, Joseph C. Cooper, and Patricia Hurley (1979) find that party votes as a percentage of all roll-call votes in the House fell by about half a percentage point per Congress between 1886 and 1967. Brady and his colleagues also find that the decline in party voting is associated with significant declines in party caucus strength, in centralized party leadership, in reductions in electoral turnover, and in party conflict. Clubb and Traugott (1977) uncover similar evidence regarding the decline of partisanship in the House. They observe that variables including "partisan disaggregation" (Clubb and Traugott 1977, 400) and the realignment process may go some distance in explaining the decline of party voting in the House between 1861 and 1974.

In recent years, however, scholars have begun to notice a more positive trend in party voting in the House. David W. Rohde (1990), observes that, beginning in the mid-1970s, the frequency of party votes as a percentage of all roll calls increases. He also detects an increase in the party unity of Democrats in the House from about 70 percent during President Nixon's first term (1969 to 1973) to 88 percent during the One Hundredth Congress (January 1987 through January 1989). Cox and McCubbins agree with Rohde and emphasize that theirs and Rohde's results may indicate a resurgence in partisanship in the House.

What party-unity and presidential-support trends have scholars found among BFUAC members?

Salamon et al. (1975) do not examine the party-unity or presidential-support activity of BFUAC members in the 1970s. They imply, however, that the party unity of BFUAC members in that era was disrupted by the multidimensionality of BFUAC's policy responsibilities. While reliably in harmony with most of their Democratic colleagues on the floor when it came to housing issues, Democratic BFUAC members, according to Salamon et al., tended to stray from Democratic orthodoxy when voting on banking regulations.

Salamon et al. allege that BFUAC members of both parties in the 1970s were personally and professionally in league with the financial institutions—commercial banks, savings institutions, insurance companies, and pension funds—regulated by the committee. They also assert that campaign funds received by members from banking and financial interests altered members' committee and floor votes in favor of the private financial institutions regulated through BFUAC policy. So while BFUAC Democrats were reliably Democratic on housing issues in the 1970s, they became predictably more conservative on banking issues.

These are interesting propositions. It is worth noting that BFUAC members in the 1980s must have felt a great deal of cross-pressure if they attempted to vote on the basis of the relative dollar amounts given by interests groups with ties to the committees. This cross-pressure may be charted by even the grossest measures.

The bankers' political action committee (PAC), the American Bankers' Association (ABA), contributed a significant amount—more than one-and-a-

quarter million dollars—to federal candidates during the 1990 elections (Philip M. Stern 1992, 315). But the political action committee which generally contributed more money than any other PAC to congressional campaigns during the 1980s was not the bankers' PAC, but the realtors' PAC.

Realtors, as well as bankers, have a direct interest in federal housing policies overseen by the BFUAC. (See chapter 3). During the 1990 election cycle, the National Association of Realtors contributed a little more than three million dollars to the campaigns of all federal candidates (Stern 1992, 314). Given realtors' natural interest in housing policy, a substantial chunk of this contribution must have gone to BFUAC members. The National Association of Home Builders also contributed more to federal candidates in 1990 than did the ABA (Stern 1992, 315).

Although it is sometimes difficult to separate the interests of these three groups, a strong assumption would be that realtors and builders have more in common with each other than either has with bankers. In whose interests, then, did the congressional beneficiaries of PAC largess labor—the bankers', the realtors', or the builders'? This question cannot be answered here, but posing it should prompt the notion that lines of influence from contributor to voting committee member may not be as clear as popularly thought.

Aside from the findings of Salamon et al., indications in the literature regarding party unity among BFUAC members seem to follow the generational trend. While studies published prior to the mid-1980s find a decline in partisan behavior in BFUAC members, studies published during the later 1980s and into the 1990s detect a rise in partisanship across the House membership, including members of the BFUAC.

The thesis of this study, once again, is that the BFUAC was an independent agent during the 1980s. If this were so, then the BFUAC should have been either more partisan or less partisan than other members of the House during the 1980s. Either finding will serve to confirm the thesis. In other words, any departure from the mean partisanship of the party caucuses of House will do. But there should have been changes in partisanship within the BFUAC just as there should have been changes in ideology. It is therefore hypothesized that both BFUAC Democrats and BFUAC Republicans differ significantly as partisans from their House colleagues at the beginning of the 1980s. It is also hypothesized that partisan differences decrease between the BFUAC and House contingents within both caucuses as the 1980s progress.

Determining Regional, Ideological, and Partisan Bias on the BFUAC

The investigation into ideological and partisan bias on the BFUAC in the 1980s proceeds along the following lines. First, regional balances between the BFUAC and the House for the Ninety-seventh through the One Hundred and First Congresses are investigated by comparing the average percentages of regional membership of those two groups and by testing for significant differences. Second, ideological differences between the BFUAC and the House are tested by interest-group ratings for each year from 1981 through 1990 by comparing the means of House interest-group scores against BFUAC interest-group scores. The statistical significance of the differences is also noted. Finally, the intensity of partisanship among BFUAC members is tested by comparing the party-unity and presidential-support scores for the BFUAC produced by the

Congressional Quarterly organization by year from 1981 through 1990 and by testing for statistical significance.

Like Reeves (1993), this study employs the regional divisions contrived by the United States Census Bureau. The Census Bureau partitions the United States into four regional divisions: the West (Mountain and Pacific states), the Midwest (East North Central and West North Central), the South (East South Central, West South Central, and Middle Atlantic), and the Northeast (New England and Middle Atlantic). (See table 4-2.) Percentages of BFUAC members and House members in each division are computed for each Congress to test for differences in regional membership. (See tables 4-3 and 4-4.) Differences in means between the BFUAC and the House of Representatives are also developed and tested (see table 4-5). Differences among regional subdivisions are usually not tested, so they are ignored here.

Interest-group ratings compiled by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. and published with other member and district information in annual versions of CQ's *Politics in America* from 1981 through 1990 are used to test for ideological differences between the BFUAC and the House. (The difference between ratings and scores is explained below.) Means are compared, and tests of statistical significance are completed between House and BFUAC members scores for each year from 1981 through 1990.

Interest-group ratings represent the percentage of votes in which a House member voted in favor of the reporting group's position on a selected set of issues that concern the group. In order for the ratings to take on meaning, however, the reporting group has to be identified by its ideological or issue

inclinations. Ratings by groups with opposing views must be examined as well to provide a balanced picture of members' behavior.

The four ratings printed in *Politics in America* are used here because they provide at least a two-dimensional view of members' ideological inclinations. These are the ratings produced for House members by the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), a liberal group; Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA), a conservative group; the AFL-CIO, a national labor organization, usually assumed to take liberal positions; and the Chamber of Commerce of the United States (CCUS), a national business organization usually assumed to take conservative positions. There are at least eleven interest-group ratings available (Michael J. Sharp 1988), including those used here. And although use of other ratings could produce various nuances in the results, the effort would probably be duplicate because of the degree of correlation among several of the ratings.

Although interest-group ratings are useful in comparing the results of this study with those presented in other studies, there are several methodological problems attached to their use.

First, to rate members of the House according to their own ideological indices, interest groups use votes that occur in the House at the end of an exhaustive process of compromise and conciliation. Although the vote may indicate where the legislator stands at the end point in that process, it may not disclose his true position on the issue.

Second, groups tend to focus on disputed votes, but not on votes disputed along party lines. That is, the votes the groups choose on which to rate members are controversial but nonpartisan. The results, therefore, may seem falsely to support the notion that there are few ideological divisions among the parties.

Third, as Cox and McCubbins (1993) report, the ratings are better at discriminating among Democrats than among Republicans. This is probably because most nonpartisan but controversial votes are the results of fights among factions of the House majority, and Democrats held the majority throughout the period covered by this study. As a result, ideological differences among Democrats may be overstated, while those among Republicans may be understated.

Fourth, as above, interest-group ratings do not capture ideological factions within any committee; inferences must be made from floor voting activity.

Nevertheless, because they have been widely used and may be easily compared across time by committee and by Congress, the interest-group ratings are employed here.

To test for members' partisanship, party-unity scores and presidential-support scores compiled annually by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. are used. The scores are presented in several of CQ's publications. They appear here from both *Politics in America* and CQ's *Congressional Quarterly Roll Call* volumes from 1981 through 1990.

Party-unity support and opposition scores record the percentage of votes in which the member votes yes or no in agreement with the majority of the member's party. Failure to vote lowers the score. Party-unity scores are therefore the result of a simple calculation.

Presidential-support scores, on the other hand, are based on the subjective, if informed, judgments of CQ researchers. They first determine the President's actual legislative program. His program may differ from the

program offered publicly by other members of his administration. CQ researchers analyze presidential statements made during press conferences, in presidential documents, and in other such statements to establish presidential policy intentions. The issues involved in each House vote are then balanced against public presidential wishes and the vote is declared in support of, or in opposition to, the President's wishes.

Scores are reported by party and by membership in the BFUAC, and means are compared with party House membership.

Results

The first hypotheses regarding BFUAC ideology was that the committee moved from a significant regional imbalance favoring the East in the early 1980s to become more regionally representative of the House during the latter part of the decade. The results of the regional comparison between the BFUAC and the House can be seen in tables 4-3 and 4-4.

Numbers in each regional block on tables 4-3 and 4-4 represent the average percentage of members from two groups, the BFUAC and the House. The differences between the two, and the statistical significance of those differences, where they exist, are computed and printed on table 4-5. Negative differences on table 4-5 mean that the BFUAC had a smaller percentage of members from the region than the House had. Positive differences mean that the BFUAC had a larger percentage of members from the region than the House had.

The statistical significance of the difference is an indication of the credence one should lend to the difference between the two averages. For the

most part, the significance of a statistic is accepted if the probability of its random occurrence is 5 percent (.05) or less. A "p" of .05 means that there is only a 5-percent chance that the number generated for the sample is randomly generated. In this case, significance at the less probable .10 level and the more probable .01 level is also indicated.

One could argue that a test of significance is irrelevant to the data summarized here because these data represent the entire population of the House of Representatives for each of the Congresses observed. Scholars have both used and failed to use such tests in past works using similar data. They are used here because such use both lends credibility to the work and encourages a proper conservatism in interpreting the results.

House mean percentages by region are most likely to change between the Ninety-seventh and the Ninety-eighth Congress because of the effects of redistricting. Redistricting usually occurs within two years of the last Decennial Census, so any shifts of membership from one region to another should take effect at the beginning of the second Congress during any decade. The general trend of greater population shift toward the West and the South was taken into account in the redistricting following the 1980 Census, with gains in House seats by both Western states (1 percent) and by Southern states (2 percent) from the Ninety-seventh Congress to the Ninety-eighth Congress. Concomitant losses are seen in the East (a loss of 2 percent) and in the Midwest (a loss of 2 percent). Changes in House percentages from the Ninety-eighth Congress through the One Hundred and First Congress are small. They occur either as a result of members' leaving the House for one reason or the other or as a result of anomalies in the data, such as missing cases.

At no time during the period studied was there a greater percentage of Western members on the BFUAC than there is within the whole House. The difference between the Western percentages for each of the five Congresses is a negative number. This indicates that the West is less represented on the BFUAC than it is within Congress as a whole. However, the difference is less (-.37) in the One Hundred and First Congress than it is for any of the four earlier Congresses studied. This trend indicates that Western representation on the BFUAC had moved toward becoming more like that of the House. But note also that none of differences in percentages for the West achieved an acceptable level of statistical significance.

Results for the Midwestern region tell much the same story. The region is underrepresented on the BFUAC for the entire decade, except during the One Hundred and First Congress, but the differences are not statistically significant. The Midwest is more underrepresented on the BFUAC for the middle three Congresses of the decade, while it is somewhat better represented on the committee during the first (Ninety-seventh) and last (One Hundred and First) Congresses of the decade. Again, none of the mean differences attains statistical significance.

The tale is a little different for Southern representation on the BFUAC. The South begins the 1980s underrepresented on the BFUAC and ends the decade somewhat overrepresented. The average difference of means between committee and House membership among Southern representatives is small. The pattern of Southern representation on the BFUAC is the pattern of Midwestern representation turned upside down. The South is greatly overrepresented on the BFUAC during the Ninety-ninth and One Hundredth

Congresses, but its representation on the panel then falls off to only a slight difference with that of the House during the One Hundred and First Congress. One could argue that the South gained members on the committee at the expense of the Midwest—just as it gained membership in the House at the expense of the Midwest on account of population shifts recognized by the 1980 Decennial Census. Once more, however, no mean differences were found to be statistically significant.

The membership champion of the BFUAC among regions is clearly the East. The average difference between committee and House delegations is greater than that for any other region. Despite a 2-percent drop in total membership in Eastern House membership after the Ninety-seventh Congress, the East maintained its overrepresentation on the BFUAC throughout the decade. It is important to note, however, that during the One Hundred and First Congress, Eastern representation on the BFUAC dropped from 30 percent to 25 percent of committee membership. This brings the committee more in line with Eastern representation in Congress, which stood at 21 percent for the last four Congresses of the decade.

These results seem to confirm the hypothesis that the BFUAC became more regionally balanced during the 1980s. They also support the independence thesis. But the results must be interpreted cautiously. The East is clearly overrepresented on the BFUAC throughout the decade at the expense of the other three regions, but its representation drops in the last Congress of the decade. However, none of the differences between means in any of the regions is found to have been statistically significant.

In relation to principal-agency theory, then, these data seem to indicate that the BFUAC began the 1980s as a liberal committee because the East was overrepresented. (Remember that regional bias represents ideological bias.) But the BFUAC became less liberal as the decade wore on and as more Western and Southern members were added. This indicates that the BFUAC began the decade as an independent but began to lose that independence as it gained regional balance.

The next hypothesis tested is that the BFUAC moved from an ideological position more liberal than that of the House to a position nearer the House's average position. (See table 4-6.) The more liberal positions taken by BFUAC members are indicated by positive differences between BFUAC means and ADA and AFL-CIO scores and by negative difference between BFUAC means and ACA and CCUS scores.

The data again seem to confirm the hypothesis, but again caution in interpretation is appropriate. The difference of means tests for ADA scores reveals that the BFUAC took positions more liberal than those of the House for a majority of the years observed. But by the same index, the committee was less liberal than the House for two years—1985 and 1986—. The other liberal measure, AFL-CIO scores, deepens the ambiguity. For half of the ten years observed, according to this measure, the BFUAC was more liberal than the House; for the other half, it was more conservative. The CCUS scores, moreover, indicate that during most of the years under observation, the BFUAC is at least marginally more conservative than the House.

Among measures of ideology used in this test, ACA scores reveal the strongest trend. By the ACA measure, the BFUAC was consistently more liberal

than the House early in the decade but became more conservative toward the end of the decade. By 1990, by ACA measures, the BFUAC registers as slightly more conservative than the House.

Although the committee registers as slightly more liberal than the House across the decade studied, none of the differences attains statistical significance. A clear trend toward more conservative ideological positions taken by BFUAC members appears only among ACA data. In short, the hypothesis regarding ideological movement among BFUAC membership is only weakly confirmed by these data, and the independence thesis is weakly supported. The BFUAC seems to remain independent of the floor throughout the 1980s, but with some indication of movement toward positions taken by the average House member.

Results of tests on two final hypotheses remain to be explained. The first is that the voting behavior of BFUAC Republicans and Democrats during the 1980s was significantly unlike that of their colleagues in the House. The second is that partisan differences decreased between both party groups and their House caucus means as the 1980s wore on. (Refer to tables 4-7 and 4-8.)

There are statistically significant negative differences between the BFUAC and the House as measured by conservative-coalition-support scores for both years of the Ninety-seventh Congress, 1981 (-12.9) and 1982 (-8.32). None of the other eight mean differences exhibits statistical significance, but all are negative. The trend among the BFUAC Democratic membership is to increase their allegiance slightly to the conservative coalition, although in absolute terms only about one-third of BFUAC Democrats allied themselves with the coalition in any one year. On the other hand, the allegiance of House Democrats to the conservative coalition (CC) dropped from a high of 44.15 in 1981 to a low of

35.95 in 1984. Percentages of House Democratic CC votes began to rise again after 1985, reaching 42.33 in 1989. The percentage then dropped below 40 (39.53) again. In sum, BFUAC Democratic CC voting patterns rose slightly over the period as House Democratic voting patterns fell slightly. But House Democrats remained more loyal to the coalition than did their partisan colleagues among the BFUAC, indicating, paradoxically, a lower degree of party loyalty among BFUAC Democrats.

Both House and BFUAC Republicans, judged by their voting patterns, were much closer allies of the conservative coalition than their Democratic colleagues. During the first six years of the decade, BFUAC Republicans voted less conservatively than did their Republican House colleagues. The differences turned out to be statistically significant in two of those years, 1983 and 1984. In 1984, there are more than 10 points separating the averages of the two groups. But as the decade wore on, BFUAC Republicans began to vote more conservatively than their House partisan colleagues. In terms of decade-long trends, both House and BFUAC Republicans were voting more conservatively at the end of the decade than they had been in 1981. The absolute rise in conservative voting is greater among BFUAC Republicans than among House Republicans. Again paradoxically, BFUAC Republicans appear at the beginning of the decade to be less partisan than their House colleagues while voting more consistently for the conservative coalition.

Party-unity support scores tell a story similar to the one narrated by conservative coalition scores.

Party-unity means are consistently higher among BFUAC Democrats than among House Democrats. Again, during 1981 and 1982, BFUAC party-unity

scores are significantly higher than those of their House colleagues. BFUAC Democrats vote less loyally than House Democrats only during two years, 1985 and 1987. Neither of those differences is significant. Both House and BFUAC Democrats are more likely to vote with their party at the end of the decade than at its beginning, but party loyalty among House Democrats rose more steeply (about 13 points) than did party loyalty among BFUAC Democrats (about 8 points), who were more loyal to begin with.

There appear to be no significant trends among party-unity scores of BFUAC Republicans. The BFUAC Republican contingent began and ended the decade supporting their party on the floor about three-quarters of the time. The same may be said about House Republicans, who exhibited similar voting habits. During the decade, BFUAC Republicans were less loyal than their House colleagues only during 1983, 1984, and 1986. During the remaining seven years, the tended to vote a stricter party line than did their House colleagues.

BFUAC Democrats were consistently less likely to support presidential policies on their floor than their House Democratic counterparts. There is a statistically significant negative difference between BFUAC and House Presidential Support averages in 1981. Only during 1985, 1986, and 1988 were BFUAC Democrats more likely to support President Reagan than were their Democratic House colleagues. Congressional Democrats supported President Reagan in a relatively high (43 percent) number of votes during 1981, but their support for his views had fallen off drastically, about 18 percentage points' worth, by the last full year of his second term, 1988. House Democratic presidential-support scores rose again during the first year of President Bush's term, 1989, then fell again in 1990. The Presidential support pattern for BFUAC

Democrats is similar—normally falling off for President Reagan after 1981, then rising, then falling again for President Bush.

That BFUAC Republicans supported the views both of President Reagan and of President Bush and supported them at higher rates than the Democrats is not remarkable. However, there appear to have been some differences in the support of presidential policies between BFUAC and House Republicans.

BFUAC Republicans supported both presidents somewhat more consistently than did their House colleagues. Only during 1983, 1984, and 1986 were BFUAC Republicans less likely to support presidential policies than the remainder of the Republican caucus. However, there is a significant negative difference between House and BFUAC Republican means for presidential support during 1984, the year Reagan ran for a second term. This result, combined with a fairly large but unsignificant difference in party-unity scores also in 1984, indicates a notable but brief trend away from Republican partisanship by BFUAC Republican members.

Both hypotheses seem to be supported, although supported in moderation, by this data. Both Democratic and Republican contingents on the BFUAC differed in their habits from their average partisan colleagues on the floor. And, as the decade wore on, changes occurred making both groups more comparable to their colleagues. The independence thesis, then, seems to find confirmation here.

Conclusions

The hypotheses developed and the tests performed in this chapter are based on the third and fourth indicators of committee independence that

emerged at the beginning of this dissertation.

The third indicator is ideological differences between committee and floor as measured by regional and ideological differences between committee and parent chamber. Where committee members differ from the parent chamber regionally and ideologically, it may be concluded that their committee is independent of, that is, not an agent of, the House. (Regional bias is another form of ideological bias, but both must be accounted for in testing for differences.)

The results regarding regional and ideological bias point toward the conclusion that the BFUAC was biased by both measures during the 1980s. Committee membership tilted it Eastward, in a liberal direction, although the regional makeup of the committee appears to have been changing toward the end of the decade. Three of the four ideological measures derived from voting activity by members on the floor—CCUS ratings are the exception—lead the observer to a similar conclusion.

What are the implications of these findings for interpreting BFUAC activity in the 1980s?

The most important for this dissertation is that the BFUAC was likely to clash with the floor over housing issues during the 1980s. The House during the 1980s was under pressure from conservative forces in the Senate and in the executive branch to slow or to reverse the direction of a great body of federal social policy, housing policy included. The results indicate that the BFUAC was likely to resist the conservative trend and to try to maintain levels of support for housing similar to those the government had supported in the 1970s. The narratives in chapter 6 and chapter 7 will help to clarify whether or not the

BFUAC did indeed resist a trend toward reducing the federal presence within the American housing domain.

The effect of the activity of the BFUAC's more liberal membership on policy making within the two other policy sets, especially banking, is more uncertain. Cited above is speculation that, as housing and community development issues shrank in comparison to banking and financial issues, members concerned with social policy making may have chosen other committees as more likely vehicles for their policy concerns. This interpretation may have merit, but is not necessarily supported by the evidence here.

The evidence does support the idea, expressed by Salamon et al., that members may have taken a conservative approach to banking issues and a more liberal approach to housing issues. This may explain the differences between the BFUAC's ratings by the ACA and the CCUS. The more businesslike, and perhaps less ideological, Chamber of Commerce may have been more likely than the ACA to rate BFUAC members highly for their work and their votes on financial issues.

The fourth indicator of committee independence is partisan differences between committee and party caucuses. Where committee members differ from their respective party caucuses in voting on the floor, the inference is that their committee caucuses are independent of, that is, not agents of, the caucuses of the parent chamber.

All three measures used to gauge partisan differences—scores for support of the conservative-coalition, party-unity scores, and presidential-support scores—indicate that Democratic BFUAC members were unlike their fellow Democrats in the House in the 1980s. They were less conservative, more likely to

vote with their party, and less likely to support the Republican presidents of the era than the remaining members of the Democratic caucus. That they were less likely to support conservative measures on the floor or the positions of Republican presidents is not surprising, especially given the "liberal" nature of two of BFUAC's three policy sets.

The finding about BFUAC's Democratic members' likelihood to support their party on the floor is something of a paradox. It may be taken literally to mean that BFUAC Democrats were "more" Democratic than their colleagues. One interpretation is that BFUAC Democrats were more likely to push consistently for those policies supported by the liberal elements of the Democratic coalition—minorities, big-city "liberals," and labor unions, for example. Democratic leadership in the 1980s had to make accommodations with the Republican Senate and the Republican executive. So it could be argued that BFUAC Democrats were likely to clash with other majority members and with the Democratic House leadership over policy both inside and outside the House.

Any clash with the Democratic majority leadership would probably have involved the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee may be most potent weapon wielded by the majority party over legislation sent by standing committees to the floor of the House. But the relationship between a standing committee such as the BFUAC and the Rules Committee is oddly difficult to discern. Much of the difficulty has to do with the question of the agency of the Rules Committee itself.

Robinson (1963) says the Rules Committee of the 1950s and 1960s was dominated by conservative interests and led by an arch-conservative chairman, Howard W. Smith. Rules was apparently so much more conservative than the

rest of the House that Speaker Sam Rayburn and the floor had to "pack" the committee with more liberal Democrats in order to force Rules to cooperate with the leadership and with the Kennedy Administration. Robinson's description of the Rules Committee was that it was an independent committee operating much to the right of the Democratic caucus.

Matsunaga and Chen, writing several years later (1976), assert that Rules had become a tool of the House leadership. They say Rules was frequently used by the Speaker to ease the way of legislation favored by the majority leadership. However, they also quote (Matsunaga and Chen 1976, 11) two influential Rules members of past years, "Tip" O'Neill and B. F. Sisk (D-CA), to the effect that Rules members felt compelled from time to time to act independently for the same reasons the BFUAC would act independently—on behalf of their constituencies.

What does the agency of the Rules Committee have to do with policy making by the BFUAC in the 1980s?

If the Rules Committee acted as the cat's paw for the Speaker and the majority leadership during the 1980s, then it could have forced the BFUAC—or any other committee, for that matter—to report out legislation calculated to pass muster by the Speaker and other highly placed Democrats. A BFUAC that acted in accordance with the wishes of the Rules Committee could not have been acting independently; it would be acting as an agent of the majority party. On the other hand, if Rules acted independently, as an agent of interests outside the House, its rulemaking activity would have simply been another bargaining point within the general give and take among independent committees.

The Rules Committee of the 1980s is not examined here in detail. But recent research by Stanley Bach and Steven S. Smith (1988) presents evidence that seems relevant to the influence of Rules over legislation emerging from the BFUAC and other committees.

The House reforms of the 1970s opened up debate on the floor, thereby increasing the chance that bills would be amended on the floor during debate. This was not a happy innovation from the perspective of the committees who wanted to see their bills passed with as little change as possible. It meant that committee members and leaders could not control the course of the debate, as they had when debate was less open. There was some worry in the late 1970s that committees would eventually lose the ability to get the bills they sponsored through the House intact. But the Rules Committee came to their rescue.

The Rules Committee had always been able to create very restrictive rules for debate regarding legislation it reported to the floor. Restrictive rules could severely restrict time for and participation in floor debate. The ability to set such rules was a powerful tool because every bill had to have a rule. Before the 1970s, restrictive rules were the exception. But as the number of floor amendments began to increase, so did the number of restrictive rules on legislation passed from Rules to the floor.

This second innovation effectively canceled the effect of the first. Leaders of other committees began to seek and began to get from the Rules Committee restrictive rules that limited debate and amendment. In effect, restrictive rules handed control of debate on the floor back over to the committees that sent them there.

If Bach and Smith are correct in their assessment of the effect of restrictive rules, then it is unlikely that the Rules Committee would have interfered regularly on behalf of the Democratic party leadership with legislation sent to it by the BFUAC or by any other committee. The move toward more restrictive rules was to reinforce the independence of the other standing committees, although that may not have been an intended consequence. Chapter 6 provides some verification of the effect of restrictive rule making by the Rules Committee by explaining the extraordinary rule made for the combined housing-International Monetary Fund bill in 1983.

BFUAC Republicans appear to have been more unified in terms of support for party positions on the floor than were BFUAC Democrats. BFUAC Republicans were significantly less supportive of the conservative coalition for two years running (1983 and 1984) and were significantly less supportive of President Reagan in 1984 than were other Republicans. But during most of the decade of the 1980s, BFUAC Republicans supported partisan positions on issues on the floor fairly predictably.

This finding leads to the speculation that the BFUAC may have been polarized. If the Democratic contingent were more liberal (even more Democratic) than their House colleagues, the BFUAC Republicans seemed to have been at least as Republican and conservative as their House colleagues. Second, if this were so, there must have been contention within the committee when it debated housing policy, with BFUAC Republicans feeling the obligation to represent their party's position in committee and BFUAC Democrats seeking to man the ramparts against raids by the House and the Democratic leadership

on the federal housing edifice. The narratives in chapters 6 and 7 indicate that this was indeed the case.

Finally, something must be said about statistical significance. The tests reported in this chapter showed a general lack of statistically significant results. However, statistical significance is primarily used to make inferences about results from the sample tested to the overall population. Because these studies tested the population itself, not a sample, it may be safe to ignore the inference of lack of significance. The best approach to the interpretation of statistical significance here may be to apply significance as a kind of intensifier.

This chapter has produced evidence that the BFUAC differed from both the House and the two party caucuses as measured by the behavior of its members on the floor. This is a moderately good indication that the BFUAC was an independent committee during the 1980s.

CHAPTER FIVE

Lowi and His Critics: Committee Power within the Policy-making Arena

The previous three chapters are an empirical review of the BFUAC of the 1980s. The aim of that review is to help determine whether the committee acted as an independent agent during that period or whether it acted as an agent of House or of party caucus. Here in summary are the results of that review.

First, a review of BFUAC leadership changes back through the 1930s found evidence promoting the idea that BFUAC leadership, as opposed to its rank-and-file membership, has been chosen in a manner inconsistent with committee independence.

Second, a close study of membership in the committee changes during the 1980s confirmed that the property rights of BFUAC members toward their seats on the committee were generally respected by Congress. Only one instance of Congress's violating the property-right norm of a BFUAC member was discovered. That one instance aside, members left the BFUAC through two routes. Some members left the House altogether by retirement, defeat, or death. If they remained in the House, BFUAC members abandoned BFUAC service only for places on committees of equal or greater prestige. This activity was a confirmation of the idea that the BFUAC was an independent committee during the 1980s.

The notion that BFUAC committee members represent districts unique enough to send to Congress members who would seek out seats on the BFUAC

was tested. Confirmation of that hypothesis would support the thesis that the BFUAC was an independent during the 1980s. An examination of the socioeconomic characteristics of the districts held by BFUAC members furnished evidence that both supported and contradicted the idea of committee independence. The evidence does suggest, however, that an increase in financial, real estate, and construction activity in a member's district seems to increase the likelihood of that member's finding a place on the BFUAC during the 1980s. But the relative degree of urbanness and poverty of a district, contrary to theoretical indications, seemed not to increase the likelihood of its representative sitting on the BFUAC.

In short, the evidence unearthed in chapters 2 and 3 in the main confirmed BFUAC's independence during the period studied, although contrary indications were also produced.

In chapter 4, components of BFUAC's ideology and partisanship were measured to see whether the BFUAC differed from Congress along those two dimensions. In line with the thesis of committee independence, it was hypothesized that certain significant differences did exist. The BFUAC seems to have contained an Eastern bias during the early years of the 1980s, but this bias began to right itself toward the end of the decade. Using voting scores developed by researchers at Congressional Quarterly, Inc. and ratings published by interest groups, a great deal of ambiguity is found concerning representativeness and partisanship on the BFUAC.

The body of evidence produced here so far points to the conclusion that the BFUAC was probably an independent agent during the 1980s, although the evidence is admittedly not overwhelming. These results should not be altogether

unexpected. Although agency scholars usually prefer one notion of committee agency over the other two, they often conclude discussions of their findings in regard to committee agency by asserting ambiguity. For example, see Cox and McCubbins (1993), who admit that what appears to them to be evidence of committees as agents of parties could be interpreted just as well to support the theory of independent committees. Evidence may support one idea of committee agency over the other two, but most legislative committee scholars seem to agree that the committee arrangements of Congress are too messy for one explanation of the uses of committee powers to exclude the possibility that the other two.

Another method of determining the validity of the thesis must now be considered, and this necessitates passage from the principal-agent frame to the policy-process frame. To continue the forest-tree analogy introduced at the outset of this study, a single tree has been inspected. This chapter and the two following it proceed with an exploration of the tree's relation to the forest.

Lowian Theory, Policy Making, and Legislative Committees

Paul A. Sabatier points out that political scientists have been traditionally occupied "with either a single type of institution or with `iron triangles' at a single level of government" (Sabatier 1991b, 147). But a growing number of scholars has demonstrated that this singular focus does not adequately explain the uses of power in the making of public policy. A wide range of studies supports this conclusion, including examinations of fiscal federalism (Michael Reagan [1972]1981), federal and state laws within a certain policy area (James Lester and Ann Bowman 1989), agenda setting (Kingdon 1984), implementation (L. J. Sharpe 1985), and other topics.

It is not necessary to abandon the traditional focus in order to share the opinion of Sabatier and others that "the development and execution of domestic policy in the United States...involves numerous agencies and interest groups at all levels of government" (Sabatier 1991b, 148). This is simply a solid restatement of the pluralist theory. But it may be just as well to turn the empirical telescope around and—still assuming that committees are powerful—to examine committees as one out of several groups of actors and institutions within the policy-making arena. A search of the policy-making forest, instead a minute inspection of one committee-tree, may suggest an explanation of the ambivalent findings of committee agency seen here and elsewhere.

A body of work on public policy making that has had a great impact on scholarship over the last two or three decades is that of Theodore Lowi and his followers. Applying Lowian explanations to the question of committee independence may move us toward a more thorough, general, and satisfactory explanation of BFUAC agency and the use of committee power.

The assumption driving Lowi's theory of policy making is that "*policies determine politics*" (Lowi 1972, 299, original emphasis), not the other way around. Lowi holds that the ability of the individual player or institution—in this case, a legislative committee—to mold public policy is fixed by the nature of the policy itself. Lowi's approach has been called "the policy content approach" (T. Alexander Smith 1982).

The nexus between Lowi's theory and the idea of committee independence is that different policy types are debated within different arenas. The more players influenced by the policy, the larger the arena, and more powerful players than legislative committees enter the policy-making arena to

debate some policy sets. When these more powerful players are present, according to Lowi, then the role of the committee in actually making policy and then making it stick is diluted. In other words, committees cede their autonomy to other policy makers on some issues.

Although Lowi has fine-tuned his theory over the years and has modified his policy typology slightly, the basic form of his theory of policy making has not changed. Neither has he abandoned his basic assumption about politics' following policy.

Lowi originally (1964) developed a typology of three to describe policies—distributive policies, regulatory policies, and redistributive policies. To these basic three he later (1972) added a fourth, constituent policies. Constituency policies, however, are left aside here; in Lowi's own words they are "a step apart from the other three categories because [they serve] the other three types of policies" [Theodore Lowi and Benjamin Ginsberg 1993, 664].)

Lowian theory supports the notion that policies may be substantially crafted either within the narrow area of the committee room (distributive policies), within the broader context of the floor of the legislature (regulatory policies), or within a much wider setting in which the executive and the leadership of Congress play the major role (redistributive policies).

Conflict among policy actors over distributive policies is very limited, and it is usually easily resolved at the committee level. Conflict is low because distributive policies are seen as winning propositions by everyone involved. Representatives in committees are able to present constituents with subsidies, grants, contracts, licenses, or outright cash awards by way of promoting federal policies. The mostly happy duty of ladling out federal largess then falls to the

executive departments of the government. As a result, individuals or individual enterprises realize jobs, profits, or other tangible rewards. No entity perceives itself to be the loser.

Since the primary beneficiaries of distributive policies are individuals, or single firms or corporations, no whole group or class is perceived to have a stake in the outcome of distributive activity. For this reason, committee members and other concerned individuals and institutional representatives may work out whatever policy compromises have to be made almost privately, within committee chambers. Once the policy, in the form of a bill, moves from committee to the floor, there is little debate. The bill's sponsors are rarely challenged on the floor concerning even the most important elements of the legislation. The bill is usually accepted with few or no important amendments by the full House.

Examples of distributional policies usually fit the image of congressional "porkbarrel" activities. Besides the support of traditional public works such as dams and highways, distributional policies may also include grants to improve land productivity; money for certain kinds of education, especially agricultural education and research to aid defense; public development of mineral resources; aid for developing new fuels; defense contracts; mail contracts; or land and cash to develop facets of transportation, such as rail transportation.

The notion of House committees as independent agents fits well within Lowi's description of distributive politics. Individual members seek seats on those committees from which they can best aim federal resources to individual targets within their own districts. Committees are able to act as primary agents for federal distributive policies because larger forces are not concerned with

distributive issues. Distributive issues concern only a few members at a time. Committee members expect support from colleagues on the floor concerning these issues, while they themselves support on the floor policies promoted by members of other committees. Distributive politics may thus be described as logrolling.

Lowi's second policy type consists of regulatory policies. Regulatory issues are usually national, not local, in scope, and the impact of regulatory policies is felt by a broader belt of groups and individuals. When regulatory policies are considered, the vortex of the policy conflict deepens and draws more powerful players into the whirl of policy making. The individual committee begins to lose its tight control over both policy and conflicts arising from the policy-making process.

Bills containing regulatory policies rarely go unchallenged on the floor of the legislature because regulatory coercion affects groups, not individuals and singular corporations. Affected groups are likely to disseminate their desires regarding the proposed policy throughout Congress, thereby insuring a lively floor debate. Such debate on regulatory policies raises the possibility of amendments' being raised and passed over the objections of those defending the original bill—the bill's sponsors and committee members who have written it.

The process of the whole legislature, instead of just legislative committees, settling conflicts over regulatory policies still fits well with the notion of committees as agents of the House. Committees must debate and vote on regulatory policies, just as they must complete action on distributive policies. But when regulatory conflicts arise in committee, the committee cannot keep the debate confined because of the nature of regulatory policy, according to Lowi.

Although regulatory policies may indeed influence committee members' constituencies, many other districts may be concerned as well. For this reason, failures to report important regulatory bills out of committee and onto the floor of the House are met with general disapproval. Most likely, debate spills out of the committee room and onto the floor of the House, where regulatory policy issues are ultimately settled.

The likelihood that regulatory policies are settled on the floor of the House does not mean that regulatory policies are not seriously debated in committee. Bills must be debated in committee, given the normal legislative process of the House. And it does not mean that committee power is lost. Rather, committee power is amalgamated with that of other concerned groups, and becomes more generalized.

Another way of regarding committee power in regulatory debate is that it is submerged under the wider authority of the House. The committee may be said, in regulatory policy making, to work as an agent of a House. Policy controversies in committee become reflections of the policy controversies that will arise on the floor. (In the case of distribution policies, the concerns over the policies existed almost wholly within committees.)

There are many examples of regulatory policies. They may entail control of uniform quality of products, such as automobiles. They may set standards for the advertising of over-the-counter drugs. They may govern rates charged by producers of energy. They may police access to providing various broadcasting media. Or they may alter antitrust laws .

Redistributive policies stimulate conflicts more broad and more general, according to Lowi, than either of the other two policy. The vortex of

redistributive policy is like a gigantic waterspout compared to the smaller whirlpools caused by regulatory policies and the minor ripples made by distributive policies. Distributive policies attract national, class, and party attention.

Redistributive policy debate cannot be confined to just the floor of the legislature—it certainly cannot be held in committee—because redistributive policies generate disputes among whole classes—"peak associations." These large groups perceive gain for, or loss by, their own members with the enactment of redistributive legislation. Redistributive issues may set the poor against the middle class, the rich against the others, black against white, male against female, or one ideology against another. As a result, debates over these issues tend to become ideological and partisan in nature.

According to Lowi, legislative committees have little or no effect on the debate and eventual resolution of redistributive conflicts because the contest is so general. Only the leadership elite—the President and his advisers, leaders of affected groups, and the congressional leadership—are able to influence the eventual outcome of the debate. Although debate in the legislature itself, and even in the committee room, may be hot, the issue is eventually resolved only at the highest levels.

In Lowi's latest refinement of his policy typology (Lowi and Ginsberg 1993), redistributive issues are included in one of five categories of activities.

First, the government may alter the quantity or distribution of money by changing tax rates or tax types. Raising taxes for wealthy individuals therefore redistributes the nation's wealth away from them and toward the poorer classes. Reducing taxes on capital gains, on the other hand, may have the opposite affect.

Second, the government may use deficit spending to pump money into the economy in the classic Keynesian attempt to counter the evil effects of a downturn in the business cycle.

Third, the government may manipulate interest rates, the supply of money, and other monetary conditions to affect demand in investment and consumption. Monetary policy is made by the Federal Reserve Board and is at least in theory overseen by the BFUAC.

Fourth, the government may spread the risk created by various social conditions, such as disease or the conditions of poverty or of old age, through the economy through welfare policies and the use of social insurance.

And fifth, the government may encourage private investment by itself sharing part of the risk of certain activities. Lowi cites mortgage insurance and loan guarantees as examples of this kind of redistributive activity (Lowi and Ginsberg 1993, 654).

Lowi and His Critics

Lowian theory has served as the organizing principle of several works on the behavior of both Congress (e.g. Ripley and Franklin 1984) and the bureaucracy (e.g. Kenneth J. Meier 1987), but it has not escaped criticism.

According to Sabatier, Lowi's formulation has been attacked for "difficulties in applying the typology to particular policy decisions" (Sabatier 1991b, 149). Sabatier claims these difficulties may be abated by altering Lowi's approach to policy making in two ways. The first remedy is to focus on the distribution of costs and benefits across policy categories (Peter May 1986). The second is to acknowledge that a policy in the form of legislation may contain

different policy types; different political behavior would then flow from different parts of the same bill (R. Allen Hays 1990).

But the more serious objection to Lowi is that his theory creates "ambiguities in the precise causal process by which behavioral differences are associated with policy types" (Sabatier 1991b, 149). Lowi asserts that the coercion implicit with any policy, bill, or law establishes the contours of the kind of politics that will be acted out in regard to the policy, bill, or law. Once the nature of policy is known, what follows is predictable.

If this is what Lowi means when he says policies determine politics—and that is the assumption here, then Lowi has presented us with an impasse. Hypotheses derived from his theory are not falsifiable. Lowi's intention for his work was that hypotheses be drawn and tested from his theory (Lowi 1972). But this is clearly not possible when it is understood that once a policy is placed within the Lowian typology, policy making assumes a sort of Marxian inevitability; all policy institutions and actors automatically assume predicted roles. Indeed, Lowian policy theory moves beyond the bounds of empirical theory and method altogether and assumes the aspect of a law of politics.

For our study, as well, an acceptance of Lowi's scheme dooms any meaningful discussion around the importance of the BFUAC's role in housing policy, because housing by his definition would be a redistributional policy. As such, it would inevitably be decided within the government among the lofty councils of the executive, peak associations, and congressional leadership. The BFUAC would assume a secondary or tertiary, relegated to introducing housing legislation to the floor. In the Lowian scheme, discussing committee power in the

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context of housing policy is futile because the power of committee in making housing policy is by definition limited.

Lowi's theory of policy making remains attractive because it provides a set of convenient benchmarks. But its major flaw—its internal inevitability—is too great to permit its use in more than textbook descriptions of public policy.

An intuitively more appealing, and certainly more flexible, scheme is that offered by T. Alexander Smith (1982). Smith attempts to escape the theoretical and methodological problems presented by Lowi by turning Lowi's assumption—that politics flow from policies—on its head. Drawing on the work of Schutz and Lachmann, Smith sees the policy process as the result of indeterminate relationships among individual policy actors, an indeterminacy that is mirrored within the process itself.

An indeterminate-policy world may seem chaotic. But even chaos, after a while, may assume a certain routine to the eye of the observer and may be reduced to typical elements. Smith is able to draw from the maze of policy behavior four courses of typical policy-making activities, based on four typical motives that propel policy actors through the course.

The first motive for making policy is "private satisfaction," which legislators may seek to achieve through certain policies. Institutional activity is low in policy making based on this motive; appeals are directed toward, and conflicts resolved at, the committee level. Conflict is reasonably low because there is little competition among groups for the government patronage in question. Agreement among interested parties is widespread, and issues often go uncontested.

These are distributive policies, according to Smith. But Smith's type of distributional policies may include both Lowi's distributive policies and Lowi's regulatory policies. Smith's definition of distributional policies is much like Lowi's. According to Smith, however, regulatory policy that is uncontested is perceived by the bureaucrat as nothing more than an enlargement of his own resources, while the regulated group plainly perceives no loss through the policy. So Lowi's regulatory policies, when made for purposes of private satisfaction, can also be classed in Smith's scheme as distributional policies.

Smith implies that housing policy may take this form. For example, other members may decide to "give" BFUAC members a certain number of, say, housing units for the poor in order to "get" something in return—support for their own "private" policies—from BFUAC members.

The second motive for policy making, according to Smith, is to maintain support for or to stymie a genre of socioeconomic life (Smith 1982). Such activity resolves itself into "sectoral group conflicts" (Smith 1982), which manifest themselves within the legislature. Party-line votes are frequent. Interest groups and their supporters in the legislature, as well as members of the executive bureaucracy, are typically involved with the decision-making process. Policies decided through these sectoral group conflicts are "sectorally fragmented" policies.

Housing policies may take this form. For example, the real-estate industry may desire changes in FHA policies that would expand the middle-class housing market and help realtors weather an economic downturn. They may be supported by the construction industry, but opposed by bankers, who traditionally take a more conservative stance toward government manipulation

of real-estate markets. A conflict like this one among forces with national followings would bring the debate onto the floor of the House.

The third motivation for policy making, according to Smith, is moral purpose. Legislators may be compelled by some set of values to pursue certain policies. Policies pursued by advocates with a moral purpose in mind are much more disruptive for the legislature than are sectorally fragmented policies. These "emotive symbolic" (Smith 1982) issues incite broad conflict and dilute the ability of legislative leadership to control the debate. Often, lesser legislative lights move to the forefront, supported by boisterous interest groups.

Emotive symbolic issues—abortion, prayer in schools, the death penalty, and the like—are icons of what people think society "ought" to be like. Emotive-symbolic conflicts find their roots outside the legislature. Although emotive symbolic conflicts are eventually settled within the legislature, this settlement is achieved, only through the most unorthodox means.

Housing policy is unlikely to take this form, unless the premises of the debate somehow metamorphose from the empirical to the symbolic. Although it is possible for housing issues to take this form—decent housing as a symbol of the nation's commitment to denature racial prejudice, for example—it is unlikely to occur.

Finally, policy actors whose motivation is to "defend or cripple a given class interest" (Smith 1982) express their desires within redistributive issues, according to Smith. Redistributive issues excite the interest of a much broader public than do sectorally fragmented policies—in this way they are similar to emotive-symbolic issues—but the conflict over redistributive policies is more structured and more predictable than those of emotive symbolic issues. Since

redistributive conflicts are limited to class relationships, the same "body of leaders" will continue to represent "the major disputants." This boils down to leadership in redistributive debates by the executive (the President) and his top aides, leaders of peak associations, and congressional leadership. Lower-ranking administrators and bureaucrats are apparently not involved as they may be in distributive or sectorally fragmented policy making.

Housing policy may take this form. The debates concerning the foundations of current federal housing policy that took place during the 1930s are certainly an example of redistributive policy making. President Franklin Roosevelt made housing policy a part of his plan to pull the nation out of the mire of Depression and set it back up on a firmer foundation, and Congress followed his direction. It is unlikely that Congress could have overcome the banking industry's objections to federal policies designed to help the middle class, for example, without President Roosevelt's leadership.

It is tempting to compare Lowi's typology to Smith's—indeed a rough correspondence exits. However, the typologies are fundamentally different, because they spring from theories that organize the world in mutually exclusive ways. Lowi's typology is prescriptive; once a policy is tagged as one Lowian type or the other, its politics is predetermined. In the case of housing policy, it inevitably falls within the redistributive category (Hays 1990), and its politics are set.

Smith's typology, on the other hand, is descriptive. Policy debate may move from one setting to another. Debate over housing policy may move from the relatively untroubled setting of the committee chamber—distributive policy—to the highest reaches of the executive—redistributive policy—and back

again. In fact, housing policy could take the form of one of at least three of Smith's four types.

Smith and Lowi agree that the BFUAC could only be effective as the primary maker of federal housing policy if housing policy were distributional in nature. But Lowi holds that it is impossible for the BFUAC to influence housing policy at the committee level—that is, to assert its independence of floor and party concerns—because housing policy is redistributive policy. Smith, on the other hand, holds that the BFUAC may indeed play a primary role when housing policy is regarded as a more or less private matter. (When it is not so regarded, it moves into one of Smith's other policy types, and the BFUAC's housing policy role is diminished.)

The task remaining for this dissertation is to discover whether Lowi or Smith is correct. If Lowi is correct, BFUAC influence over fashioning federal housing legislation should be found to have been very limited in the 1980s. Housing policy, fit within Lowi's theoretical frame, can be settled only at the highest levels of government. If this is so, then the BFUAC was not independent during the decade of the 1980s. It acted as an agent of the House, or more likely of the party caucus, and took its cues regarding housing policy from party leaders. If this is what occurred, the independence thesis is not confirmed.

If Smith is correct, on the other hand, housing policy in the 1980s may at times have been made in the committee room or it may at other times have been made at the highest levels. To confirm Smith's thesis, it simply must be found that housing policy is not always redistributive in nature, as Lowi says it always must be. To confirm the thesis of this paper, it is necessary to find that BFUAC was a major influence on federal housing policy during the 1980s. Since just two

housing bills were able to make their way through Congress during the period studied, two questions are asked by way of confirming the thesis of committee independence.

First, did BFUAC act as an agent of outside interests during the debate over the 1983 housing bill?

Second, did BFUAC act as an agent of outside interests during the debate over the 1990 housing bill?

These questions are to be answered through discussion and analysis of the case histories of the housing legislation in 1983 and in 1990. It is expected, given the thesis of this paper, that both housing bills will be found to have been of Smith's distributive-policy type, not of Lowi's redistributive policy type. In both cases, specific benchmarks that show them to be cases of the distributive policy type are sought.

To confirm the thesis, both cases should be marked by a relatively low level of conflict. Neither the President nor his advisers, including the secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), should take much part in molding either the housing act of 1983 or the housing act of 1990. In both cases, moreover, the House floor itself should remain relatively quiescent during debate over the bills; it should make few or no changes to the housing bills presented to it by the BFUAC. By the same token, national groups concerned with federal housing policy should remain passive. In fact, lively debate over housing policy should be relegated to BFUAC committee chambers, and the final bill should be largely a product of that limited debate.

The Use of Case Histories: A Defense

Case studies offer several benefits that may not be realized through more rigorous empirical methods. The most significant benefit is that case histories allow scholars to examine particular events in depth and though many sources. However, since this dissertation passes from the use of other empirical methods to the use of case studies, the use of the latter in the last two chapters probably requires some defense.

Case studies are qualitative, rather than quantitative, methods of revealing information. They are not without their detractors. Single case studies have been disparaged for "lacking control" and therefore being of little "scientific value" (Donald T. Campbell and Julian C. Stanley 1963). (This criticism apparently does not extend to comparative case studies—studies of two or more cases, such as the ones below.) Case studies are nevertheless an empirical method and have been used successfully by political scientists and other scholars as the methods of choice in many works, major and minor.

Graham T. Allison (1971), for example, uses a case study of the Cuban missile crisis to explain the decision-making processes in both Soviet and American government circles during October 1963. His use of three different models to interpret the same event foreshadows in a way the work done here.

Robert A. Dahl's (1961) classic study of one city—New Haven—is a case study examining local decision-making processes. Dahl's work has been emulated by others; Clarence N. Stone's (1989) more recent study of Atlanta is a case in point. Both Dahl and Stone contributed insights into the making of local political decisions that may not, or could not, have been made using other

methods. Dahl's framework was used by later researchers as a benchmark against which subsequent case studies are measured.

Case studies such as Dahl's allow for the discovery of complex interactions that may not be observed through the kind of quantitative studies completed in the first part of this dissertation. And comparative case studies like those that follow in chapters 6 and 7—as distinguished from single-case studies used by Dahl and criticized by Campbell and Stanley—supply us with opportunities to discover similarities and differences between or among cases. Theory may be tested, or theoretical models may be developed from the results. In our case, two theories are tested and compared and hypotheses confirmed or denied.

It should also be noted that both Lowi (1972) and Smith (1982) use case studies from which to develop the theories we are scrutinizing here. So the involvement of the case-study method in policy research is both generally and specifically relevant to this study.

The principal source of information for the next two chapters is the *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, a publication of Congressional Quarterly, Inc. *CQWR* provides a running account of policy battles in Washington and allows the researcher to follow the history of bills from the time they are first introduced into committee until their final disposition. But this study also includes information taken from various other CQ publications. These may include the *Congressional Quarterly* (*CQ*) itself and the *Congressional Roll Call* (*CRC*). Newspaper sources will include accounts of, stories about, and interviews with participants in the conflict over the making of federal housing policy in 1983 and in 1990. Such stories were published in *The New York Times*,

The Chicago Tribune, The Atlanta Journal, and other national and regional newspapers that cover daily events in Washington.

CHAPTER SIX

The Housing Bill of 1983: Distributive or Redistributive?

The question addressed in this chapter is whether the BFUAC acted independently during the debate over the housing bill of 1983. The answer will come through inference. If the BFUAC, its members and its leaders, were able play a major role in shaping housing policy through the 1983 legislation, then it is assumed that the BFUAC was an independent agent, that is, an agent of interests outside the House. It is also assumed that housing policy is regarded as distributive, not redistributive, by members of Congress. If this is true, then Lowi's notions concerning the politics following policy fail muster in this case, and Smith's notions are confirmed.

If, on the other hand, the making of the housing bill of 1983 is found to have slipped out of the BFUAC's grasp and into the palms of the chamber or the House party caucuses, then the BFUAC must have taken a subordinate role in making housing policy. This would mean that the BFUAC did not act independently in 1983, but instead acted as an agent of House or party. And if it is shown that the housing debate of 1983 spun out of the control of the BFUAC and its leaders and spilled out into wider arenas, then housing policy must have been regarded by policy makers as concerning a wider range of interests than those represented by the BFUAC alone. If this is shown to be true, then Lowi is confirmed, at least in this one instance, although Smith's theoretical frame may still be applied.

The benchmarks of distributional policy making are vital to this discussion and will be referred to constantly within the text of the narrative of this chapter. They are central to the analysis at the conclusion of this chapter as well.

First, debate—or at least lively debate—of housing issues in 1983 must have remained somewhat confined. Most housing issues should have been settled in committee, and any debate outside committee should fit the parameters set for it by the committee and its leaders.

Second, there should be little involvement in the housing debate on the part of the President and his advisers. The executive is inevitably involved in legislative debate regarding federal policy through the relations of its bureaucratic agencies with the standing committees that oversee their activities. But this relationship is expected within the routine circuit of activities by the various "subgovernments." In the case presented here, involvement at the committee level by officials representing HUD and various housing-connected subagencies may be expected, but housing policy should not be a major focus of the President and his advisers. The secretary of HUD, for example, should not be expected to propose major changes in housing policy. The executive and his advisers become involved in policy when the interests of national constituencies are effected. That is, the executive is not likely to be drawn into distributional policy making, and it is not expected that he was in 1983.

Third, there should be little debate on the House floor regarding the housing bill, and few amendments should be added on the floor. Debate and amendments should be controlled by committee leadership and membership both in and out of the committee room. Restrictive rules regarding floor debate

may be applied by the Rules Committee at the behest of BFUAC leadership, as suggested in Chapter 4.

One implication of the notion of committee independence begs clarification here. The theory of committee independence does not allow the BFUAC or any other standing committee to act as an agent of any other institution within the House. "Independence" means autonomy from forces within the parent chamber. But the possibility that the BFUAC may act as agent of another institution of the federal government is not ruled out. For the committee to remain "independent" in the traditional sense, it is only necessary that the government institution as principal allow the independent House committee to act on its goal of re-election of membership and that debate on housing policy be confined within the parameters that otherwise determine distributional policy.

A final benchmark of distributive policy making is that national groups should remain inactive. They should view the housing bill as a narrow, parochial piece of legislation only marginally effecting their constituents. High activity by peak associations marks the debate of redistributional, not distributional, policy. This does not rule out routine interest by even national groups in housing policy in 1983. But that interest should not flare to engage larger interests and cause the BFUAC to lose control of the debate.

In short, for the primary theses of this chapter to be confirmed, debate over housing policy within the House in 1983 should be controlled by the BFUAC. The floor and party caucuses should at no point interfere. A close case study of the housing bill of 1983 should reveal whether these things are so.

Federal Housing in the Early 1980s

President Reagan was not kind to the federal housing establishment. He was not predisposed to be. The first two federal budgets he signed into law, those for fiscal years (FY) 1982 and 1983, began a deliberate attempt by his administration to decimate federal social programs, housing among them. The Reagan era downsizing was carried along with the concurrence of a budget-conscious Congress.

(Federal fiscal years in the 1980s began on the first day of October and ended on the last day of September of the following year. The fiscal calendar is designed to fit the federal fiscal process. Fiscal years are not to be confused with calendar years.)

Samuel R. Pierce, who was to be secretary of Housing and Urban Development throughout Reagan's two terms in office, said during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Banking committee that although he and Reagan planned to cut HUD's authorizations, they certainly did not mean to turn their backs on the poor (*CQWR* 17 January 1981).

The final housing budget signed by President Carter in late 1980 included $31.2 billion in long-term budget authority to support public-assisted housing programs for low- and moderate-income families. (Carter had originally requested another $2 billion.) The $31.2 billion included nearly $1.5 billion in new contract authority for the Section 8 rent-subsidy program. The remainder was to fund other programs sponsored by the federal government under Title II of the federal housing act. The housing reauthorization passed in 1980 also included $11.8 billion for the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG), a Title I program. CDBG would be supported with $4.11 billion the

final fiscal year of the reauthorization, 1983. The other major Title I program, the Urban Development Action Grant fund, was allotted $675 million for the three fiscal years. The 1980 housing bill also reauthorized the Title III mortgage-guarantee program run by the FHA, the housing planning assistance grant (Title IV) program for state and local governments, and the Title V rural housing mortgage-guarantee program run by the Farmers Home Agency (FmHA).

President Carter's attitude toward the federal housing establishment seems very generous compared to that of the Reagan Administration and the Congress of the 1980s. Both he and the Democratic Congress took an incremental approach to housing during the late 1970s; they added money to federal housing programs only very conservatively. President Carter's major initiative was the addition of Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG) to community development programs. The UDAG program was designed to encourage private investment in commercial or industrial projects in financially ailing urban areas. Arguments arose in Congress over where UDAG money was to be sent. The original formula supported by Carter sent many UDAG dollars to old cities in the Midwest and East, fewer to newer cities of the Sunbelt.

In 1979, Congress increased authorization for UDAG from $400 million to $7675 million for FY 1980. Meanwhile, Carter and Congress maintained and sometimes incrementally cut financial support for the federal housing establishment. For example, Congress authorized contract authority for low-income housing assistance in FY 1980 of only an additional 240 thousand units under the Section 8 rent subsidy program. This was a decrease from 380 thousand units authorized for FY 1979 (*CQWR* 12 January 1980).

There was no specific housing authorization bill in 1981, President Reagan's first year in office. Appropriation for programs authorized earlier were funded through the budget reconciliation act passed by Congress in August of that year. Reagan accepted the final bill to fund all HUD programs at about $23.5 billion, $18.08 billion of which was for subsidized housing. HUD programs were to be funded in FY 1982 with about 23 percent fewer dollars than Congress had given them in FY 1981.

It could be argued that Reagan's hostility to federal housing programs is an indicator of the national importance of housing issues in the 1980s, therefore marking them as redistributive in nature. To argue so would probably overestimate the President's animus toward housing. President Reagan was by the nature of his politics bound to oppose "big government," especially as it was defined through federal social policies. President Reagan's early housing budget reflected not so much his hostility to federal housing programs, but his antipathy to the entire federal establishment save the military.

The Housing Emergency of 1982

In his budget message to the second session of the Ninety-seventh Congress early in 1982, President Reagan proposed eliminating major low-income housing programs altogether and replacing them with a voucher system to help the poor pay their rent (*CQWR* 13 February 1982). The President suggested new housing outlays of only $7.67 billion, down from $8.55 billion for FY 1982, and new budget authority of just $684 million, down from $13.02 billion in FY 1982. HUD, according to the proposal, would recapture about $17.6 billion in spending authority from previous authorizations. These recaptures

would serve to prop up the current federal housing system until vouchers were phased in. The President wanted Section 8 rental assistance and new subsidized rental construction phased out altogether. He excepted from the phase-out, however, a block of 10 thousand new units to be constructed for elderly and handicapped tenants.

The President's proposal was a renewal of the decades-old Republican argument that no new dwelling stock was required to house the poor, that the poor needed an income supplement to help them afford existing housing traded on the commercial housing market instead of housing provided for them by the government. In April 1982, the President's blue-ribbon Commission on Housing seconded his housing motion. President Reagan had impaneled the commission in 1982; its job was to look into the federal housing structure and the policies that maintained it and to suggest reforms.

Suggestions from the commission's interim report—the report was issued in November 1982 (*CQWR* 7 November 1981)—had been incorporated into Reagan's budget proposals for FY 1983. Its final report, issued in April 1982, suggested the provision of a new voucher system for housing and the elimination of federal rent controls on housing then controlled by local housing authorities. According to the commission, rent controls depressed housing starts and actually drove the price of housing up.

As it turned out, the more sensational congressional housing battles of 1982 and 1983 were pitched around the issues embodied in proposed emergency housing legislation introduced in both houses of Congress. The two-year-long running fight over emergency housing diverted the question from one of housing for the poor to housing for the middle class.

Emergency housing activity in Congress was sparked by a depression in the housing industry. By April 1982, the industry had been in a slump for more than a year. Middle-class families were being forced out of the market as the stakes for purchasing a home grew higher. Most of the traditional measures used to gauge the health of the housing industry were down: housing starts; sales of new, single-family houses; and the rate of sale for existing units. Construction-trade unemployment stood at 17.9 percent in March 1982, double the national rate of unemployment. Most significantly for potential middle-class home buyers, the interest rate during the same month stood at 17.5 percent, a rate so high, according to the Federal Home Loan Bank, that 85 percent of all American families were priced out of the market (*CQWR* 17 April 1982).

Congress chose to meet this middle-class housing crisis through a series of schemes whose main thrust was to subsidize the mortgages of middle-income families. This action, it was assumed, would increase the numbers of housing units purchased and revive both the real-estate market and the construction industry. This revival was to be accomplished by having the government absorb as much as four percentage points of mortgages costing 11 percent or more.

Senators Jake Garn (R-UT) and Richard G. Lugar (R-IN) introduced in the Senate an emergency housing measure that would have cost the federal government about $1 billion a year over five years, beginning in FY 1983. Introduced in March 1982, the Garn-Lugar bill (S 2226) would have subsidized only purchases of new homes. They withdrew it from committee consideration in the face of Democratic amendments designed to help the real-estate industry by broadening the program to include the sales of older homes (*CQWR* 11 April

1982). The pair later reintroduced the measure into committee upon the Democrats' promise not to try to amend it heavily.

A similar House bill (HR 5834) sponsored by Representatives AuCoin (D-OR) and Jerry Patterson (D-CA) of the BFUAC was introduced about the same time. Their proposal promoted a very similar method of emergency housing finance, but limited the service to less costly houses purchased by families earning more modest incomes (*CQWR* 11 April 1982).

Two key members, Chairman St Germain of Rhode Island and Representative Gonzalez of Texas, chairman of the BFUAC's housing subcommittee, decided that any emergency housing legislation should be integrated into new federal housing-authorizing legislation. Gonzalez produced an ambitious housing bill (HR 6296) that embellished Section 235 of the Housing Act to help subsidize mortgages for qualified low- and moderate-income home buyers, at a cost of about $1.1 billion for the next fiscal year. But the new legislation also contained provisions to reauthorize federal housing programs for $28 billion. Support for the Patterson-AuCoin scheme collapsed as members moved to back the Gonzalez proposal. It was marked up and passed by his subcommittee, almost intact, on 5 May 1982.

BFUAC leadership also proposed on 7 May another emergency housing measure, one apart from the emergency housing components of HR 6296. This bill, HR 6294, provided for a $2 billion emergency housing program for the remainder of 1982. Chairman St Germain described HR 6294 as a jobs bill and said he hoped it would immediately revive employment among the construction trades. Since HR 6294 contained spending above levels agreed upon for FY 1982, Congress also had to appropriate additional funds to put the emergency

program in place. It was placed on a fast track by St Germain. On 11 May, only four days after its proposal, HR 6294 was hurried through the BFUAC, reached the floor, and was approved the same day that St Germain pushed HR 6296 through the BFUAC and sent it to the floor.

The next day, 12 May, the House passed HR 5922, a supplemental appropriations bill to fund the provisions of HR 6294. With its 1982 emergency housing program in place, the House, and BFUAC leadership, had to wait for the Senate to act (*CQWR* 15 May 1982). Meanwhile, it began a debate over Gonzalez' bill.

The Senate voted on 27 May for an emergency appropriations bill—its version of HR 5922—to fund its version of the emergency housing act. The House/Senate conference committee met on 5 June to hammer out differences. They eventually agreed to spend $3 billion on emergency housing aid. The committee paid for the move by rescizing $4.1 billion from earlier appropriations for assisted housing and $1.6 billion from rent supplement funds. A provision for waiving the stipulations of the 1982 Budget Act, which had set government spending limits, also had to be added.

Although the conference measure succeeded in both houses, it was promptly vetoed by President Reagan, who acted on threats made earlier by Budget Director David Stockman. The House failed to override the veto by 37 votes, 253 to 151 (*CQWR* 26 June 1982). The death of appropriations meant death for authorizations, so Congress's plan to flush the housing market with federal money was effectively dead, at least so far as the current fiscal year, 1982, was concerned. However, both houses still had regular housing authorizations in process.

As it turned out, neither house acted to reauthorize federal housing programs. Congress passed, and President Reagan signed, an appropriations bill (HR 6956) to re-fund HUD and other agencies, but no new money was included for the government's subsidized housing programs. Supplemental funds were used to keep those programs running at a reduced rate for FY 1983.

There were, in effect, two housing debates in Congress rather than one in 1982, although the two appear to have crossed each other at several points. One debate concerned the size of established housing programs. The other debate concerned emergency housing programs. The first appears to have been a low-level argument; the second was not.

The Reagan Administration's proposals for regular housing programs seem pro forma: cut the budget and replace subsidies with vouchers. Neither suggestion seems to have really been given much thought by Reagan or by Secretary Pierce, whose absence during the BFUAC's debates over housing had become notorious. Housing programs were to be cut just like everything else. The voucher idea had been trotted out periodically by Republicans in Congress and in the executive since the 1930s. President Reagan's commission rubber-stamped the voucher system for him in a fairly predictable manner.

The debate over regular housing authorizations in 1982 appears to have been controlled in the House by the BFUAC. Note that St Germain and Gonzalez squashed the notion of independent emergency housing legislation in the House and offered a regular authorization bill that emphasized elements of established programs they thought would meet the emergency. The elements of the committee's housing bill that did not contain emergency provisions were routine and unremarkable. No new programs, except for those mentioned, were added.

No pressure from "peak" groups was noted in the history of the 1982 housing engagement.

On the other hand, the middle-class—for that was its nature—housing "emergency" had sparked concern in Congress because the effects of the emergency were broad. It touched potential middle-class home owners, the construction industry, realtors, banks, and concerned federal, state, and local agencies. Relatively junior members proposed emergency housing legislation over the heads of committee leadership, which had to act to block the proposal. Both houses of Congress acted on emergency legislation for that fiscal year. The House bill, HR 6294, was given such special consideration that it began and ended its career in the House in just five days. Finally, Congress's emergency housing bill for 1982 was vetoed by the President. In the end, regular housing authorizations were lost in the brouhaha over emergency housing bills.

The fights for both emergency and regular housing legislation would be taken up again in 1983. The results could have surprised the observer, considering Congress's record of failing to run the presidential gauntlet with housing legislation in 1982.

The Housing Emergency of 1983

Gonzalez and St Germain's aim for 1983 was finally to get a housing authorization bill passed during the Reagan Administration. Their 1982 measure had died painfully and had taken a long time to expire. Perhaps its death should have been predicted, however. Congress's finite tolerance for and attention to housing policy had been expended in 1982 in partisan and intercameral wrangling over the emergency housing bill. That bill was passed, but it was

swiftly vetoed by the President, and the House failed to override the veto. Meanwhile, the actual housing authorization legislation had taken second billing and was eventually ignored to death. Refusal to compromise the differences in the amount of resources the Senate on the one hand and the House on the other had been willing to grant HUD—especially its subsidized housing programs—had effected a coup de grace.

President Reagan delivered another coup de main to the federal housing establishment in his budget message early in 1983. Reagan asked Congress to spend about $8 billion on subsidized housing for FY 1984. Just $515 million of that, however, was to be in the form of new budget authority. The remainder was to be recaptured from earlier years by canceling previously approved housing units or by using money deferred from FY 1982. The President wanted to end most traditional HUD construction programs, as both he and his blue ribbon housing panel had recommended in 1982, and to subsume them under a voucher program. Reagan left CDBG virtually untouched—he actually proposed a slightly increase from $3.46 to $3.5 billion—and recommended funding the FHA mortgage-assistance program at level commensurate with 1982 and 1983 (*CQWR* 5 February 1983).

HR 1: Housing Authorization in the House

Representative Gonzalez' housing authorization bill for FY 1984, HR 1, was introduced in the House in March 1983. Containing provisions to reauthorize all major elements of the current housing establishment, it included funding for all current subsidized housing programs. It was in fact a copy of

Gonzalez's 1982 proposal reprinted for FY 1983. The greatest difference was the funding level. Instead of more than $29 billion for housing, Gonzalez was willing to spend only about $24.6 billion and some change.

Gonzalez's bill was taken up by his BFUAC housing subcommittee on 20 April 1983. The group rejected one element contained in President Reagan's budget proposal out of hand. The President had suggested that CDBG funds could be freed of restrictions that bound them for the use of nonhousing projects. The President's proposal would have allowed state and local recipients of CDBG funds to siphon off community-development dollars into subsidizing housing for the poor. Representative Stewart McKinney attempted to make this change via amendment, but the amendment was defeated and dropped from the table (*CQWR* 23 April 1983). The subcommittee passed HR 1, still containing $24.6 billion for HUD, on to the full committee on 26 April.

Passage of HR 1 through the BFUAC itself took little time. A total of three hours was spent in marking it up, and it emerged little changed from the form in which it was introduced. CDBG was to receive $4.5 billion. The BFUAC committed nearly $13 billion dollars to subsidized housing for the poor, $9 billion dollars more than President Reagan had requested. FHA insurance was extended as well; the bill committed Congress to insure up to $45.9 billion in loans made to middle-class home owners. (The insurance committed the federal government to underwrite mortgage losses by banks; the figure is not an amount budgeted to be spent.)

HR 1 had an easy ride through the committee process. The only major amendments were presented by Representative McKinney. These amendments

were to CDBG, left committee-approved housing authority untouched, and were defeated anyway.

On 24 May, the House Appropriations Committee approved spending more than $16 billion on HUD programs in FY 1984. This was less than the BFUAC had voted to spend but more than $9 billion above the figure requested by President Reagan (*CQWR* 28 May 1983). The House passed the appropriations bill on 2 June with few amendments and little change to the housing component.

On 13 July, the House passed HR 1, the authorization legislation, with few substantive revisions in the language of the act. Representatives Steve Bartlett (R) of Texas and Wylie (R)of Ohio, both members of the BFUAC, offered three substantial amendments between them. All three amendments were defeated by recorded vote. Four minor amendments were adopted viva voce after little debate. Three of these four had been submitted by BFUAC members, two by BFUAC Democrats. Just one amendment accepted viva voce was offered by a non-BFUAC member, Representative Mario Biaggi (D-NY). It allowed elderly and disabled people living in federally funded housing to keep pets (*CQWR* 16 July 1983). But about $9 billion was lopped off of the roughly $25 billion the BFUAC had authorized for housing programs. This brought the cost of the authorized housing programs down to the level already approved by the Appropriations Committee.

Essentially, the BFUAC was able to control the debate of HR 1 on the floor of the House with little effort except for the compromise on appropriations. What are the implications of that compromise for the notion that the BFUAC was acting as an independent committee?

The reduction could be an argument against BFUAC independence. The Appropriations Committee acted to pare down the amount of money to be spent on housing authorized by the BFUAC. The amount voted by Appropriations for housing was a figure about halfway between President Reagan's request for housing authorizations and the BFUAC authorization. This is not an investigation of the Appropriations Committee in the 1980s, and it is not an investigation of the budget process, so this record does not reveal the details of the process through which Appropriations reached this compromise. But in terms of committee agency, it may be inferred that Appropriations was acting on the part of the majority leadership or of the floor itself. Appropriations, it could be argued, was instructed to interdict any federal program that House and party leaders thought would not pass presidential muster.

On the other hand, it could be argued that the BFUAC asked for more housing money than they knew the House would approve for a purpose. BFUAC members were conscious of the budget-cutting move in the House and of the President's animus toward social programs, but BFUAC members remained loyal to the constituencies that elected them. To prove that loyalty, they continued to add dollars to housing programs. This tactic would allow them to blame the House itself for reducing the housing budget or even lay the blame at the feet of another committee.

It must be remembered that the indicator of independence on trial here is that of the ability of the BFUAC to control the path of legislation. On that score, the BFUAC experienced few problems on the floor except for the reduction in program budget.

The passage of HR 1 is of at least minor historic note—it was the first housing bill approved by the House in two years. The BFUAC and its leadership must have been encouraged. But the question of whether any housing programs could escape President Reagan's veto still hung in the air. So did the smell of trouble.

On 21 June 1983, Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, Jr., (R-TN) had pulled the Senate mate to HR 1, S 1338, from the Senate floor. This occurred more than three weeks before the House passed HR 1 on 13 July. The Senate bill would have authorized more than $17 billion spent for housing in FY 1984.

The Senate's housing bill was jointly sponsored by Senator Garn of Utah and Senator John Tower (R) of Texas. Although neither senator was to exercise much influence over housing policy in the near future—Garn departed the Senate Banking committee and Tower was retiring from the Senate—they both retained at least a short-term interest in housing policy. Senator Tower was especially concerned that a housing bill be passed in 1983. He viewed the absence of new congressional housing policy as the "relinquishment by Congress of its right and duty to set policy regarding housing." (*CQWR* 25 June 1983).

Senator Baker, however, had apparently grown apprehensive over the strong opposition of Senator William L. Armstrong (R-CO) to the bill. Armstrong, a Republican and a member of the Senate Banking committee, had objected to the size of the housing authorization. He had called S 1338 a "budget-buster" when it was being debated in June and had threatened to offer scores of amendments to slow the progress of the bill when it got to the floor. Armstrong particularly objected to authorization for new rental housing construction and

the failure to target community-development grants and rural housing funds to low-income persons.

Senator Baker did not clearly state his reasons for withdrawing the bill from debate. He probably heard in Armstrong the voice of the administration's continued opposition to renewing the federal housing establishment, and he probably decided to withdraw the bill in the face of a certain presidential veto. Whatever his reasoning, by 24 September 1983 the Senate's housing bill was still in limbo.

A Policy Sausage: Housing and the International Monetary Fund

A housing bill was eventually passed in 1983, although the narrative of housing action in Congress, to this point, seems to foreshadow its defeat. The contention here is that there was a housing bill in 1983 because at that time housing was perceived to have been relatively narrow. Its narrow appeal probably doomed housing legislation in 1981 and again in 1982, although existing programs were re-funded from time to time during those two years. The BFUAC routinely exerted itself to push housing legislation through Congress, but those efforts were subsumed by greater issues.

In 1981, Congress, faced with the juggernaut of President Reagan's popularity, had more or less abandoned the authorization of expanded federal housing efforts. The housing debate, such as it was, had been muted by the debate over the budget reconciliation act. A similar situation had evolved in 1982. That year, the question of emergency housing relegated regular housing policy to a secondary position within the congressional policy-making arena.

Now, in 1983, another legislative "emergency" arose. This time, the BFUAC and its leadership were able to contrive a solution to the problem of getting any kind of social legislation past President Reagan's veto.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), was the creation of a cooperative agreement among 44 nations at the conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in 1944. It began functioning three years later. Backed by the United States, the IMF has been credited with keeping the financial markets of the free world running smoothly—to the extent that they *have* run smoothly.

The IMF establishes a quota, or contribution, for each member nation. (The original 44 members expanded to 180 in the 1980s.) A member's ability to draw from the fund is in proportion to its quota. Loans, or draws, granted to members are meant to help members overcome temporary balance-of-payments deficits. Each member is required to establish what are called "par values" for their national currency. A nation's par value is the value of that currency compared to the U.S. dollar, which was originally tied to the value of gold.

The system worked well for its first 25 years, but by the early 1970s the United States itself was building annual trade deficits. Foreign investors began exchanging U.S. dollars for U.S. gold, and the U.S. gold reserve dropped to about $10.1 billion by 1971, less than half of what it had been in 1949. Various moves to strengthen the dollar failed, and in 1976 finance ministers of IMF member nations sanctioned floating currencies; that is, they allowed exchange rates among member nations to rise and fall with the market.

The IMF probably could have survived the introduction of floating exchange rates with few problems. At the same time, However, the price of oil

on the world market began to rise and eventually quadrupled. Newly cash-flush, oil-producing nations such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait began depositing billions of dollars with international banks. Those banks were anxious to lend those billions, under the auspices of the IMF and the World Bank, to cash-poor but credit-worthy developing nations such as Brazil, Mexico, and Korea. Loans were made, often at ridiculously low rates—at or below 1 percent. By 1973, more than $500 billion dollars were owed by developing countries to the IMF.

As huge as these debts were, they were incurred for the most part by a small group of developing nations. If the world economy of the 1980s had remained predictable, no crisis would have occurred. But as it turned out, events conspired against the debtors and the IMF.

The U.S. Federal Reserve Board in 1981 tightened federal monetary policy. Money was restricted, interest rates rose, and so did the scheduled debt payments of developing nations, many of whose loans were based on variable interest rates. At the same time, prices for commodities exported by the debtors dropped. Venezuela and Mexico, for example, had depended on income from oil sales to keep up their debt payments. When the price of oil fell again, their ability to repay foreign loans withered. By the middle of calendar year 1982, the debt service on Argentina's debt totaled 177 percent of its total export earnings (*CQWR* 9 April 1983).

The troubles of the IMF and the debts of foreign nations appear to stand at a far remove from the BFUAC and federal housing policy. As it turned out, however, the concern of the Reagan Administration to resolve the IMF crisis was central to the ability of the BFUAC and its leadership to force a resolution to the two-year impasse in Congress over housing authorization.

Oversight of federal international finance policies had fallen under the purview of the BFUAC since the committee's creation. The international role of the BFUAC had naturally grown since the end of World War II and with the institution of the arrangements made between the United States and its trading partners under the auspices of IMF and the World Bank. The BFUAC had committed consideration of American international financial policy to its Subcommittee on International Trade, Investment, and Monetary Policy.

During the early 1980s, the international financial community through IMF began to consider reinforcing the fund in the face of huge—but still just potential—defaults by debtor nations. The Reagan Administration's financial advisers saw eye to eye with the management of large American banks that stood, in the main, to gain by the increase. The advisers favored the move, and Reagan took their advice. By late 1982, the administration was asking Congress to increase the U.S. contribution to IMF by $8.4 billion dollars. The administration's position was inspired by an impending IMF conference, which was to take place in New York in 1983. The administration wanted to have a its IMF rescue package hurried through Congress so that the American IMF director could speak during the conference with authority driven by unified policy.

The administration proposed to Congress this enhancement of the American commitment to IMF in late 1982. The initial reaction in the House was negative. The administration's proposal was criticized on three separate grounds. First, it was said to be a bailout of big American banks, banks which had already committed billions of dollars to IMF financing of debtor nations. Second, some members, especially Republicans, saw American aid to third-world nations through IMF as foreign aid in disguise. Third, many Democrats

regarded the conditions imposed by IMF on debt-burdened nations as too stringent. They urged the administration to direct the American IMF delegation to lobby the organization for longer, lower-term loans to the debtors.

On 21 December 1982, BFUAC Chairman St Germain himself called President Reagan's IMF proposal a "'bailout' of bankers who had made imprudent international loans" (*CQWR* 7 May 1983, 880). Between December 1982 and May 1983, however, St Germain was involved in a series of exchanges with the administration that caused him to alter his position on the IMF question. Reagan himself sent a letter pleading with the BFUAC's chairman to reconsider his position on IMF. St Germain finally agreed to at least consider an IMF relief bill, and one was considered by the Subcommittee on International Trade, Investment and Monetary Policy. On 5 May 1983 the subcommittee approved a bill to increase the American contribution by the requested $8.4 billion. But despite widespread opposition to the bill among members outside the BFUAC, only one significant amendment was added. Offered by Representative Jerry Patterson (D-CA), it instructed the American IMF contingent to oppose loans to the Republic of South Africa.

The BFUAC marked up the IMF bill a week later. St Germain saw to it that the bill was amended to add provisions in line with Democratic criticism of the administration's proposed IMF policies. First, a provision was added that tightened the regulation on foreign lending by American banks. The BFUAC required the banks to establish a special loan loss reserve whenever the likelihood arose that the debt could not be paid. A second amendment, proposed by Representative Patterson during subcommittee deliberations but not added

until full committee markup, required the IMF to move toward more long-term, low-interest loans for hard-pressed debtor nations.

Some BFUAC members expressed the opinion that St Germain had strong-armed the bill through committee. Representative Neal, chairman of the subcommittee, and Representative John LaFalce (D-NY), a subcommittee member, both objected to the addition of such important amendments after the bill had passed through the subcommittee. St Germain was unrepentant. He probably already had already worked out a strategy for forcing the administration to approve a housing bill in 1983, and that strategy featured the IMF "bailout" bill as a prominent hostage (*CQWR* 7 May 1983, 880).

The IMF bill had hurdled one obstacle, committee passage, but its future remained uncertain. Representative John Hiler (R-IN) said that "[t]here is not a lot of support for this [the IMF bill] back home" (*CQWR* 23 July 1983). The bill was scheduled for debate in the House on 21 July 1983, but Speaker O'Neill postponed it. He counted only 130 votes in favor. Much of the opposition came from minority Republicans, and Democratic members were known to resent their opposition. The Democratic leadership decided to hold the bill off the floor until the administration had persuaded its congressional allies to support the President's position on IMF policy (*CQWR* 23 July 1983).

By 28 July 1983, however, the IMF bill was back on the floor of the House. An amendment proposed by Chairman St Germain and BFUAC ranking minority member Representative Wylie met the objections of most members who had originally opposed the bill. Two important issues were addressed by the amendment. First, the amendment directed the American director sitting on IMF's board to oppose any loan principally made for bailing out banks. Second,

the amendment required the director to vote against debt restructuring through IMF unless the structured loans were longer and less costly to debtor nations (*Alan Murray, CQWR* 30 July 1983).

The amendment carried and the bill was passed. But many House Republicans still voted against the bill and therefore against the wishes of the Reagan Administration.

The administration and supporters of IMF in Congress were relieved, but that relief must have been short-lived. On the same day, the House refused to pass a supplemental appropriation to fund the bill for the 1983 fiscal year. The new IMF policy could not acquire its needed financial backing until the 1984 budget package was agreed upon by Congress later in 1983.

It should be evident from the legislative activity surrounding the IMF bill in 1983 that the debate over international financial policy was redistributive in nature. The implication of changes in the American position regarding IMF and the World Bank were considered at the highest reaches of the executive branch in 1983. Criticism about the IMF bill in Congress that year centered around the bill's unpopularity with members' constituencies. Members outside the leadership took strong positions regarding its passage. There was a party-line division on the final vote; Republican members rebelled and voted against the Republican administration's position on the bill. Peak associations were involved. The committee involved with writing the IMF legislation, the BFUAC, was apparently instructed by the majority party caucus to include language favorable to the party's position on the bill. And, there was other evidence, at least at the subcommittee level of the debate, that junior members were being pressured from above to move the bill through committee.

There was more to come.

The Letter

During the debate on 28 July over the IMF "bailout" bill, an amendment was proposed by conservative Republicans that directed the American contingent on IMF to vote against the proffering of loans to "communist" countries. The amendment passed. It had been opposed by Republican leadership—especially by Minority Leader Robert H. Michel (R-IL) and by BFUAC ranking minority member Representative Wylie. Yet the House found it difficult to make a vote that could be interpreted by some elements as favoring socialist countries, and the amendment was added to the IMF bill. The act of amending the bill was not as important as what followed.

House Republican campaign committee chairman Guy Vander Jagt of Michigan, urged on by Representative Gramm of Texas, a recent convert to the Republican Party, used the vote to make political hay. They composed and mailed a pamphlet attacking Democratic members who had voted against the amendment—that is, they attacked Democrats who had voted in favor of the position held by both the Reagan Administration and by the Republican House leadership. The pamphlet was mailed to voters in the districts of 20 Democrats who had voted against the amendment and whom the House Republican campaign committee had targeted for defeat in 1984. The substance of the pamphlet's message was that the vote against the amendment was "pro-communist." It failed to mention the Republican opposition to the amendment.

This move enraged Democrats who had voted for the entire bill. Their position was that they, not the House Republicans, had carried the IMF bill.

Some of them now stood, they thought, to lose votes in their home districts because they had acted in accordance with the wishes of the Reagan Administration. Chairman St Germain, as quick to use an opening to his own advantage as were his Republican opponents, saw an opportunity to get a housing bill past President Reagan's veto while placing the administration in his debt.

While the fallout over the pamphlet was still heavy, St Germain wrote a letter to President Reagan. "I am convinced," he said, "[that] a housing authorization bill needs to be enacted into law this year." He continued: "I am also convinced—given the margin of the vote on HR 2957 [the IMF bill], and having talked with a number of members in the House who voted favorably for this legislation—that unless a housing bill is enacted into law this year, they will be constrained to vote against any conference report on IMF legislation....I am seriously constrained from continuing with the legislative process on HR 2957 until the housing authorization bill is completed" (*CQWR* 27 August 1983, 1726).

Such high-level political activity surrounding the IMF question is another indicator that the IMF bill was seen as redistributive in nature by the actors involved—and there were a lot of them.

Somewhere in the shuffle, most of the players had forgotten about the housing authorization bill. Perhaps it was considered a dead issue for yet another year. But the leadership of the BFUAC remembered. Representative St Germain had decided to run a Statue of Liberty play with the housing bill as the ball and the IMF bill as the fake. Asked to comment on the IMF question, St Germain managed to threaten the President with killing the IMF bill and upbraid the Senate for its inaction on the housing bill in the same breath.

Final Moves

The Democratic House caucus was incensed over the Vander Jagt-Gramm mailing. Representative Barbara Boxer (D-CA), caucus chair, announced in early September that the caucus had decided no vote would be taken in the House on the IMF bill's conference report until President Reagan apologized personally to those members who had been targets of the House Republican mailing. The caucus also demanded that the Republican House campaign committee issue a retraction and reinterpretation of the information contained in the pamphlet.

President Reagan issued apologies not just to the "wronged" Democratic members of the House, but to all members of the House. St Germain, in turn, struck a bargain with the Senate leadership and with the administration while the IMF bill was in conference. The substance of the deal was that both houses would pass both the IMF legislation, giving the administration what it wanted, and a housing authorization bill, giving St Germain what he wanted.

The legislative process that achieved the desired results was worthy of a Byzantine court. On 16 November, in the Senate, Senator Garn offered an amendment to HR 3959, a supplemental appropriations bill. The bill had originally contained $1.5 billion to fund the construction of the Clinch River breeder reactor, but that money had been stripped from the legislation. As HR 3959 stood in the Senate on 16 November, it contained only $445 million in supplemental funds—that is, until it was amended.

That day, Senator Garn rose to offer an amendment to HR 3959 which must have nonplused the uninformed. The amendment was in essence a joining of the IMF bill, HR 2957, and the housing authorization bill originally offered to

the House by Representative Gonzalez early in 1983. The IMF provisions of the amendment authorized $8.4 billion more in U.S. funds to back the IMF. The housing language of the amendment to HR 2957 authorized federal housing programs at about the level sought originally by Garn in the Senate. (St Germain and Gonzalez had compromised in conference and agreed to reduce housing funds from the $27 billion they had originally sought to authorize.)

The House did not act on the conference report for HR 2957 until the Senate had amended the measure. Then the Rules Committee voted on 17 November to draft a so-called "self-executing" rule for HR 2957. The rule provided for consideration on the floor of the House of the changes to HR 2957 that had been made on the floor of the Senate. The House did not debate the measure, HR 2957, itself, but voted on the rule provided by the Rules Committee. A vote in favor of the rule was a vote in favor of the IMF-housing changes made by the Senate to HR 2957. A vote against the rule was a vote against the compromise. The Rules Committee also limited debate on the issue to one hour—very little time to discuss such an important issue. The opponents of the housing-IMF measure fumed, but the leadership had effectively quashed debate. The appropriations measure was passed in both the House and in the Senate.

The Rules Committee was probably acting at the behest of the House leadership, which had determined to get the housing-IMF bill passed. At the same time, in limiting debate, it was acting in the interests, if not at the request, of the BFUAC and its leadership. Restricting debate on the bill meant there was little time for opponents to register complaints and no time to amend the bill.

The compromise drew fire from both parties. Minority Leader Michel abhorred the compromise as it was processed through the House but supported the measure on the floor at the behest of the President. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV), who had himself been known to apply Machiavellian principles to legislation in the past, called the process "reprehensible."

But the bill passed the House, 226–186, after the Senate voted in favor of the compromise, and President Reagan signed it. St Germain, Gonzalez, and the BFUAC finally had forced a housing authorization measure on the White House during President Reagan's watch. The next housing authorization bill would be seven years in coming, and the politics of its composition would be quite different.

Conclusions: Distributive of Redistributive?

Did the BFUAC operate as an independent committee in this case; that is, was the housing policy made in 1982 and 1983 of a distributive or redistributive nature? An argument could be made for both distributive and redistributive policy.

The most powerful evidence that the BFUAC acted independently in both the 1982 and 1983 sessions is that there were no serious challenges to the shape of housing-reauthorization legislation inside or outside the BFUAC's committee room. During neither session did amendments made on the floor reshape the legislation. Floor debate was controlled by the BFUAC membership, and most amendments that were added on the floor were authored by them.

The emergency-housing debate of both years was a different matter. In 1982 and 1983, for example, so-called peak associations, which represented the construction and real-estate industries in the aggregate, called for help through alternate, emergency legislation—quite out of the routine. The call of these peak associations was heard throughout Congress and on both sides of the aisle. Although the BFUAC was a player in the emergency housing debate, it did not control it. Note that this difference in interest-group activity between routine housing authorizations and emergency-housing bills serves as a demarcation between distributive and redistributive policy making.

A clarification may be called for here. Evidence presented in earlier chapters indicates that BFUAC members may have regarded the construction and real-estate industries in their districts as important elements of their constituencies. In terms of the principal-agent frame, then, those interests would be the BFUAC's principals. However, as important element in the relationship

between principals and agents within the independent-committee scheme is that the control by committee of routine legislation is not necessarily sparked by sudden cries for help from the supposed principals; it is driven by hopes of reelection support. Calls for emergency help—such as the emergency-housing issue—would probably be evidence of a different kind of politics, one that would involve more players and would be more likely to be distributive.

A second indication that BFUAC controlled debate on the routine housing bill was that there was little partisan contention over housing authorizations. President Reagan appeared relatively unconcerned about the shape and size of the federal housing establishment; his aim was to reduce all social programs. He seemed to take no special notice of housing beyond promoting, in a rather desultory manner, housing vouchers over subsidized housing. (Substituting vouchers for subsidies was a standard Republican suggestion that did find favor with Congress during the Bush Administration.) HUD Secretary Samuel R. Pierce, who would have taken the point position for the President if the President had actually wanted to engage in a debate over housing policy, was essentially a nonplayer.

At the same time, the Republican party in Congress offered little resistance to reauthorizing housing, as long as housing was reduced along with everything else. It is important to note the difference between the House Republican stand on housing and their votes against the IMF bill that was supported by a Republican administration. One of the marks of redistributive policy making as opposed to distributive policy making (according to both Lowi and Smith) is that redistributive debates create partisan disturbances within the legislature. The IMF proposal did that in 1983. The housing bill itself did not.

The use of the Rules Committee to control the passage of legislation on the floor is often a mark of partisan control, and Rules definitely played a part in passage of the 1993 bill. But the use of Rules in this particular instance is ambiguous, because an absence of partisan interference in the process of legislation may simply be a mark of general acceptance of the legislation already worked out by committee. But note in this context that Rules made it very difficult to amend the final IMF-housing bill on the floor and severely limited time for debate. This may have been done out of a mix of motives, one of which was to accommodate the desire of the BFUAC to get a housing bill passed. So in this instance even the use of Rules to control passage of the 1993 bill could be a sign of BFUAC independence, not a marker against it.

There was quite a lot of partisan contention surrounding the IMF question, contention that was made more intense through the agency of the Vander Jagt-Gramm campaign letter. But it has already been acknowledged that the IMF issue was a kind of redistributive policy making; it was inherently likely to breed partisan spats.

Finally, the chamber itself did not act to contradict the BFUAC's control of the housing debate. In fact, the BFUAC encountered little opposition on the floor, where members of the parent chamber would seek to lay traps for legislation of which they disapproved. This certainly did not seem to be the case with housing legislation sought by the BFUAC. In 1982, the attention of the House was focused on molding legislation for the housing "emergency" of that year, not on routine housing authorizations. And In 1983, members nearly forgot about housing legislation in the face of the IMF crisis.

As far as basic policy making is concerned, then, the BFUAC appears to have acted independently in 1982 and 1983. On the other hand, there are certain indications that housing policy was a matter of concern outside the committee room.

First, the Reagan Administration did impanel a blue-ribbon commission to study housing issues and then try to get Congress to enact the voucher programs suggested by the commission. The panel's suggestions were nothing new, but its very existence as well as its suggestions did represent a certain interest by the executive in housing policy.

Second, the bill did encounter some resistance when it reached the floor--in the form of the Appropriations Committee's unwillingness to fund housing programs at the level approved by the BFUAC. It is far from clear, however, that this opposition represented either a power play on the part of house or party or an escalation of the housing issue from distributive to redistributive.

It could be that asking for more than it knew it would get could have been a tactic employed by the BFUAC to obtain more money for housing programs than they otherwise would have received. This is what is suggested above. On the other hand, funding for most other so-called social programs was being reduced, so the Appropriations Committee may have given housing as much as it could get. In other words, Appropriations may have felt that in funding the 1983 housing bill just $8 billion below the BFUAC's request, it was preventing further deletion of housing-program strength. If this was indeed the intention of the Appropriations Committee, then it was acting not as an agent of the House or of the Democratic leadership, but as an independent committee itself. It has already been suggested that the Rules Committee eases the way for legislation

on the floor by requiring strict rules in the debate for certain bills. The Appropriations Committee in 1983 may have been acting within its own particular compass to accomplish a similar task.

Finally, it could be argued that without the IMF problem there would have been no housing bill in 1983. Since the IMF bill was clearly redistributive, sought as it was by the executive and other national powers, the housing bill became redistributive as well when it was subsumed under IMF, the housing bill became ipso facto redistributive. If this were so, then the BFUAC simply acted as a pawn of greater interests and had no independent role in making housing policy.

This argument, however, ignores the role of BFUAC Chairman St Germain. St Germain was able to combine the two bills, IMF and housing, and to convince the House to go along on the basis of his place on the committee responsible for both bills. The point is that the initiative was taken by someone at the committee level. The House followed St Germain's lead and approved the combination.

Although it is not explicitly stated, an assumption made about leadership of redistributive policy is that it works from top down, not bottom up. That is, redistributive policy leadership may be taken by legislative party leadership, the executive, and others, not by committees or their senior members. The argument followed here is that the eventual housing bill originated with the BFUAC and that its leadership successfully saw to its passage.

On average, then, it can be contended that the 1983 housing bill was a distributive bill and that the BFUAC acted as a major player in the housing debate of that year.

But this discussion raises an important question. What is the nature of routine, distributive policy making conducted by independent committees in the face of congressional, and national, attitudes that are turning away from the promotion of government as a positive force in national life? This question will be taken up in chapter 8 after a description and critique of the next housing bill passed by Congress in the 1980s.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Housing Bill of 1990: Distributive or Redistributive?

The case history of the housing act that was eventually accepted by Congress and the President in 1983 reveals that the BFUAC probably did act as an independent agent during the housing debate that extended from 1982 through 1983. This was the expected result. It serves to confirm the working hypothesis of this study, that the BFUAC acted independently during the 1980s. But the results of the 1983 case study also serve to disconfirm Lowi's placement of housing policy as inevitably redistributive in nature.

The question addressed in this chapter is whether the BFUAC acted as an independent agent during the debate and the passage of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act of 1990. That act was the only other housing act passed by Congress during the 1980s. The thesis of this work will be confirmed once again if the 1990 housing bill, signed on 28 November 1990 by President Bush, should also be found to have been result of distributive politics, with the BFUAC acting as an independent agent.

The analysis of the case history of the 1990 act is performed using the same benchmarks used to gauge the 1983 act. The debate should have been confined to the committee room. The President and his advisers should have taken little notice of the legislative process of developing housing policy in 1990. The debate outside the committee room, that is, on the floor and in other forums, such as the conference committee, should have been controlled by the BFUAC

members. Finally, there should have been little or no effort of national interest groups or peak associations to intervene.

Like the housing act of 1983, the 1990 act was the end product of two years of work. But the scope of political activity surrounding the debate and passage of the 1990 act was much broader than that surrounding the 1983 act. This is shown in part by the activity peripheral to Congress concerning housing policy, activity that helped focus the legislature's attention on the problem of housing late in the 1980s.

After the 1986 elections, with both houses of Congress again under Democratic control, congressional Democrats had begun to look toward the election of a Democratic President in 1988. Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA), who had re-gained the chairmanship of the Senate Banking Committee's subcommittee on housing, requested the formation of a task force that would study federal housing policy. The result was the formation of the National Housing Task Force (NHTF), or the Rouse-Maxwell Commission.

Several national interests were at stake. One of the proofs of that is the participation of representatives of major housing interests in the deliberations of the Rouse-Maxwell Commission in 1988. For example, its chairman represented the Enterprise Foundation, a noted conservative "think-tank." By contrast, a member of a federal bureaucracy charged with running one of the major housing programs provided by the federal government served as vice-chairman. Other members included a wide range of interests, public and private.

Chaired by James Rouse of the Enterprise Foundation, a noted conservative "think tank" and vice-chaired by David Maxwell of FNMA (Fannie Mae), one of the federal government's major housing programs, the commission

was composed of people representing the housing industry; federal, state, and local governments; and research organizations. (Note that the task force was an amalgam of national interests, all of whom were concerned about the shape of federal housing policy in the years to come.) Although NHTF's primary focus was to research housing issues rather than to advocate changes, it played a major role in bringing housing issues to Congress's attention. Its influence continued after the election of 1988 brought George Bush into office.

Another measure of the comparatively wide scope of the politics surrounding the housing bill of 1990 was the activity of groups representing the interests of state and local governments and public officials. New legislation that alters the impact of federal housing and community-development policies on state and local governments attracts the attention of their representatives in Washington.

State and local groups were keenly interested in the 1990 housing legislation because both housing for the poor and community-development programs had suffered severely under the Reagan Administration. State and local government officials hoped that any 1990 housing bill would bring federal relief for housing and community-development programs that they wished to continue but were finding it difficult to fund. The Senate was in the hands of the Democrats again, beginning with the One Hundredth Congress. The Bush Administration was taking a more tolerant, though still conservative, attitude than the Reagan Administration had taken toward spending for social programs. So state and local officials hoped that federal housing programs would be expanded and their funding increased.

The general concern of these groups before and during the contest about the condition of the federal housing establishment in the late 1980s is a measure of the scope of the politics surrounding the 1990 housing act. They seemed to have agreed that the federal government ought to act to revive federal housing policy after the severe shocks of past years.

Federal Housing Policy at the End of the 1980s

During the Reagan years, the federal government's stake in all facets of housing had decreased—housing for the poor, housing for the middle class, and community development programs had all suffered funding cuts—during the 1980s. By 1988 two housing issues had crept onto Congress's agenda. Both were underlined in the report by the National Housing Task Force to Senator Cranston's subcommittee in March of 1988.

In the first place, the report said, only 36 percent, or about one-third, of people aged 25 to 29 years owned homes in 1987. Nine years earlier, in 1979, 44 percent of that age group had been home owners.

Second, NHTF said that federal funding for new housing had decreased 80 percent from 1978 to 1988 and that median rents had increased at twice the rate median incomes had risen between 1973 and 1983. Jessie Rattley of the United States Conference of Mayors, in testimony confirming the commission's findings, told Cranston's subcommittee in September 1988 that the rate of home ownership was declining the U.S. and that low-income housing rents were at their highest in 20 years (U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs September 1988).

Shortly afterward, the National League of Cities compiled a housing survey, the results of which were reported in the *Washington Post* in January 1989. The League found in the survey a lack of affordable housing across the country. The lack was blamed on the decline of economic growth in the cities (Gwen Ifill 1989). The NLC report was later used by the *Post* (Ann Mariano 1989) to condemn the Reagan Administration for aggravating, if not for creating, the housing problems outlined in the League's report. The *Post* called for the government to recognize that a housing crisis existed. It also referred to a study by the Census Bureau's American Housing Survey that found that half of all renters in 1985 with incomes below the poverty level used 65 percent or more of their incomes for rent and utilities.

Rising rents and plummeting ownership rates affected the poor and the middle class in different ways. One mark of the housing crisis, according to the *Post* was the growing number of homeless people throughout the United States. Congress had acknowledged this problem and tried to help correct it with the passage of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. And the Census Bureau, gearing up for the 1990 Decennial Census, was making an effort to define homelessness and making plans for obtaining an accurate count of the nation's homeless.

Added to the housing problems of the middle class and of the poor who could afford housing, the presence of many homeless individuals and families within the nation came to symbolize, for those who were so minded, the need for a new government housing effort. It also meant that the perception was growing within Congress, in the media, and within groups with special housing

and community-development interests that housing was a national problem that cut across economic class lines.

Adding to this perception were several problems within the existing maze of federal housing programs and policies.

The first problem had to do with the stock of low-income housing. Between 1962 and 1973, housing developers had contracted with the federal government to build low-income housing units. The government in return had subsidized developers' mortgages as long as the subsidized units remained low-rent units, that is, as long as they stayed within the ability of families and individuals living at or near the poverty line to pay rent. The contracts had usually stipulated a 40-year term for the arrangement, although the developers or owners were typically allowed to prepay mortgages after 20 years. Owners could then convert the property to uses other than for housing the poor.

Between 1989 and 2005, more than half of the units constructed under this program—about 360 thousand units of the 650 thousand units built—would become eligible for prepayment, and most of these could be prepaid and converted between 1991 and 1994. No one seemed to know how many of the units would be actually converted. The National Low Income Housing Preservation Commission, an ad hoc unit formed by Congress expressly to find out how many low-income units stood in danger of prepayment, placed the number at 243 thousand (*CQWR* 6 May 1989, 1041–2).

The second problem confronting federal housing policy makers by 1990 was the expiration of federal rent subsidies under the Section 8 rental subsidy program (*CQWR* 6 May 1989, 1042). During the 1970s, the government had begun to underwrite the rents for very low-income tenants by subsidizing either

the renter or the property owner. The subsidies had been authorized for periods of time up to 40 years. The problem was that many of the subsidies with shorter terms were running out. If the subsidies were not renewed, it was estimated that large numbers low-income people would face eviction because of their inability to pay their rents.

The third problem within the federal housing establishment was the HUD housing scandal that surfaced in May and June 1989 (*CQWR* 17 June 1989, 1477). HUD contractors were found by the Justice Department to have embezzled at least $20 million during the tenure of President Reagan's HUD secretary, Samuel R. Pierce. The Justice Department found the felonies were compounded through the failure of HUD regional offices, as well as HUD's central office in Washington, to properly oversee the use of contracted funds. Many HUD employees were found culpable in the misuse of federal housing funds. One HUD employee actually took five million dollars from HUD and distributed it to the poor, in effect mocking what she saw as the inability of the agency to actually complete its mission. The HUD scandal put housing policy on the long-term agenda of Congress in mid-1989 and may have contributed to the eventual passage of the 1990 housing act.

By 1989, then, several institutions and groups with national constituencies and prestige had registered complaints against the federal housing system. This group included the *Washington Post*, one of the nation's most influential newspapers, which had gone so far as to proclaim a housing crisis. Many of the concerns held by the National League of the Cities and other groups of government officials were shared by representatives of private industry. Those concerns were given voice through the Rouse-Maxwell Commission, itself

created at the behest of a powerful senator with a housing agenda. The internal and programmatic problems experienced by HUD seemed to punctuate that concern as housing was moved to the front burner in Congress in 1989.

The Debate Begins, 1989

The immediate legislative antecedent of the 1990 housing law eventually signed by President Bush was introduced in the Senate in March 1989 by Senator Cranston of California and Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato (R) of New York. The Senate bill, dubbed the National Affordable Housing Act (S 565), was carefully crafted. It contained new programs, but only incremental funding raises for traditional programs. It proposed spending only $15.1 billion in FY 1990 and $15.7 billion in FY 1991.

The Cranston-D'Amato bill incorporated several of the NHTF's proposals. These included the creation of the Housing Opportunity Partnerships (HOP) program, an increase in HUD-financed housing units for poor families, a new program of loans to developers, and certain changes in FHA policies.

The HOP program would commit state and local governments to both the development of new housing units for the poor and renovations of existing low-income housing units. HUD would distribute three billion dollars in HOP funds among the states, which would be required to match federal funds with their own. In this way HUD would be able to double the number of low-income housing units with funding from the new housing act.

The proposed Senate bill would also have created a program of below-market-rate loans to developers of housing for the poor, thereby increasing the supply of available housing suitable for low-income families. And the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) would lower the down payment it required for first-time buyers of homes from 5 to 3 percent, a proposal aimed at increasing the number of younger Americans who could afford to own their own living quarters. First-time buyers could use money from IRAs for down payments.

Finally, the Senate bill proposed setting up an agency with HUD called the HOME Corporation to administer the three-billion-dollar-a-year HOP program. It also would have funded an Office of Affordable Housing Preservation within HUD to study the issue of imperiled housing subsidies. States and local governments would be required to write and get HUD to approve five-year housing-affordability plans.

Although the Senate bill incorporated provisions recommended by the NHTF, retained most existing programs, and would have created several new programs, it was nevertheless the less expansive of the two housing bills proposed in Congress in 1989. "We have a more ambitious agenda" (*CQWR* 18 March 1989) said BFUAC member Representative Barney Frank (D-MA) of the House bill, which was sponsored by the BFUAC's new Chairman Gonzalez, Representative Frank, and several other BFUAC Democrats.

Gonzalez, a liberal Democrat—his ADA score was 100 in 1988—representing San Antonio, Texas, had taken up the reins of the BFUAC dropped by Chairman St Germain after his electoral defeat in 1988. Although Gonzalez' career up through the ranks of the BFUAC had been undistinguished as a banking regulator and a housing advocate, he was nevertheless appointed to the post by the Democratic caucus when it parceled out chairmanships early in 1989. Gonzalez' committee seniority apparently overbore other concerns members of the caucus may have harbored about his chairmanship abilities. After his appointment as BFUAC chair in January 1989, Gonzalez also kept his seat as chair of the BFUAC's Housing and Urban Affairs Subcommittee. He had held that station when St Germain was chair of the full committee.

Gonzalez' bill would have reauthorized existing housing and community-development programs run by HUD and the FmHA at levels much higher than were current in 1989. Gonzalez proposed spending $22.9 billion in FY 1990, roughly $7.7 billion more than federal housing programs were receiving in FY 1989 and $7.8 billion more than the Senate bill proposed. The cost of these programs would then rise to $32.8 billion in FY 1991, $17.1 billion more than Cranston's bill.

There were variations between the Senate and the House bills, however, that made it difficult to compare their real differences of cost. Costs were scored differently for budget purposes and by what was reauthorized. For example, the added funds proposed by the House bill included a hedge for inflation. And the Senate bill did not include reauthorization for the community-development program. Gonzalez bill would have funded community development at more than three billion dollars a year.

Cranston's and D'Amato's estimates also did not take into account the cost of preserving existing government-subsidized low-rent housing. Preservation costs would rise dramatically, if predictions were correct, as the subsidies on housing built in the 1960s and the 1970s began to expire in the 1990s. Both bills called for preserving such units for low-income use, but only the House bill authorized a set amount for that purpose—$746 million for FY 1990 and $9.8 billion for FY 1991.

Once expiring subsidy and community-development costs were subtracted, Gonzalez bill would have authorized spending about $18.7 billion and $19.3 billion in fiscal years 1990 and 1991 respectively, as opposed to Senator Cranston's bill authorizing $15.1 billion and $15.7 billion (*CQWR* 18 March 1989).

Although Cranston, Gonzalez, and HUD Secretary Jack Kemp had been hopeful early in the year of the passage of new housing legislation in 1989, it was not to be. Instead, Congress had its attention diverted from substantive policy concerns by the HUD scandal and by the savings-and-loan bailout. Passage of new housing legislation had to wait until those two problems were addressed in legislation. But Gonzalez made an attempt to take advantage of that problem by pairing housing legislation with bailout activity.

Gonzalez oversaw passage by his committee of two housing amendments to the bailout legislation, HR 1278, on 16 April 1989. The savings-and-loan bailout bill was reported out of the BFUAC on a vote split along party lines. An amendment sponsored by Gonzalez would have created a pool of funds from the money loaned by Federal Home Loan Banks to member savings-and-loan institutions. A second amendment to the bailout legislation, sponsored in committee by Representative Frank, would have given nonprofit groups, state and local agencies, and the poor first refusal rights on purchasing low-priced housing for three months. The amendments were added to HR 1278 over BFUAC Republican opposition. The Real Estate Asset Division of the Resolution Trust Corporation was also charged in the Gonzalez-Frank version of the bailout bill with disposing of foreclosed property taken over from failed savings-and-loan banks.

The housing amendments to the bailout legislation were opposed by the savings-and-loan lobby as well as by the Republican members of the BFUAC. Kenneth McLean, chief lobbyist for three large thrifts, said his industry opposed the amendments because Gonzalez' changes would have added to the general

tax burden. But Frank, Gonzalez, and others said that they could defend the changes to the bill regardless of the higher price tag.

Realtors also opposed the BFUAC changes to the bailout legislation because Gonzalez' additions prevented realtors from brokering deals on certain properties for 90 days. But the opposition of the real-estate industry remained low key. Meanwhile, the National Association of Builders (NAB) tried to get President Bush, Secretary Kemp, and others in the administration to accept the idea of setting aside a certain number of foreclosed homes for low-income families. NAB did not like to be kept at arms' length while nonprofit organizations and local governments brokered housing to the poor (*CQWR* 27 April 1989).

BFUAC Republicans planned in any event to strip the housing amendments from the bailout bill when the bill reached the floor of the House.

Despite the strong case that housing proponents made for new housing legislation in 1989, House, Senate, and administration could not finally agree on the form of the new law. The House Appropriations Committee did approve an increase for HUD's current programs on 11 July 1989. On 31 October, Congress agreed to re-fund HUD. Both houses passed HR 2916, the spending bill that included small raises in funding for several existing HUD programs, including housing for the poor, FHA, and community-development programs (*CQWR* 4 November 1989).

The last hope of Gonzalez, Cranston, and D'Amato for new housing legislation in 1989 remained with the amendments to the savings-and-loan bailout legislation. In early November, they were still hoping to keep new

housing program amendments attached to the HUD reform bill, but events conspired against them.

First, the administration confirmed on 10 November 1989 that its housing policy was to enable the poor in their choice of living quarters, not to expand the housing stock on their behalf. This was a restatement of the Reagan Administration's position. It meant that the administration opposed keeping the housing amendments within the bailout bill.

Second, the BFUAC's housing subcommittee abandoned the last chance for a housing bill in 1989 by stripping the HUD reform bill of its two amendments on 11 November 1989. Gonzalez was opposed to the action but was overridden in subcommittee by a faction led by Frank, who was joined by Republican members. Later, Gonzalez allowed HR 1 to be sent to the floor, under a suspension of committee rules, without a full committee hearing.

Although Senator Cranston was dedicated to keeping housing reform with the HUD reform bill in 1989, his advocacy could not turn events in favor of new housing legislation. The reform bill, HR 1, was accepted by the House, and the housing programs stripped from it by Frank and his supporters in the BFUAC were not pasted back onto the legislation on the floor. On 22 November 1989, the HUD reform measure was passed by both houses and sent to the President for his signature. With the HUD reform crisis fading, reform of housing policy seemed to have a better chance of passage in the next session, beginning in January 1990.

Housing Policy Making in Congress, 1990

The Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard weighed into the

housing policy debate in 1990 when it released an evaluation of the housing market in the United States during the 1980s (Apgar et al. 1990). The results of the Harvard study seemed to muddle the national housing picture rather than clarifying it by supplying numbers for both sides of the supply/cost argument.

For example, according to the Joint Center, the government's commitment to helping poor families pay for housing had actually grown during the 1980s, despite the apparent animosity of the Reagan Administration toward the expansion of any social program. The report revealed that 19 percent of poverty-level renters in 1974 received housing subsidies from the government. In 1980, 23 percent did, and 31 percent received subsidies in 1985. The Harvard report also said that vacancy rates for apartments renting for $150 to $300 per month increased between 1981 and 1987 from 4.7 to 8 percent.

But the Harvard study also revealed that the number of poor people in the United States grew by several million during the 1980s, even as the proportion of poor people being helped by federal housing programs grew and the vacancy rate of poor-affordable housing increased. The number of households living in poverty rose from nine and one-half million in 1974 to nearly fourteen million in 1985. That was an increase of some ten million people, to a total of 23 to 33 million people living in poverty. (In 1985 the poverty threshold for a family of four was $10,989, according to Bureau of Labor Standards.) As a result, the absolute number of eligible families—and eligible individuals—not receiving federal housing aid was larger in 1990 than it was in 1980.

Meanwhile, said the report, the number of low-rent units that could reasonably be occupied by low- and moderate-income people had been

declining. Between 1974 and 1985, the housing market in the United States had lost almost 2.8 million unsubsidized apartments renting at less than $300 a month. The total number of apartments in that low price range dropped from 10.1 million to 8.5 million. This decrease was offset in part by an increase of one million in subsidized apartments. Finally, empty units available to the poor were by 1990 typically in extremely poor condition and/or located in declining neighborhoods.

The Bush Administration used the report to fortify its argument that the nation's poor needed help with the *cost* of housing, but that the supply was adequate. "If you look across the nation, there's [sic] about 105 million housing units with 500 million rooms, and that's about a bedroom for every person in the U.S," according to HUD Undersecretary Alfred A. DelliBovi (*CQWR* 28 April 1990, 1270). The problem for the poor, he added, was affording the housing that was available.

Advocates of an enlarged federal housing program such as Barry Zigas, president of the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, pointed to contrary indicators. Zigas maintained, in reaction to DelliBovi, that housing problems in the United States differ across local and regional housing markets and that there is no one national market for housing. Citing national statistics about available housing, according to Zigas, was irrelevant because houses could not be moved to satisfy demand. "It's not like being a regional grocery store manager and noticing that more people eat Wheaties in Baltimore than Washington, and so shipping more Wheaties to Baltimore from Washington will solve the problem" (*CQWR* 28 April 1990, 1270).

Indeed, the Harvard study pointed out (Apgar et al. 1990, 11–12) that housing costs and rents varied greatly by region across the United States. While costs and rents had varied but remained low in the Midwest and the South between 1967 and 1989, costs and rents had increased dramatically in the West and Northeast. For example, the typical rent in Houston in 1989 was about $340 per month. Families living in Los Angeles paid about $550, while those living in Boston paid more than $560.

Regardless of what Harvard said or the Bush Administration thought, the perception outside Washington in early 1990 was that the federal government needed to fix the national housing problem. Richard Y. Nelson, Jr., executive director of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, said that 800 thousand to a million families were on waiting lists across the country in early 1990 for public housing (*CQWR* 28 April 1990). Nelson also said that another million families were waiting for federal vouchers and certificates to subsidize their rents.

Housing Proposals in Congress: Administration, House, and Senate

By April 1990, three different housing proposals had been delivered to Congress. But even the most generous of the three reauthorization proposals would add no more than 183,357 households to the subsidized housing rolls in FY 1991 (*CQWR* 28 April 1990).

The Housing Proposal in the House

The House of Representative's 1990 housing bill was HR 1180, sponsored by BFUAC Chairman Gonzalez. Like its House predecessor of 1989, HR 1180

significantly expanded existing housing programs but added little that was new to federal housing policies. The bill authorized spending $27.8 billion in FY 1991 on existing HUD housing programs. This was an increase of about $11 billion over spending authorized for FY 1990. It added about 183,357 households to overall assistance rolls. (The bill's original spending authorizations were unlikely to have been approved, because the House Budget Committee provided early in April only a $3.3 billion increase in housing budget authority for FY 1991.)

The Gonzalez bill did create two new programs, the first of which was the National Housing Trust. It offered a maximum of 6 percent interest rate on mortgages. To qualify, a home buyer would have to have a total family income that did not exceed 115 percent of the area family-of-four median. The National Housing Trust would cost $5 million in FY 1991.

The second new program in Gonzalez bill' was the Community Housing Partnership. It provided grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations for the production of housing and also to assist low- and moderate-income families in buying houses. This program was designed to encourage nonprofit groups to develop and manage housing projects as well as to build and rehabilitate units for sale to low- and moderate-income families. These two new additions to federal housing programs were apparently reworked from the housing proposals stripped from the 1989 HUD reform bill, HR 1.

HR 1180 provided additional budget authority for construction and operating subsidies of housing for the elderly and disabled, for rental certificates, and for Section 8 "moderate rehab" assistance. It authorized $300

million in grants for rental housing development. It also set aside about $8 billion in FY 1991 for a five-year extension on contracts with owners of low-rent subsidized units covered by an expiring congressional moratorium on mortgage prepayments. Without the extensions, landlords could pay off their mortgages and convert their buildings to condominiums or rent the apartments at market rates.

Note that HR 1180 emphasized housing production, along with a program to help moderate-income families buy houses. This emphasis is not a coincidence. Remember that there was a significant difference between BFUAC districts in the 1980s and other districts regarding the construction and real-estate industries. The provisions of HR 1180 catered to just those constituencies.

The Senate Proposal

The Senate's 1990 housing bill, S 566, was sponsored by Senators Cranston and D'Amato, who had sponsored the 1989 Senate housing bill as well. The Senate bill reorganized current programs and created new ones. The bill as it was originally written would have authorized spending about $15.7 billion dollars on federal housing programs in FY 1991, or $4.1 billion more than the amount spent in FY 1990. The increase was in line with a request made in April by 29 senators to the Senate Budget Committee. The group, which included all Democratic members of the Senate Banking Committee, requested that Budget increase the fiscal-year baseline spending on federal housing programs by between $3.6 billion to $4 billion.

The authors of the Senate bill aimed at making federal housing policy more flexible to respond to the needs of local governments and local housing

markets. Like the 1989 bill, it proposed creating a $3 billion a year subsidy program, Housing Opportunity Partnerships (HOP) to encourage development of rental apartments for low-income families. State and local government were to match federal grants with 25 percent of the federal subsidy. They were to use the money to buy existing units, build new units, or rehabilitate existing housing stock. At least 10 percent of local funds was to go to housing developed, sponsored, or owned by nonprofit community housing groups. As previously proposed, HOP would be run by a new agency within HUD, the HOME Corporation.

The Senate bill also required people to contribute to personal savings accounts in federally insured institutions for at least three years before they became eligible to receive mortgages insured by FHA. Once that requirement was fulfilled, individuals would be eligible for mortgages up to $125 thousand, or 90 percent of the median sales price of housing for the state in which the purchase was made.

A major innovation introduced in the bill was the abolition of programs that provided housing certificates and housing vouchers for low-income families. Instead it created a "rent credit" program that was to be either tenant based or project based, according to local need. Rent credit was to be used to renew expiring Section 8 assistance contracts, to help tenants displaced by owners who refused to renew project-based contracts, and to increase the number of very low-income families receiving housing aid.

Note that the major innovations presented in the Senate bill did not emphasize housing production and purchase—although other elements of the bill did these things. The new programs written into the Cranston-D'Amato bill

sought instead to promote the ability of families with moderate and low incomes to afford decent housing, either through personal savings accounts or the new rent credit program. The Senate bill was written along the lines suggested by an alliance of national groups and was probably meant to have a broader appeal than the House bill.

The Administration's Proposal

HUD Secretary Jack Kemp committed the Bush Administration to a move in new housing policy directions on 13 March 1990 during a hearing of the administration's housing proposals before BFUAC's Housing and Urban Affairs Subcommittee. The committee was chaired by Representative Gonzalez, who was also the chair of the full BFUAC.

Called HOPE (Home Ownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere), the administration's initiative consisted of four programs contained within HR 4245. (As far as the record shows, neither HR 4245 nor its Senate counterpart was never debated on the floor per se, but elements of the administration's new housing proposals were incorporated into housing legislation crafted by the banking committees of both houses. In effect, HR 4245 and its Senate sister served as a stalking horse for Kemp's new housing ideas.)

The major thrust of the administration's proposed program, embraced within the first title of the bill, departed from past programs to house the poor in a significant way. Instead of providing rent or rental space, the program would actually help eligible families purchase apartments or houses. However, following the Republican theme—that the private section was already enough

producing an adequate supply of housing—the program would help public-housing tenants purchase the apartments in which they currently reside. Under HOPE, HUD could also grant money to low-income families for the purchase of HUD housing in multifamily projects on which the FHA had foreclosed, and it could award grants to nonprofit organizations to develop programs for the transfer of publicly held, vacant, single-family homes to low-income families.

The new program also contained a plan to shield low-income tenants from sudden rent increases in federally subsidized units that stood in danger of being paid off by owners and converted to more lucrative uses.) First, owners would have to file notice of intent to prepay mortgages. Then tenants would be given a two-year right of first refusal to purchase their building with grants from HUD. Furthermore, if owners decided to prepay and tenants did not buy the units they inhabited, owners would have to underwrite moving expenses, security deposits, and cost of six months' housing to each tenant. The catch was that HUD could approve prepayment only if HUD had enough money to provide rent-assistance vouchers or certificates to tenants who had to move.

The administration's bill attempted to address the growing issue of homelessness through the Shelter Plus Care program, which would provide both rental assistance and support services to homeless people who are seriously mentally ill or have alcohol and drug problems. A demonstration program would test whether combining vouchers with support services could help the elderly to live independently. Kemp also touted Operation Bootstrap, another new program, that would require local public-housing agencies to develop local programs to help families become economically independent.

Finally, Kemp explained that the bill would allow HUD's secretary to designate 50 Housing Opportunity Zones across the country. The program would provide federal assistance and encouragement to local governments to design "barrier removal plans" that would scrap restrictive zoning laws and outdated building codes and modify other regulations to spur the building of affordable housing (*CQWR* 17 March 1990).

Once again, however, following the line that the housing supply is already large enough, no new construction programs were offered, and the only current program to receive new funding under the administration's proposal was be housing for the elderly and disabled. HUD provided loans and below-market interest rates to nonprofit corporations who would then build housing for and charge lower rents to elderly and handicapped tenants. FmHA provided a similar program in 1990, helping public, nonprofit and private developers to build rental housing projects in rural areas.

But even this program would not escape being pared down under the administration's proposal. Bush, Kemp, and HUD wanted to cut the number of units constructed for the elderly and the disabled from 7,689 in FY 1990 to 3967 in FY 1990. This cut would bring the cost of the program down from about $473 million to about $283 million. The administration also wanted to cut FmHA construction from 41,885 units, costing about $1.9 billion, in FY 1990 to 28,785 units in FY 1991

The House subcommittee seemed to approve the general outline of the HOPE program, but Kemp had to field two major critiques of the program by Democratic members. Representative Mary Rose Oakar (D-OH) endorsed the expansion of home ownership that Kemp advocated but wanted the government

to expand rental opportunities for the poor as well. A more partisan issue arose when Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Representative Joseph Kennedy (D-MA) attacked the mortgage prepayment plan as a financial aid to developers. The housing market in early 1990 was described as "tight," and developers were desperately looking for means to remain solvent. Pelosi and Kennedy accused the Bush Administration of trying to provide welfare for developers through a program designed to help families living in reduced circumstances.

But there was Republican criticism of Kemp's proposals as well. It came from Representative Bartlett of Texas. Bartlett wanted low-income people to have the same right to keep profits from sale of homes as everyone else. Kemp's bill would force people who bought their own low-income apartments to sell them back to the tenant organization overseeing the project for the amount of their initial down payment, plus cost of improvements and inflation, so that other low-income families could purchase the properties.

The Bush Administration's housing bill is notable within the context of this dissertation and important for an analysis of the thesis offered here for at least two reasons.

First, it was the brainchild of HUD Secretary Kemp. Kemp had taken an active interest in housing policy through every stage of the housing debate in 1989 and 1990, and his interest in housing was fleshed out in the administration's housing bill. Some, but not all, of his proposals found their way into the final conference report and were signed into law. Kemp's most notable contribution to the administration's housing policy was the HOPE program.

Second, the bill was built along partisan lines. The addition of this element may be more surprising than it seems at first glance.

The Reagan Administration opposed federal housing policy on general principals and sought constantly to cut its funding. President Reagan's housing proposals were fixed to that theme, but they were not innovative and they contained no surprises. The Republican congressional tack on housing was to move away from increasing housing stock to helping low- and moderate-income families afford existing housing. Congressional Republicans in the BFUAC attempted had attempted, with little success, to amend the 1983 bill to that effect. The President, when asked, had approved the Republican congressional approach to housing, but his interests had been more general.

The Bush Administration's flagship housing proposal, captained by the Secretary Kemp, was a streamlined version of earlier Republican proposals. But the more important difference between 1983 and 1990 was that in 1990, the administration actually proposed and backed a number of innovations (incorporated in the HOPE program). The housing push by the Bush Administration and the active participation in the housing debate by high-ranking members of that team carry important ramifications. The important point for the thesis of this work, is that the administration's attempt to capture the housing debate was an acknowledgement that the housing question was a national question. The housing debate had moved beyond mere routine and parochial concern that could be easily captured and mollified in committee.

Another Senate Bill

Before either House or Senate could debate its version of the 1990 housing bill, the housing policy community was thrown into a tizzy when on 24 April a

bill cosponsored by Senator D'Amato and Senator Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT) of Connecticut was introduced in the Senate. The bill would have bypassed the scandal-ridden HUD entirely. It combined the nine major federal housing programs into one block-grant proposal, funded it with $7 billion, and handed it to the states. Why D'Amato would cosponsor another housing bill, especially one containing such a radical proposal, remains unexplained (*CQWR* 28 April 1990).

Forces outside Congress, who were watching the progress through Congress of the first housing bill in eight years, were quick to react to the new proposal.

Some public housing officials predicted the death of public housing if the bill passed. On the other hand, the National League of Cities, whose first response was ambivalent, decided the new D'Amato-Dodd bill would mean more dollars for housing programs run by local governments. The League hedged toward supporting the bill.

Secretary Kemp, reacting through an assistant, Mary Brunette, said the bill would mean "an abdication of responsibility and leadership" by the federal government" (*CQWR* 28 April 1990, 1271). The National Governor's Association agreed with Kemp. The governors saw the bill as abandoning federal direction of housing and dumping the whole national housing program at the feet of the states.

D'Amato and Dodd eventually dropped their rival housing bill, but the very act of proposing it was significant. In essence, it represented a miniature revolt against Cranston's leadership on the housing issue. Their action served to notify Senate leadership and the housing establishment that there was some

unrest among housing-policy activists. Meanwhile, however, debate over the original Senate bill began.

Debate on the Senate Bill

The Senate acted more quickly than the House in bringing a housing bill to a vote on the floor.

Senator Cranston's subcommittee approved the Cranston-D'Amato bill, S 556, on 5 May 1990, after a three-day session. Although the bill, with amendments, garnered 16 votes, the fact that the four senators voting "no" were all Republicans portended partisan trouble for the bill on the floor.

The full Senate committee made several changes in the original proposal. First, the $3 billion dollar HOP program was sliced by $1 billion dollars. HOP was originally to have been administered through an Office of Affordable Housing Preservation, run by an assistant secretary in HUD. Those two elements proved too expensive for committee Republicans, and Cranston compromised by dropping them from the bill.

Second, the program that would have merged federal rental voucher and rental certificate programs into one rental credit program was dropped. The bill simply modified programs then in place and provided that rental assistance would be based upon a fair market standard.

Third, the bill extended the current law regarding FHA mortgage insurance for two years. Cranston and D'Amato had originally proposed increasing mortgage ceilings for first-time home buyers. The ceiling as of late 1989 had been raised to insure mortgages up to about $125,000.

One of the original provisions of the Senate bill would have continued a program that was meant to develop housing for low-income families. It was to be funded with only about $369 million in new money, a comparatively small sum. The money would have been used to acquire, rehabilitate, and build public housing, replace demolished public housing, and undertake reconstruction of public housing. That money was sliced from the version accepted by Cranston's subcommittee in a move that dissatisfied low-income housing advocates. But Cranston's staff director, W. Donald Campbell, said the compromise was necessary to fend off party-line voting on the floor of the House. He pointed out that another $2 billion of public-housing modernization funds, as well as $1.9 billion in public housing operating subsidies for FY 1991, were not affected (*CQWR* 5 May 1990).

The Senate floor debate on S 566 began on 18 June 1990, and the bill immediately ran into trouble. Although the bill that emerged from committee carried some features of the administration's new housing proposals—notably the HOPE program—the Bush Administration objected to several elements of the bill as it was presented to the full Senate. The administration was seconded by the Republican Senate minority.

In short, President Bush and Secretary Kemp wanted to de-emphasize construction, an alteration that would significantly reduce the bill's price tag. They also wanted to target only the most needy families for assistance, another cost-reduction move. Finally, and most importantly for the government's middle-class housing programs, the administration wanted to insure FHA's actuarial soundness, it said, by increasing financial commitments of FHA clients.

This last change requested by the administration was potentially the most damaging to the Senate bill. The disagreement between the Cranston forces and those of the Republican administration uncovered an ideological crevice into which the entire bill could disappear without a trace.

Republicans had traditionally been wary of government programs for middle-class clients. The minority party saw such programs as vote-buying schemes hatched by Democrats and promoted by a burgeoning housing bureaucracy within HUD. In spite of this, Republicans senators had in the main supported the FHA mortgage-insurance programs run by the federal government because of the programs' popularity among their constituents. But Republican senators strained to keep FHA insurance programs from becoming what Republicans considered giveaways to the middle class. (Along these same ideological lines, Republicans opposed public housing and other subsidized building programs as giveaways to developers and realtors.)

While the Senate was in the process of debate on this issue, Price Waterhouse, a private accounting firm that had been commissioned by Congress to audit HUD's FHA program in light of the HUD scandal, published its findings. According to Price Waterhouse, FHA's mortgage-insurance fund had been eroding during the 1980s. The authors of the study wrote that annual defaults by middle-class purchasers of housing on FHA-guaranteed housing had reached $350 million. Price Waterhouse concluded the fund could become insolvent within the next decade if Congress did not restructure the program (*CQWR* 28 July 1990].) The report prompted the Senate's floor revision of S 566, and would also influence the BFUAC's and the House's handling of the their version of the housing bill.

Once again playing cat's paw for the administration, Senator D'Amato of New York proposed on 18 June 1990 to increase the down payment on all FHA-financed houses. Taken directly from Bush's and Kemp's original 1990 housing scheme, this proposal would have required higher premiums on smaller down payments. The D'Amato plan would have also required FHA clients to pay all closing costs up front in cash. At the time, closing costs could also be financed under FHA arrangements.

Cranston objected to President Bush and Senator D'Amato's proposal, and Cranston had allies outside Congress. These included the national realtors', home builders', and mortgage bankers' associations, as well as the Consumers Union. All of these organizations saw D'Amato's swap between HUD's financial stability and the ability of middle class families to purchase homes as a bad trade.

Cranston claimed the administration wanted to alter an effective program in a way that would place "a draconian burden on millions of middle-income families who are trying to buy a home" (*CQWR* 23 June 1990, 1966). (The actual rise in up-front costs for the average family would have been about a $900 increase in the $3,550 then needed.) Cranston's counterproposal was based on allowing HUD to manipulate premiums on FHA down payments annually in a way that would keep the program financially sound.

D'Amato's final gambit was to demand that funds for Secretary Kemp's HOPE program be restored to the levels proposed by the administration.

The Senate passed a compromise solution on 27 June 1990, nine days after the debate on the new housing bill began—and after several amendments by way of compromise were made on the floor. The final bill spent $3 billion more

than President Bush had originally requested but authorized $3 billion less than the current House version of the housing bill. It attempted to satisfy the administration and increase the soundness of FHA by establishing higher premiums on down payments of FHA-financed housing. It also required the two-thirds of closing costs be paid with the down payment, a compromise between financing all them (the Democratic position) and financing none of them (the Republican plan).

Cranston's proposed program to help develop more housing for moderate and low-income families, HOP, was also curtailed. Cranston and the administration agreed to impose qualifications on communities applying for HOP funds. Only those communities with low vacancy rates, with low turnovers of housing units renting below the existing fair-market rent levels, and with high ratios of substandard housing were to become eligible for HOP funds. This was in line with the Republican wish to curtail the production of housing when, they felt, an adequate supply was already available.

On the other hand, the final Senate bill did fund Secretary Kemp's HOPE program, which sought to help finance the cost of the purchase of housing for families of modest means rather than to make subsidized housing available or to finance the erection of new dwelling units for moderate- and low-income families. The program was to receive only $240 million for FY 1991 but was to be increased to $1 billion in FY 1993. The Democrats sweetened the HOPE pot by raising its funding to its original $435 million dollar, three-year proposal, as D'Amato demanded.

Final ratification of S 566, as amended, was held up for more than three hours by debate over an amendment by Phil Gramm, by now a Republican

senator from Texas. Gramm objected that Texas and other Sunbelt states were contributing more than their fair share of Community Development Block Grant funds, an until-now uncontroversial aspect of S 566. Gramm wanted to change the formula with which CDBG funds were parceled out. Senator D'Amato responded that his constituents did not particularly like providing funds to bail out failed savings-and-loans—many of which were located in Texas—either. D'Amato carried the day, and Gramm's amendment was defeated. This episode echoed a Sunbelt-Rustbelt fight in Congress over CDBG funding that had occurred during debate over the housing bills of the late 1970s (*CQWR* 30 June 1990).

The debate in the Senate is revealing. As indicated, the miniature revolt on the part of Senators D'Amato and Dodd revealed unrest among leadership over housing issues—a sign that these issues were become more than "business as usual" committee work. Even more significant was the fact that the debate took on in revealed strong partisan overtones. Republicans demanded and eventually got some reduction in provisions for housing construction. They allowed other such provisions to stand only when the Democrats agreed to fund the full amount requested by Secretary Kemp for his proposed HOPE program.

That the housing debate in the Senate took these turns is another indication that low-level, distributive-type committee-only control had been lost. The perception of the actors was that they were playing for high stakes—on behalf of national constituencies—during their struggle to shape the 1990 housing act. This very perception helps the issue meet the criteria for being labeled redistributive.

Debate on the House Bill

From the beginning, the House version of the 1990 housing bill differed from the Senate version and the administration's plan in that focused more on re-funding existing programs than on creating new programs and reshaping housing policy. Even in the early stages of debate, however, it became clear that forces other than just the BFUAC would act to determine the eventual shape of the legislation.

A month passed between the emergence of the House bill from the BFUAC's housing subcommittee—which came near to composing a committee of the whole for the BFUAC—on 10 May 1990, and the final report on HR 1180 to the floor by the BFUAC.

The subcommittee's main concern during its markup of HR 1180 was an amendment to the bill that would have relaxed the standards imposed on manufactured housing by the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974. Republican members, led by Representative Hiler of Indiana, wanted more flexible standards. Several Democratic members defected, and Hiler won. But the debate surged around that relatively minor issue. The major issues contained within the bill—alterations in FHA procedures, continuation of rent subsidies, and the concern over the loss of low-income units through mortgage holders' buyouts—were left for the full BFUAC to settle.

HR 1180 was reported to the full committee on 10 May (*CQWR* 19 May 1990). It was taken up there on 10 June and, after three days' debate, was reported out of the BFUAC on 13 June.

The major housing issue handled by the BFUAC during debate over the housing bill in full committee was the question of prepayment by developers of mortgages on low-rent dwellings, an issue that had more or less been ignored by the Senate. The issue was decided in committee by the addition of an amendment offered by Representative Bartlett of Texas. Bartlett's plan provided incentives to building owners to continue renting to low-income families for the full 40 years of the mortgages. The 20 voting BFUAC Republicans were joined by nine Democrats, including six Southern Democrats, to add the amendment to the bill.

HR 1180, as it was presented to the floor by the BFUAC, also created a National Housing Trust Demonstration to help first-time home buyers by buying down the lenders' interest rates so that no rate would exceed 6 percent for those families covered by the program. The program was meant for families of moderate means.

The BFUAC also added a Community Housing Partnership (CHP) program. The money provided under CHP—about $300 million—was meant to be sent through grants to state and local governments and to nonprofit corporations, to acquire, rehabilitate, or construct low- and moderate-income housing. The money was also to be used to help low-income families buy homes by selling government-acquired housing to them at no more than actual cost, plus a small add-on for development.

On the whole, the BFUAC and its Democratic majority focused on re-funding old programs rather that proposing new ones or tinkering with overall housing policy. HR 1180 authorized the expenditure of about $19 billion in housing assistance for the poor. Every one of those dollars was to be spent on

programs that were current at the time. The House also voted to follow the BFUAC's uncontroversial $2.5 billion Community Development Block Grant authorization. Most of the rest of the bill was to fund equally noncontroversial rural housing programs. A few million dollars each were earmarked for new programs—HOPE, for example, was given $629 million (*CQWR* 4 August 1990).

The House saved most of its fire for the BFUAC's recommendations to shore up the FHA fund.

The Price-Waterhouse report had been published during the Senate's debate of S 566 and had caused the Senate in mid course to add provisions meant to shore up the viability of the FHA mortgage-insurance fund. The report had been widely circulated by the time the House met to debate HR 1180. The Senate's version of the housing bill had been altered after senators read and became concerned about the report. And the Bush Administration's position—that FHA had to be saved at the cost of raising initial costs to purchasers—was known as well. The report and the subsequent concern in the Senate and by the administration over the financial health of FHA served to focus the House's attention on the features of the BFUAC's bill that regulated the FHA mortgage-insurance program.

During House debate on HR 1180, the Bush Administration reaffirmed its position on toughening FHA standards for home buyers. President Bush felt the best way to help the FHA mortgage program was to force buyers to come up with more cash up front and to pay a mortgage-insurance premium based on the amount of their down payment.

In 1990, home buyers were already paying a 3.8-percent mortgage insurance premium up front, but this premium could be financed along with

closing costs. The Bush Administration wanted to change to a risk-based premium program. The administration's plan would retain the 3.8-percent mortgage insurance premium but require that it be paid in addition to and at the same time as the down payment. The administration also wanted buyers to pay at least two-thirds of the closing costs and to finance no more than one-third of the closing costs. The current requirement for down payments—3 percent of the first $25 thousand of the price of the house and 5 percent thereafter—would be retained (*CQWR* 28 July 1990).

Although Secretary Kemp acknowledged that the administration's plan would compel some families who could otherwise afford an FHA-guaranteed house to delay buying, he argued that eventually they would be able save the money they needed and enter the FHA program. But the administration's plan found no supporters outside Washington, even among conservative groups that often backed the positions of the Republican administration.

Norman D. Flynn, a lobbyist for the national realtors' organization, called the administration's proposed increase of up-front costs "a fatal flaw" (*CQWR* 28 July 1990). Trade associations representing mortgage bankers and home builders, as well as the Consumer Federation of America, the Consumers' Union, and the National Council of State Housing Agencies, decried the administration's proposal. It would, they asserted, deprive thousands of American families of moderate means of the opportunity to invest in owning their own homes.

In 1989, 900 thousand families had purchased dwellings through the FHA program. The National Association of Realtors said that, if Bush and Kemp got their way, that number would be reduced by about 100 thousand a year. The

mortgage bankers' association thought the reduction would be more like 35 thousand. The administration thought that its position on FHA mortgage insurance would prevent only about 25 thousand families a year from buying their own living space (*CQWR* 28 July 1990).

Representatives Bruce Vento (D-MN) and Tom Ridge (R-PA), both BFUAC members, countered the administration's proposal during House debate over HR 1180. The Vento-Ridge amendment to HR 1180 would not raise the up-front costs, but would contribute to FHA's health over a longer term. The Vento-Ridge amendment allowed purchaser's of FHA-guaranteed mortgages to spread the cost of their insurance premiums out over several years instead of paying for an insurance premium based on their down payment at the time the payment was made. The cost of the down payment would remain the same.

The administration's response to the Vento-Ridge amendment, made through Secretary Kemp's office, was that people were less likely to default on their mortgages when they invested more of their own money. Kemp asserted that the new plan would lead to a default rate above 12 percent The current default rate on FHA-guaranteed mortgages in 1990 was 11.6 percent (*CQWR* 28 July 1990).

Representative Ridge countered that raising initial costs of purchasing an house to the level the administration was proposing would run counter to the spirit of the public-housing policy under which FHA was conceived, that is, to assist first-time home buyers. Some of these, he acknowledged, might place themselves at risk financially when they bought a house. But, he said, Congress could make FHA "so sound that those for whom the program was designed can't use it" (*CQWR* 28 July 1990, 2424).

President Bush and Secretary Kemp remained adamant regarding the administration's plan to reinvigorate FHA by raising initial costs to home buyers. The Senate's version of the housing bill, S 566, had been amended along the lines they suggested, and they meant, it seemed, to stick to their guns regarding the House version. Secretary Kemp wrote a letter, copies of which were sent to all House members during the floor debate on HR 1180, in which he asserted that the President would veto any housing bill that did not include the administration's plan to fix the FHA mortgage-insurance fund. However, House Republicans decided to vote for the Vento-Ridge amendment when House Democrats threatened to delete the BFUAC's version of Secretary Kemp's HOPE program from HR 1180. Minority Leader Michel and Representative Newt Gingrich (R-GA), the influential minority whip, both agreed to support Vento-Ridge. It was added to HR 1180 with just two members dissenting.

Most of the House debate concerning HR 1180 was spent with members arguing about saving FHA, but another important issue could not be ignored. Representative Bartlett's amendment to HR 1180 regarding the problem of prepaid mortgages had been added in committee over the objections of Northern Democrats. The amendment had simply allowed financial incentives to be offered by the federal government to owners of low-income housing to prevent them from paying off their mortgages early. The amendment had been supported by committee Republicans and Southern Democrats and thereby garnered enough votes in committee to be added to the bill. But centrist and liberal committee Democrats had voted against the proposal and attacked it on the floor.

Representatives Thomas Carper (D-DE), David Price (D-NC), Peter Hoagland (D-NE), and Liz Patterson (D-SC), all BFUAC members, offered a floor amendment—referred to as Carper-Price—that would replace Bartlett's amendment. Carper-Price would require owners of low-income housing to give a two-year notice of plans to prepay their mortgages. HUD would then appraise the property and would offer incentives to the owner to stay in the program. If the owner refused, then any group willing to buy the property and maintain it for low-income rental purposes would have right of first refusal. The owner would be required to sell the property to the group if the group offered to pay the owner the appraised value of the property. If there were no offers, the owner could then pay off the mortgage and convert the property to any use without penalty.

In areas with very low vacancy rates, Carper-Price required owners to give tenants an additional three years' notice to find a new place to live. The owner was required to pay up to half the tenant's moving expenses, and tenants could acquire Section 8 rent subsidy certificates, or vouchers, to help pay for their new quarters.

Representative Bartlett came around to support the plan, even though it replaced language he authored that would have supplied owners with more liberal incentives to remain in the low-income rental program. The only real resistance to Carper-Price came from the left wing of the Democratic membership. That resistance was spearheaded by Kennedy of Massachusetts, who advocated forcing low-income property owners to remain within the program and spoke of poor families being thrown "out on the street" (*CQWR* 4 August 1990, 2516) if Carper-Price was added to HR 1180.

The House agreed to the amendment, with just twelve members dissenting. The new housing bill, as amended, was accepted by the membership on 1 August 1990. By that point, it was abundantly clear that control of the issue had long been out of the hands of BFUAC membership. That control had begun slipping while the bill was still in the committee room, when Representative Bartlett successfully led a revolt by Republicans and disaffected Democrats against Gonzalez on the separate issue of mortgages on low-rent dwellings.

The House debate over HR 1180 seems to have contained the elements of redistributive policy making. The Price-Waterhouse report provoked a storm of national interest focused on the debate in Congress over the health of the FHA. The Bush Administration, represented by Secretary Kemp, took a strong position on the bill while it was under debate and tried to influence the outcome. National coalitions such as the realtors' association took strong positions on the bill, and they, too, tried to influence the outcome through media attention. Several amendments were hotly debated on the floor. There was a partisan division over the issue of prepaid mortgages, revealing the lines of a partisan argument over FHA and the housing bill in the House.

It seems clear that the policy represented by the bill had taken on redistributive characteristics. BFUAC seems to have lost control of it as soon as the Price-Waterhouse report was made public. In other words, the BFUAC did not act independently in the debate.

Changes in Conference

The House of Representative's version of the 1990 housing bill, HR 1180, was passed, after debate, on 8 August 1990. The House voted to fund the bill

with about $26 billion, $11 billion more than the Senate had offered and about $4 billion more than President Bush recommended. There were three major differences between the House's version of the 1990 housing bill, contained in HR 1180, and the Senate's version, contained in S 566.

The first and most contentious issue of the 1990 housing policy debate concerned changes in the FHA program. Any changes in the FHA mortgage guarantee program had to be made carefully. The FHA, according to the Price-Waterhouse report, was ailing and could be saved only by infusing cash into its guarantee fund. The main dispute was between the House and the administration over how that could be done. The House had agreed to extend purchasing costs over several years while raising buyers' closing costs a little, so that potential home buyers would not be dissuaded from buying homes because of burdensome up-front costs. The administration, on the other hand, wanted to shore up FHA's mortgage-guarantee fund by getting buyers to shell out more up-front money to cover closing costs and mortgage insurance. The Senate had essentially agreed with the administration and had amended S 566 to that effect. The Senate version would have added about $1 thousand to the initial home-buying costs for people purchasing homes worth $65 thousand through the FHA program, compared to an additional $800 thousand the House version would have added.

As it turned out, the House-Senate conference committee had to push the House version of the FHA bailout plan off the table when their colleagues in the budget conference committee required that the FHA program generate $2.5 billion in revenues in 1991 and 1992. The House version of the bill would simply not yield an adequate cash flow over the next two years to meet that

requirement. Consequently, the Senate version of the FHA salvation program was adopted by the conference.

These developments prompted the National Realtors' Association to oppose the bill out of hand. According to Stephen D. Driesler, chief lobbyist for the realtors' organization, the conference version of the FHA bailout bill would put home ownership out of reach for 60 thousand families annually for the next two years. He also predicted that those losses would be reflected in reduced revenues for other businesses peripheral to the housing industry, such as the furniture, the home-moving, and the home-improvement industries (*CQWR* 20 October 1990).

The second issue facing the conference committee was that of subsidized housing. The point of contention was continued construction of rental units for low-income families. The Senate, in a radical departure, had approved a plan devised by senators Cranston and D'Amato to collapse the existing rental-construction programs into block grants. The Senate wanted to hand the operation of building and providing new rental units for low-income families to the states. The House, on the other hand, had cut several rental programs from the budget but had funded the remaining so-called "traditional" rental-construction programs well. The problem for the conference committee was how to reconcile these two approaches and to take into account the administration's position as well. President Bush's main concern was the cost of the construction programs.

The conference committee worked out a compromise by adding the House's construction program, which had been sponsored on the floor by Representative Charles Schumer (D-NY), to the Senate's block-grant program.

Traditional low-rent construction programs were to compose 10 percent of the total expenditures for FY 1991 and 15 percent for FY 1992. The conference Republicans had tried to kill the construction program entirely, but were satisfied to convert construction into a block-grant program. The subsidized housing language in the bill also included Secretary Kemp's HOPE program in the new housing program. The final conference version, which represented a compromise among all parties represented at the conference, included $9.5 billion for subsidized housing and provided a total of $23.7 billion for all HUD housing programs.

The third issue facing the conference committee was that of the prepayment of mortgages by owners of low-income rental units. The House had addressed this issue; HR 1180 had been amended to meet this danger at least twice, once in the BFUAC and once on the floor. But the Senate had failed to address the issue at all until 27 September. Then it had passed a stop-gap measure, S 5558, that simply applied a one-month moratorium, beginning on 1 October 1990, that prevented landlords from paying off federally subsidized mortgages. The moratorium was meant to give the conference committee time to solve the problem.

A compromise of sorts was worked out in conference between Representative Bartlett, author of the House bill's provisions concerning mortgage buyouts, and Senator Cranston. Bartlett wanted mortgage holders to be able to sell their property at its appraised value, once it was determined that their communities contained an adequate supply of other units to meet the housing needs of low-income families displaced by the sale. The compromise insured that mortgage holders could sell their property, but its low-income

rental status would be preserved throughout its remaining useful life by selling it to buyers who would pledge to so maintain it. Mortgage holders could still sell the property, or convert it to other uses, if the community had high vacancy rates in housing available to the poor.

Conclusions

Here are the members of the cast who played active roles during the resolution of the housing debate that lasted from 1989 to 1990.

Congress as a body seems to have become aware of national housing problems at least by 1987; that awareness was marked by the passage of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987. Congress also approved the creation of at least two groups to study housing in the late 1980s—The Rouse-Maxwell Commission and the National Low-Income Housing Preservation Commission. The first was response to call from Senator Cranston. The second was impaneled when the danger of prepayment of mortgages for low-rent housing began to arise.

The Senate banking subcommittee and its chairman, Senator Cranston of California, played a major role in the entire process of passing housing legislation. Cranston's concerns seemed to have revolved about the ability of the middle-class to purchase family dwellings. This concern was incarnated in the form of the Maxwell-Rouse Commission, many of whose recommendations took form in the housing bills that emerged from Cranston's subcommittee in 1989 and 1990.

The *Washington Post*, a powerful media voice based in the capital itself, lambasted the government for its lassitude in reforming housing policy. The *Post*

took one cue from a report by another national organization, the National League of Cities. The League was concerned, as Senator Cranston was concerned, that the ability of the average family to purchase a home was slipping. The paper also called for the government to shore up the ability of the poor to afford better quarters.

Secretary Kemp represented the administration and took the lead in its attempt to reform housing policy around conservative principles. The narrative here is not broad enough to capture the level of the secretary's activity on behalf of the housing programs that he promoted, especially HOPE. He made numerous field visits to urban sites outside Washington to press for support for HOPE and other Bush Administration proposals. Kemp also had to guide his agency out of the quagmire Secretary Pierce had evidently left it in. But Kemp represented politics of federal housing, not its administration.

Little had been said here about the activity within HUD itself, but its professional administrators must have been pulled from two directions. First, they had to defend themselves from the scandals of Pierce's administration and clean up existing programs. Second, they had to gird their agency for the effects of the housing reforms that Congress appeared poised to pass in 1989 and 1990.

Finally, the BFUAC did play an important role in passing the new legislation—but not a central one. Its version of the housing bill of 1990 rehashed several older housing concepts into new programs. Its policies regarding housing for the poor continued in the tradition of financing new housing construction. The Senate, on the other hand, was convinced by Kemp to initiate the HOPE program and to fold several other programs into block grants administered by the states, a clear departure from previous policy.

The activity of these players must now be measured against the benchmarks for distributive policy making. If the 1990 housing act was a distributive bill, the BFUAC should have acted powerfully as an independent player. Did it?

The debate over housing in 1990 was certainly not contained with the BFUAC committee room. The debate swirled around the country. National groups were involved, concerned, and vocal about their suggestions. At least one important amendment was added to the BFUAC's version on the floor of the House in 1990. The Bush Administration actively intervened in the debate in the person of Jack Kemp. At least one nationally respected newspaper called for Congress to solve a housing "crisis." Congressional commissions added their voice to the debate. And the bill that emerged from conference committee in 1990 was much closer to the Senate's version than to the House's version.

There is an argument to be made about the relative weakness of the BFUAC's position in committee compared to the strength of the Senate's position. It may be that the Senate and its committees are better qualified to control and to shape redistributive policy than is the House and its committees. After all, senators represent states, which provide much broader arenas of political activity than do House districts. Senators must appeal to a more diverse electorate than do members of the House, so their elections do not depend on the goodwill of interests as narrow as those represented by members of the House.

It may be, as well, that Senators acquire a more balanced view of policymaking. Senator Cranston, for example, could argue as passionately about agriculture as he could about housing--because a large section of California's economy is dedicated to agriculture. Senators may be better able to distance

themselves from the demands of narrow interests and address national issues more passionately than their blindered colleagues in the House.

Another way of stating this argument is that the Senate may be more in harmony with national interests than the House and is therefore in a better position to mold redistributive policy, which is national in character.

A fair interpretation of the BFUAC's activity is that it attempted to maintain the direction of federal housing policy as it then existed, on behalf of its constituencies. There is no direct evidence presented here that the BFUAC was acting on behalf of the real-estate and construction industries of its members' districts. (Remember that data presented in chapter 4 pointed to the likelihood that these groups formed powerful constituencies in the districts represented by BFUAC members.) But the policies that emerged on the questions of housing for the poor and FHA refinancing strongly suggests that was the case.

The committee's ability to hold the line and simply strengthen the finances of the existing structure was clearly overwhelmed by the national attention the question of reforming federal housing policy had attained by 1990. National groups entered the debate, which spilled out of the committee room floor onto the floors of the House and the Senate and into the counsels of the executive. The issue was national. The policy making was redistributive in nature. And the BFUAC bent to the inevitable.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The House Committee As an Independent Actor on the Stage of Public Policy: Some Conclusions

The BFUAC has been viewed both up close as an individual "tree" and from a distance within the context of the federal policy-making "forest." Along the way, several conclusions have been drawn about what the evidence reveals of the independent character of the BFUAC.

Each member of Congress must constantly worry about re-election. That concern is translated into the way policy is made and into the contours of the policies themselves.

From the first time a member ascends the Capitol steps until that member descends them for the last time, re-election is on his or her mind. This is especially so for members of the House of Representatives, who are bound by the constitutional requirement to appeal to the people every other year. Congressional careers are made, continued, or broken through elections. Members must turn toward their districts as faithfully as followers of Islam face toward Mecca. Representatives must constantly ask themselves, What is the best way to keep me squarely in front of my constituency? One answer is to keep producing legislation that provides for the constituents' wants and needs.

The House of Representatives is a legislative body composed of 435 members, each of whom represents more than one-half million persons. A population of 250 million (approximately that of the United States) even taken half a million at a time, is bound to display a great deal of divergence. But at the

same time, various district populations exist that may resemble each other. These districts are similar enough to elect representatives who must make similar re-election appeals.

One view of congressional policy making holds that Congress has developed a set of institutions to accommodate similar sets of re-election appeals. These institutions are standing committees. Members themselves will change committees only when they see that the change enables them to increase their ability to reward their districts for their re-elections. Members' allegiance is to the forces within their districts, or elsewhere outside Congress, that make their elections possible.

In such a system, how are public policies made?

In the main, the process is one of back-scratching and logrolling. Policies made in committees find their way to the floor of the House, where they are received and sanctioned. Members trust that the voting support they render their fellows is returned when their own committees' bills reach the floor. In this system, committees are important, they are powerful, and they are at the center of each member's legislative life.

But there is another view of the role of committees in the House of Representatives. This second view does not necessarily abandon the assumption that members' self-interest is the dynamo behind policy making in the House, but it does not abide the notion that committees are centerpieces of the policy process. Instead, the House itself is said to be the responsible institution. Its committees play secondary but important, roles.

Committees remain important institutions within the House, in this second view, for a good reason. The House is responsible for a vast amount of

activity, and not everything can be taken care of on the floor of the assembly. Although the House is, essentially, a committee of 435, such a large committee in inherently unwieldy. To process the vast amounts of legislation that pass through House chambers during any session would be cumbersome and deadly slow if all legislative tasks were performed on the floor of the House. Some division of labor had to be devised for efficiency's sake. That division of labor takes the form of the modern committee system in the House.

According to this view, committees are helpful in several ways. One of the most important is the acquisition of expertise by committee members concerning certain fairly narrow sets of policies. The "learning curve" on any given piece of legislation for experts who have dealt with similar concerns often in the past is very short. And, with committee members sharing a common pool of knowledge regarding the issue, debaters within committee chambers use a kind of shorthand. This is so because members are familiar not only with the issues but with each other.

Shared expertise greatly shortens debate within committee. It makes more efficient the policy-writing process that is, in the main, the immediate responsibility of the standing committees of the House.

Another helpful characteristic of committees is that they develop reliable information which can then be passed on to other members on the floor. It may not be possible for all representatives to read all of the bills they are called upon to pass or fail. Members unfamiliar with looming legislation refer to trusted members of the committee that produced it in order to make an informed vote.

Within such a policy-making system, committees do not necessarily lose their appeal to members' re-election concerns. Committees are, after all, charged

with legislation on specific policy sets, and those policy sets remain fairly constant save in eras of reform. People at home still recognize the significance to their concerns of their House members' committee activities.

What then is the difference between the House-centered policy idea—the idea that committees serve as agents of the House—and the committee-centered policy idea—the idea that committees act as agents for interests entirely outside the House? Simply that committee-centered idea assumes that committees are responsible for making policy and that they are received on the floor without much criticism. The House-centered idea assumes that the House itself is the responsible institution, although relying on its committees for expertise and information.

Now appearances, it seems, may confuse one system with the other. If the House does indeed trust its committees as experts to refine legislation within committee chambers, then there may be no need to debate that legislation when it appears on the floor. The experts have done their best, other members may think, and nothing remains to be done. Taken one bill at a time, this floor-committee relationship maintains the outward appearance of committee independence because the floor really has little to say about policy made by committees it trusts.

But differences may appear in committees themselves that throw this easy floor-committee relationship into a cocked hat. Committees may shirk their duty to the House in one way or the other. The House may have unwisely chosen to compose a committee in such a way that the committee's views are unlike those of the House itself. These differences are usually identified as ideological. Committee members of unrepresentative committees devote their expertise to

presenting legislation that is perceived by other members to be biased in one way or the other. In that case, the policy cannot be left alone by the floor. It cannot be agreed upon by the entire chamber until the chamber has rectified the bias placed in the policy by the committee who wrote it. In such an event, debate spills out of the committee room and onto the floor of the House.

Now as a matter of fact, the committee may think that it is acting autonomously. Members may be surprised when their bill arouses such hot debate on the floor. What is the cause of the furor? The bill is unrepresentative of the desires of the House. Its bias must be rectified, and this must be done on the floor. More powerful players than the committee enter the arena. The cause of the turmoil is the addition of players into the policy-making arena. No longer is just the committee concerned with the bill. The bill has attracted a national audience.

Yet the committee considers, by its own lights, that it has acted correctly and in the self-interest of its members. It desires the floor to carry the task through and pass the bill. The floor refuses and re-forms the bill, altering the narrow intent of the policy therein into something broader.

Now, there is a third concept of the role of committees in the House. This concept has to do with re-election again, but re-election conceived on a national scale. In this view, committees are agents of political parties, usually defined as party caucuses within the legislature.

According to most observers, the role of political parties within the political process is shrinking. And yet there is evidence that many if not most American voters are loyal in some fashion to parties and their candidates. People still vote along party lines. It therefore behooves members of the House of

Representatives to support their parties' policy positions in the committees and on the floor of the legislature.

Again, the argument here is for self-preservation. Partisan support in chambers and on the floor translates into votes at home for loyal partisan members. In this third view, party caucuses control the organization and debates of the House, and standing committees do as the caucuses bid. Committees are carried along by partisanship. National and local electoral concerns seem to merge. What is good for the national party is good for the member in his district. Members are constrained to fashion policy within committee chamber along partisan lines. But again, even if this is so, committees may seem to be placidly forming policy within committee rooms that is eventually met with party approbation on the floor, as well. Why? Because caucuses have made committees in their images.

The first of these views of House policy making clearly includes the notion of committee independence. That is the thesis defended in this study of the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives in the 1980s. Was the committee independent as the term in conventionally defined and as is described in the introduction? Within the context of principal-agent theory, was the BFUAC an agent of forces outside the House?

The answer to that question is that the BFUAC may have performed as an agent of each of the three principals. It may have acted as an independent agent at one time or another. It may have acted as an agent of the floor from time to time. Or, it may have occasionally been a partisan agent. The answer to why the

thesis is confirmed in part, but not confirmed in part, is found in analysis of the results of the survey of BFUAC activity in the 1980s represented by this study.

Do the Indicators Hold?

Five indicators of independent committees were identified at the outset of this study. The first is self-selection of committees by members. The second is that each committee's districts share characteristics that together distinguish them from other district. The third and fourth involve ideological and partisan differences between committee members and other members. The fifth is ability to control the course of legislation as it passes through the House.

Each of these indicators of committee independence was investigated in the context of the BFUAC in the 1980s. What do the results reveal?

Self-selection

The first indicator, self-selection, is marked by two factors. The first factor is respect by floor and caucus of seniority rights of committee members. This respect is translated into the "rightful" promotion of senior members into committee positions of responsibility. The most senior member of the majority party's committee delegation chairs the committee. His or her most senior minority colleague is recognized as the ranking minority member, and so forth. Interference with this right by the party caucus indicates party, not committee strength, in the House.

From an empirical standpoint, most BFUAC members who remained in Congress remained at their posts in that committee. This evidence supports the independence thesis. But there are other considerations.

The record of promotion into the chair of the BFUAC during the period studied and before does not support the independence thesis. The most senior member of the majority democratic delegation, Representative Gonzalez, was seated as chairman in 1989, after the electoral defeat of his predecessor, St Germain. But Gonzalez' experience seems to have been an exception for the BFUAC. St Germain had been raised to the chair over the head of a senior colleague, Representative Reuss, who had just occupied that station himself. And Reuss's selection represented two breaches in seniority; he was promoted to the chair past two other, more senior colleagues. And veteran chairman Patman, whom Reuss replaced, had himself had assumed the chair after decades of service behind a colleague more junior than himself.

A conclusion that may be reached after reviewing this record is that the Democratic caucus of the House regarded the chairmanship of the BFUAC as an important post. The caucus did not care to tolerate too much deviation from party positions on legislation composed by the committee. One method for insuring party partisan orthodoxy is to place a party censor in the chair as a kind of political officer. The power of the chair, even after the mid-1970s, may serve to keep the committee more or less on the straight and narrow.

Another conclusion that may be drawn from the appointment experience of the BFUAC chair that it may make little difference to the caucus whether the committee is like or unlike themselves, as long as the chair is able to moderate the activity of his committee charges into policies acceptable to a majority of the caucus. (It is true that principal-agent theory would allow for the composition of committees unlike the caucus, as long as some method exists to keep the committee from shirking its duty.) If this observation is true, then

Representatives Gonzalez and St Germain were regarded by their Democratic colleagues as "party men." They replaced members who offended the majority or were unable to keep the BFUAC in line with the wishes of the caucus.

The second mark of self-selection by members is the "property right" norm. The floor recognizes each member's right to the committee position or positions he occupies. Members are assumed to own their committee positions, and members move from one committee to another only if the new position promises more advantages toward re-election.

Scholars have devised a number of schemes regarding the desirability of House committees, most of which follow Fenno's representation of members' goals in the House. Members whose primary concern is re-election will seek out committees that help them achieve that goal. Members who focus on making good public policy will seek out committees with a similar focus. And members who desire to accumulate power within the House itself will seek out the power or prestige committees. Such committee typologies are useful because they create benchmarks that may be used to measure committee performance and to create explanations for committee behavior. But there are limits to their use as well.

First, there is the question of members' motives. No legislator's motives can be entirely discerned, and those that may be discerned are never entirely pure. Second, there is the mundane question of House committee organization. House members in the 1980s occupied positions on an average of two standing committees. It is entirely possible that members sought out a position on each of the two committees with a different motive in mind: BFUAC for policy, for instance, and agriculture for re-election. Finally, there is the question of the multidimensionality of committee policy making. The BFUAC oversees banking

regulation and housing policy. Although these two policy sets meet at several points, members may see them as quite different. A member may seek a position on the BFUAC for re-election purposes based on the strength of the construction industry in his district, only to find that he has to major in banking policies as well.

The BFUAC is usually touted as a policy committee. But it may just as well have re-election appeal for many of its members. This point draws the narrative to a discussion of the movement of certain BFUAC members off the committee during the 1980s.

Movement of members from the BFUAC to other policy committee or to a re-election is unremarkable. These moves are explained as members' seeking a better fit for themselves. For example, Representative Cooper moved from BFUAC to Energy. The reason is unknown, but a plausible explanation drafted from theory presented earlier in this dissertation is that the move was made to put him into a position to appeal more strongly to his constituency for re-election.

Still remaining is an explanation for the moves of several quite junior BFUAC members not to policy or re-election committees, but to power or prestige committees. This phenomenon presents an anomaly that may not very well be explained through the notion of committee independence.

If seniority within committee means eventual promotion to leadership, then members who attain seniority within the House itself—a separate list is kept for each committee and for the House—should frequently be rewarded with seats on prestige committees. Yet several BFUAC members during the time

studied were promoted to prestige committees without spending much time either in the House or on the BFUAC itself.

In a way, this phenomena is not a breech of the ethics of self-promotion within the committee system. Members could be motivated to move from the BFUAC to a prestige committee for any one or all three of the motivations stipulated by Fenno. But members do not promote themselves; they are moved by the party caucus itself. Why then were these junior BFUAC members so fortunate?

One explanation is that party caucuses assert more power throughout the committee system than is otherwise believed. It may be that certain members are marked for promotion early in their congressional careers. They are placed by the caucus on one or more of the non-prestige committees, and their performance closely watched. They may even be placed under the tutelage of certain veteran committee chairs. If they live up to early expectations, they are encouraged to request, and are rewarded with, a place on Rules or Ways and Means.

Now, this would mean that the caucuses may regard standing committees as laboratories for House leadership, much as state governments are sometimes regarded as laboratories for federal policies. It may also indicate that the prestige committee themselves serve as agents of the party caucuses.

Prestige committees occupy positions of importance within the House because they collectively oversee the entire spectrum of federal policy making. Several prestige committees are gatekeepers. As agents of party caucuses, Appropriations, Budget, and Rules are able to enforce partisan orthodoxy by forming or re-forming policy in the domain of policy and re-election committees.

This would free leaders of parties in the House from worrying too much about the relative independence of standing committees. Each caucus would have to take care only that the prestige committees were carefully staffed with members who act within the policy prescriptions of partisanship.

The Socioeconomic Characteristics of Members' Districts

The second indicator of committee independence is the notion that certain districts share common socioeconomic characteristics. It is possible by extending the logic of this assertion to imagine that clusters of similar districts across the country send representatives to Congress who perceive similar electoral needs. These members band together in committees and proceed to legislate to meet their constituents' common needs. This notion is crucial the idea of independent committee agency.

If all districts shared similar features, then all members' electoral appeals would be similar. Every member would have a common interest in each and every policy set within the purview of each committee, and there would be little competition for committee places. Some kind of round-robin system could be devised, or perhaps a merit system created, that would scramble the membership among committees at certain intervals—say, at the beginning of each new Congress. If all districts were fundamentally the same, then it would benefit each member to serve on as many committees as possible. A member with a record of service on several committees could claim that he worked for all the interests of his constituents. (This idea of common policy goals shared by all members seems to be central to those who assert that committees are—or should be—agents of the parent chamber.)

If the BFUAC was an independent agent during the 1980s, however, its districts should be found to have been different from other districts in certain ways. A series of hypotheses were developed and tested in chapter three of this dissertation to explore the validity of that assertion. Assuming that valid measures were applied, tests indicate that BFUAC districts were different in statistically different ways across at least two variables—the strength of the construction industry in the district and the number of individuals employed in banking, finance, and real estate.

These findings support the independence thesis. But they seem to stand at odds with earlier scholarship.

According to several scholars, the BFUAC is a policy committee. Now, this designation has several ramifications, but the most important of these is that it undercuts the conception of the BFUAC as an independent agent. Members of independent committees choose their committees for re-election purposes, in the main. Committee members must of course make, or seem to make, policy on behalf of their constituents to get re-elected. But their interest in making good public policy, as members of independent committees, is secondary to their interest in pleasing their constituents.

Policy committees would seem to look for guidance to the chamber itself, or perhaps to the party caucuses. What is to be made of evidence found here supporting independence for the BFUAC?

It may be as simple a matter as killing two birds with one stone. Policy mavens, who despite their preferences need to appeal to their districts for re-election, may be able to reward their districts and satisfy their policy-making impulses at the same time. A sounder answer, though, is simply that the

common committee typologies are too crudely conceived to admit the nuances tied to mixed motives of members of Congress. This is not to say typologies are not useful. But their authors intend them to elicit criticism and spark further explanation. They are not meant to lay down an orthodoxy. But when they are abstracted many times away from their empirical roots by reuse and repetition, they lose explanatory power.

The findings supporting this second indicator do in part affirm the notion that BFUAC districts were distinct from other districts of the House. This finding is important to the confirmation of the thesis. One of upshots of this confirmation is to reduce the likelihood that the characterization of the BFUAC as a policy committee is correct.

But note also that this test succeeded among only two of the five variables tested. The BFUAC does not seem to differ significantly, as hypothesized, from other districts by measures of poverty, urbanness, or the members' personal characteristics. What conclusion may be drawn from these findings? One explanation may be that the variables employed may have failed to tap the meanings of poverty, urbanness, or members' personal dispositions. If that is the case, it may still be that BFUAC districts differ from others by these characteristics. The failure is with the test. Other measures must be devised and tested.

Ideological Differences

The third indicator of committee independence is that committees members hold to ideological biases that separate them in one way or the other

from other members of the House. Biases reveal themselves in two ways. Committee memberships may be overbalanced toward one region of the country or the other, or committee members may be marked as more liberal or more conservative through rating systems devised by certain ideologically based interest groups that measure voting patterns on the floor .

There is a certain ambiguity in explaining that, for example, a committee dominated by Southern members is conservative. Its Southern members may in fact be members elected from the liberal Southern enclaves, if such exist. The idea of regional ideological bias tends to level all differences among persons and districts. If Representatives Albert Gore of Tennessee and Trent Lott of Mississippi serve on a committee together and contributed to a Southern majority, the committee is marked as conservative. Yet Gore is certainly more liberal than Lott, the conservative. This of course is a problem encountered generally with the use of statistics to test empirical concepts of political phenomena. It does not necessarily diminish the findings here, but it does imply that caution should be employed in interpreting them. Committee ideology is probably better discerned on a district-by-district basis.

The real test of this regional measure comes in combination with other measures of ideology, such as the systems that use floor votes to rate members' ideology. Problems with these rating scales are noted in chapter 5, but their use is so widespread that even the skeptic may employ them with some assurance of their worth. Their use also promotes ease of cross-study comparisons.

The results of the regional comparisons suggest that the BFUAC was an Eastern, therefore a liberal, committee during the 1980s. The results of the ideological tests for voting reveal a similar, although somewhat more

ambiguous, pattern. But the four ratings used seem to concur that, over the decade studied, BFUAC members voted on the whole less conservatively then their colleagues on the floor of the House. The results of the second test seem to validate the results of the first test. The two combine to make a moderately strong case in favor of a committee whose views were divergent from those of the House.

The results do support the idea of the BFUAC as an independent agent. But again, several circumstances may modify that interpretation.

First, although differences exist between the BFUAC and the House by every measure during each year of the entire decade studied, none of the differences attains statistical significance. The lack of statistical significance cannot be ignored, but it may be explained. Statistical significance is computed and attached to the results of tests like the one employed here when data is taken from a sample, that is, a small group taken from among the entire population of the units of observation. In this case, the units of observation are members of Congress. Data is not taken from a sample, but from the entire population for each of the ten years studied.

The statistical significance used with sample-based data enables one to generalize from results produced through the manipulation of sample-based data. That is, if the results are found to be statistically significant, statements can be reliably made regarding the findings as if the findings were based on data taken from the entire population. But, since these data are derived from a population and not from a sample, it could be argued that the statistical significance of the results may safely be ignored.

This argument is not entirely convincing. It could be argued, for example, that it is votes cast, not members of Congress, that are being observed. If that is so, then the entire population of votes has not been tested; only a sample has been taken. In that case, the production of statistical significance is called for.

In any event, statistical significance has been noted for the results of the tests for both ideology and partisanship. The best interpretation is probably that statistical significance is a kind of intensifier of the results produced. Rejecting results because of their lack of statistical significance may not necessarily be called for.

The second consideration is that the ideological measures of the BFUAC are changing, as hypothesized. This should be expected. The population of the country is moving South and West. States in those regions are robbing Northern and Midwestern states of House districts as Northeastern and Midwestern populations remain static or decrease. And of course, as the regional membership of the House is reconfigured, so are the memberships of House committees. Assuming that the ideological tendencies by region remain as others have theorized, then not only the BFUAC, but other committees of the House, should move ideologically to the right.

Finally, the most tangible problem with the efforts made in this study to tap into ideological differences between the BFUAC and House have to do with the inaccessibility of true committee-based data. Committee voting records are probably the best source that could possibly be used to discern ideological divisions within committees themselves. Floor voting records are the end products of a series of maneuvers, both in committee and on the floor. Committee members who vote one way on the floor may have voted very

differently within committee chambers. Without committee voting records, changes are difficult to pinpoint, and members' true ideological positions are difficult to assess. But committee voting records are simply difficult to obtain outside Washington. One of the House reforms of the 1970s was the requirement that records of committee votes be kept. Unfortunately, those records are not published. However, Glen R. Parker and Suzanne L. Parker's use of committee voting records (1979, 1985) demonstrate that they can be obtained and employed successfully.

Despite the caveats listed above, however, the results of testing for ideological differences mark the BFUAC as an independent committee. Evidence indicates that BFUAC did differ ideological from their House colleagues during the decade of the 1980s.

Partisan Differences

A fourth mark of committee independence is that of partisan differences between Republican and Democratic delegations in committee and their respective party caucuses within the House. Significant differences indicate that committee delegations are unlike the caucuses and maintain both distance from and independence of party caucuses in the House.

The same caveats apply to the use of floor votes that apply to the use of ideological interest group ratings. (This time, floor votes appear in the form of conservative-coalition, party-unity, and presidential-support scores.) The tests applied to these scores, however, reveal some significant differences. BFUAC Republicans, compared to BFUAC Democrats, were generally more supportive

of the conservative coalition and of the positions of Republican presidents Reagan and Bush. This is to be expected, but it means that a direct comparison between BFUAC Democrats and BFUAC Republicans can only be made between the party-unity scores of those groups. By that measure, BFUAC Democrats appear to be somewhat more unified than their Republican BFUAC colleagues.

The results imply that BFUAC Democrats are indeed unlike their colleagues on the floor, measured by voting habits. In the Ninety-seventh Congress, they appear to have been very unlike their colleagues; statistically significant differences appear at least once for each measure during 1981 and 1982. But this intensity abated toward the end of the decade. BFUAC Democrats appear to have become, on the whole, more like their Democratic colleagues on the floor as the decade waned.

BFUAC Republicans also voted in patterns unlike those of their House colleagues throughout the decade. Committee Republicans were intensely unlike their colleagues during the second session of the Ninety-eighth Congress in 1984, and they were significantly different by one measure during the first year of that Congress, 1983.

Considered in tandem with the results of ideological differences between the BFUAC, the results support committee independence. If Republicans are assumed to take more conservative positions and Democrats the more liberal positions, then BFUAC Democrats were more liberal than their House colleagues. BFUAC Republicans were also somewhat more liberal than their House colleagues. But the question arises again as to whether floor votes accurately measure partisans divisions at the committee level. If it is assumed that they do, then the results may be taken at face value. But the best course is

probably to apply caution in interpreting the results to strongly favor independence.

Control of Legislation

E. E. Schattschneider (1960) says that the most important element in policy making is the salience of the issue under consideration. Salience means, within the context of national politics, how widespread the interest in the policy becomes. The wider the interest, the more players enter the arena.

To understand Schattschneider's notion of policy salience is to understand the genesis of Lowi's typology of public policy. Each policy level represents policies more salient than the previous level. Distributive policies attract little attention; redistributive policies attract the most. Schattschneider builds no typology on the idea of policy salience, but seems to imply that the same kind of policy may attain different degrees of salience. During one year, housing policy may capture national attention. During the next, housing policy is replaced on the national agenda by other policies, and housing policy may be relegated to the committee room.

Lowi seems to part from Schattschneider at this crucial point. Lowi freezes specific policies at one salience level or the other. Lowi's scheme works if his assumption that politics are driven by policy is true. It is probably more revealing to say that Lowi believes that politics are driven by policy types. But if politics are driven by policy, then the level of salience of any given policy is predetermined. Housing policy debates, typed by Lowi as redistributive politics, must inevitably reach a high level of salience.

What Lowi seems not to take into account is that politics is often a game of perceptions of mere images, images that themselves may distort reality. What is perceived to be so, whether it is or not, is acted upon as if it were so. So it is with public policy. If a certain policy is perceived by many individuals, legislators, bureaucrats, groups, and interests to affect them, then they all join the debate, and a high degree of salience is attained. The policy is redistributive in nature. If the issue is perceived by only a few of them to be important, then a low level of salience is attained. The policy is distributive in nature.

This very important role the notion perception plays in the policy process is the contribution Smith (1972) makes to understanding the policy process. His insights enable the connection between the policy process frame, presented in the second part of this dissertation, and the principal-agent frame dominating the first part of this work.

Distributive policy making is policy making by independent committees. The issues are perceived as narrowly drawn and irrelevant to all but just a few interests. These interests are those represented by the BFUAC or by any other given legislative committee. The committee may act freely, shape the legislation as it desires, and have the results accepted by the floor without demur. It hardly matters whether the committee represents the floor, party caucuses, or any interests other than its own. Since the bill is perceived to affect so few interests, other powerful institutions trust the committee's judgment and accept the bill.

Redistributive policies are debated at the committee level as well. In fact, there may be no apparent difference to committee members; they must move on the policy regardless of its salience. The difference is that many more policy actors perceive the bill as relevant to their interests as well. These other actors

cannot join the committee to debate the issue necessarily, but they may address the issues that concern them through other forums. The President has a national audience available through national media, for example. Within the House, concerns of other members may emerge in floor debate. If the issue is partisan in nature, the House may divide along party lines.

The point that must be made here about redistributive politics is that committees lose their tight control over policy debates when the issues grow in salience. Greater institutions capture control of the debate because they perceive that the issues affect a wide range of interests whose concerns they must address.

At the point where that control is lost, committees also lose their ability to work entirely on behalf of their own constituents. Another way of saying this is that, at the point where control is lost, committees lose their power to act independently. They still must act, but they must act within a broader context, a context dictated by more powerful players, whose agent the committee then becomes.

The idea of the salience of issues helps solve some of the ambiguity created by the results brought to light through the investigation in this dissertation of the last indicator of committee independence. Depending on the salience of the issue at the time, the BFUAC may serve as an independent committee, as an agent of the House, or as an agent of the floor, all around the same issue. The BFUAC is independent when the salience of issues is low; it loses that independence to House or to caucus as the salience of the issues rises. And yet the committee may perceive itself as acting in a similar capacity at all times, despite its diminished capacity to control the debate.

An example of the BFUAC's losing control of housing policy debate is presented in chapter 7, which presents a case study of the housing bill of 1990. Many other players other than the BFUAC are on the stage from the time the curtain rises, and they are there because the perceive that housing has captured national attention. Congress had commissioned two ad hoc committees to study housing from different angles. The topic of homelessness was being continually placed before the public by the media, and the *Washington Post* had decried a national housing crisis. Public scandals had shaken HUD. The Senate, the House, both parties, the President and his putative major adviser on housing, Secretary Kemp, all had taken stands on housing policy. The BFUAC was of course involved, but by 1989 the debate was clearly out of their control.

The housing bill the BFUAC provided the House in 1990 looks like a partisan document and was probably meant to meet standards set by the Democratic House caucus. But the House itself took control on the floor, and the bill was altered in a major way. The conference committee on the housing agreed on a final version that was unlike the original bill the BFUAC had presented to the floor, partly because the House through its appropriations process had acted to limit the scope of the bill while it was in conference. The final conference version of the housing bill suited the Senate and the President more than it pleased the House, regardless of its eventual title.

By contrast, the housing bill of 1983 was unassuming--and largely distributive in nature. It appears to have been controlled by committee through floor debate, although the Senate failed to act. The bill appeared dead in the water until BFUAC chairman St Germain performed his sleight-of-hand by tying the housing bill to the International Monetary Fund issue in 1983.

The 1983 housing-IMF combination raises an important question that must be addressed before this discussion is finished.

One of the assumptions about distributive policy making is that distributive policies usually become law. Legislation that interests few players and seems to hurt no one makes everyone happy with the results. No one is injured, and interested parties receive their benefits in due course. Redistributive policies, however, may provoke widespread opposition because they may be seen as harmful to certain powerful interests—the President, political parties, peak associations, and so forth.

Why then was the 1983 bill initially pronounced dead?

For nearly 50 years, from the 1930s through the 1970s, political scientists could study the policy process of the federal government under the assumption that government was a dynamic, moving, positive, growing force in society. This half-century of positivism in government began to come to a close during the 1980s with the election and installation of the Reagan Administration. President Reagan was determined to return the federal government to its former size and deprive it of its relatively new ability to reshape American society through official planning. In short, negativism replaced positivism.

This fundamental change in the direction of government could not be accomplished overnight, nor could it be done without a series of clashes between adherents of the philosophy of positive government and their negativist opponents. The battles of this political war were played out, and are still in the process of being played out, in every forum provided by American society. One of those forums is Congress.

The Reagan Administration missed few opportunities to attack the positivists through the legislative process. Their plans included rescissions, vetoes, reduced budgets, party-block voting, and the like. And these tactics eventually began to take their toll. Positivists were aghast at their losses and began to attack their opponents for not playing fair. In a sense, the use of the legislative process by opponents of "big" government had become an issue debated within Congress. And because it was debated with national attention focused upon the debate, it became, in Lowian terms, a redistributive issue.

Routine distributive legislation that formerly passed the House without much comment continued to get passed, as before, but was often lost in the midst of a greater battle. This is probably what happened to the original housing bill in 1983. It could be resurrected and passed under the upturned nose of President Reagan only because of some legislative hocus-pocus performed by a senior member of the House.

Principal-Agency Theory and the Study of Legislative Committees

Principal-agency theory provides a common-sense frame for the explanation of committee activity. It frames committee activity in terms of economic theory using a three-part device that mimics typologies expounded by political scientists. In the end, it seems inadequate to explain the behavior of the BFUAC very well.

Evidence found in chapters 2, 3, and 4 seems to support the thesis that the BFUAC was independent during the 1980s. But evidence in the review of two housing bills in chapters 6 and 7 seems to contradict this support.

The best explanation is that the BFUAC, and by inference other committees, acts independently only as long as larger forces allow. When national issues arise, committee power is suppressed, although not necessarily weakened, by these forces. When grand issues are finally resolved, constituency interests recapture the attention of the committee, and committee independence is able to re-assert itself.

It may be that national issues were raised so infrequently during the 1980s that most empirical evidence supported the notion of independence for the BFUAC. If this is so, then the problem raised by the contradictory evidence may be one of the fungibility of the data examined. Any one piece of evidence, no matter how important it is perceived to be, weighs as much as any other piece of evidence in the final evaluation. If most of the evidence points to committee independence, then that notion is confirmed.

Another possible explanation is something like that made by Cox and McCubbins (1993). They assert that the evidence they marshal in favor of party-dominated committees may be used just as well to support the theory of committee independence. But that thought may perhaps be turned around. Evidence marshaled in favor of independent committees may support just as well the notion that party caucuses--or the floor--control the BFUAC.

Say the BFUAC is an agent of its party caucuses. Most of the time the caucuses allow the committee delegations to work on behalf of their constituencies. When national issues arise, however, or issues that are perceived to be important to the electoral success of the party, the caucuses intervene in committee activity.

This may have been the case in the choice of chairmen for the BFUAC. The Democratic caucus may have perceived that issues considered in the BFUAC were so important that it could not trust the selection of the chair to committee seniority. Yet in the cases of individual junior members, no greater issues were at stake, and the caucus approved their committee requests with little question.

Principal-agency theory appears too brittle. It is unable to detect shifts of perception about issues that could predict the uses of committee power. A more accurate assessment of committee agency may be found by measuring the perceived breadth and salience of the policy involved and assuming that committees involved may shift from one principal to another depending on that perception.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

A Review of the Literature of Committee Studies

This dissertation is an examination of the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives in the 1980s. Committee studies like this one are a common type within political science. Because they compose a vast literature within the discipline, it seems prudent to examine the body of work that has legislative committees as its theme. One purpose for this review is to identify certain tendencies within the literature of committee studies. A second purpose is to provide a reference tool that may be employed in the dissertation itself from time to time. A third purpose is to place this paper within the sociology of committee scholarship.

Heinz Eulau's and Vera McCluggage's (1984) typology of the study of legislative committees forms the framework of this review. Eulau and McCluggage locate all committee studies within one of three groups: studies of the power and influence of committees, studies of strategic premises and internal decision making by committees, and studies of environmental restraints faced by committees. They also identify certain subgroups within each of these major types. For purposes of clarity, I use the term *genre* to refer to these subgroups.

Studies of Committee Power and Influence

Representatives want power and influence, and one group of committee studies beginning with the early postwar generation and continuing to the

present re-emphasizes the thought of Wilson (1885) and of McConachie (1898) on the power and influence of committees in Congress. The most important of these is that of Richard E. Fenno, Jr. (1973), but the studies cut across several generations of scholarship from William L. Morrow (1969) and Joseph C. Cooper (1970) to Steven S. Smith and Christopher J. Deering (1990).

A variation on the "power" theme stresses the strength of particular committees within the congressional context. Examples of single-committee works in this genre are Fenno (1962 and 1966), Lewis Kaplan (1968), John W. Kingdon (1966), John F. Manley (1970), and James A. Robinson (1963). These studies emphasize that committees wield power in the congressional system, that is, "their decisions most often become Congress's decisions" (Leroy N. Rieselbach 1983, 160). (Curiously, scholars who have tried to chart committee influence empirically using votes on the floors of Congress have had little success—see for example Keith Krehbiel and Douglas Rivers [1988].)

Another genre of this kind of study focuses more narrowly on congressmen's motivations for requesting and working on certain committees. The literature on committee assignments and assignment requests is about 30 years old. An early example is Lewis C. Gawthorp (1966). Bullock's work on committee assignments (1970, 1973, 1976, 1985, and with Sprague 1969) spans three decades. Other works are those by David W. Rohde and Kenneth Shepsle (1972), Shepsle (1978), Lynnette P. Perkins (1981), Bruce Ray (1980a and 1982), and John R. Hibbing (1982). Committee assignment work has been buttressed by the fairly recently acquired access of scholars to data on the requests of congressmen for committee assignments.

Another genre in this thematic group is related to the ideas of representation and re-election. As Joseph K. Unekis and Leroy N. Rieselbach point out (1984) congressmen and women represent congeries of interests, not nationally representative populations, so their motivations to get re-elected are reinforced by the urge to produce policies compatible with those congeries of interests. This is best done through membership on committees specializing in policies important to constituents.

One of the earliest examples of this genre is Charles O. Jones' (1961) case study of the House Agriculture Committee. Others include John R. Hibbing's (1984) piece on electoral pressures and transfer payments and Arthur T. Denzau and Michael C. Munger's (1986) article on the representation of unorganized interests. Works that follow specifically the relationship between the appropriations process and re-election include Rick K. Wilson's (1986) article on appropriations at the district level for river and harbor work between 1889 and 1913 and D. Roderick Kiewiet and Mathew D. McCubbins' (1985) work on appropriations and congressional elections.

Studies of Strategic Premises and Internal Decisions

A second group of committee studies contains variations on the theme of the strategic premises and the internal decision-making processes of congressional committees. Works on leadership, gatekeeping power, committee integration, information exchange, rules and norms, staff activity, subcommittees and conference committees, and voting coalitions have all found their way into this group, which tends to fall into one of two genres.

One common genre has to do with works on leadership and its effect on the decision-making processes of committees. Current scholarship seems to agree that "congressional leadership is best understood from a contextual perspective" (Sinclair 1989, 136) and that congressional and committee environments shape styles and strategies. For example, in the modern context—at least since the 1970s—changes in House rules that were meant to limit the power of committee chairmen did just that. Today, the chair's discretion in committee is more limited than it was 25 years ago. Power has been retained by the party caucus or has seeped down into the hands of the subcommittee chairmen.

Leadership studies reviewed include those of Cooper and Brady (1981), Burdette A. Loomis (1984), and Glenn R. Parker (1979).

Another genre within the "inner workings" thematic group concerns itself with committees and policy process. Perhaps the most mature work among this group is that submitted by David E. Price (1978 and 1981), a political scientist who also served several terms as a congressman from North Carolina. Price (1981) refines Fenno's dictum that committees differ from one another systematically by suggesting that committees may see their responsibilities in one policy area as different from those in another policy area. They may even differ in their approaches to similar policies over time.

Others who have taken up the issue of policy making in congressional committees include Gerald S. Strom (1975), Lance T. LeLoup (1979), Lauriston R. King and W. Wayne Shannon (1986), Barry G. Rabe (1990), and R. Allen Hays (1990).

Studies of the Environmental Constraints of Committees

Works in a third group in this typology are concerned with the environmental constraints faced by committees. They explore the larger context within which committees work. Subgovernments have been the subject of scholarly attention at least since J. Lieper Freeman's (1955) work on bureaucratic-legislative committee relations. The subgovernment theme is continued later by other notable scholars, such as Emmette S. Redford (1969). But congressional committee scholars seem to focus more narrowly on particular relationships between committees and the executive branch (either the president or the bureaucracy) and between committees and special interests.

One genre in this group addresses the question of interest-group activity, including lobbying and political donations, and the effect of that activity on committee members. Hall and Wayman (1990) recently found, for example, that evidence of lobbyists buying votes from members is weak. Instead, PACs give money to their committee friends without reference to specific issues. PAC money has become, according to Hall and Wayman, a means to mobilize members on committee who are already predisposed to support PAC interests. Denzau and Munger (1986) found in an earlier piece that interest-group activity does not necessarily diminish efforts of congressmen in committee from serving their larger voting constituencies in favor of serving PAC interests.

For example, Jon R. Bond and Richard Fleischer (1990) review presidential support by committee leaders by analyzing roll-call votes cast on the floor of both chambers from the Eisenhower through the Reagan Administration. They find, not surprisingly, that committee members of the president's party usually support the president's position. Support of committee

leaders on the floor varies little whether the president's party is in the minority or in the majority.

A final genre within this group concerns congressional oversight and control of the bureaucracy. What may become a classic of this genre is Matthew McCubbins and Schwartz' (1984) article on congressional oversight. They find that committees rarely oversee federal agencies in a methodical manner; that is, they do not operate oversight operations as if they were police regularly patrolling a neighborhood. Instead, committees generally ignore their oversight duties until crises occur and then step forward to conduct rescue efforts, much like firefighters who are called upon in crises to extinguish already burning buildings.

APPENDIX B

A History of Committees in the House

The historical survey in this appendix is presented with a dual purpose. First, it attempts to provide a broader understanding of the House committee system by tracing its development. Second, it supports the thesis of the dissertation by showing how committees have acted either as independent agents or agents of floor or of party. It should be noted that, due to the nature of this work, only the history of House committees is explored; information about Senate committees is not included.

This review follows an outline suggested by Smith and Deering (1990), but other sources were also consulted. These include Neil MacNeil (1963), Schepsle and Weingast (1987), Brady, Cooper, and Hurley (1979), Cooper and Young (1989), Gerald Gamm and Kenneth Schepsle (1989), and McConachie (1898).

The history of committees in the House is usually broken into three periods: from 1789 to the Civil War, from the Civil War to the 1920s, and the 1920s and after. A fourth is added here: after 1965.

The First Period: 1789 to the Civil War

Early members of the House were typically veterans of state or colonial legislatures or of the Continental Congress. Their aim in the new House was to create pathways for the fullest expression of the will of the majority. Accordingly, the House within the first 30 years or so of the Republic's existence

remained reluctant to allow committees to perform the major responsibilities of sponsoring and altering legislation. The concern of the House in limiting committee purview was plainly that committee action could distort the will of the majority; these earlier legislators much preferred that decisions to be made on the floor.

Nevertheless, by 1811, the House had created ten standing committees, including the Committee on Ways and Means. These committees' activities were minutely controlled through instructions given to them by the body for each piece of legislation (McConachie, 1898). For most bill writing, the House had used a system of temporary, ad hoc committees. But after the War of 1812, the House began to shift legislative responsibilities toward such standing committees as it choose to create. The number of standing committees rose steadily between 1825 and 1861. By 1861, the number of standing committees in the House had grown to 39.

The House itself had grown from 64 members in 1789 to 241 in 1833. Rational, closed-ended debate of legislation on the House floor had become less plausible as House membership grew. The House leadership of the 1820s routed more and more legislation to standing committees.

At first, committees could consider only legislation referred to them by the floor. And even then, the floor typically attached strictures that limited the ability of committees to rework the bills as they saw fit. But by the 1830s, standing committees in the House had acquired two important new rights. First, committees members could sponsor new legislation specific to their committees' concerns. Second, committees were gradually allowed more freedom in

reporting out legislation. They finally assumed the authority to report legislation back to the floor as they saw fit.

By the onset of the Civil War, then, despite earlier fears of committee power, Congress had more or less institutionalized its committee structure. Thirty-nine standing committees had acquired freedom and power to sponsor and alter legislation.

The Second Period: From the Civil War to the 1920s

From the Civil War until the 1920s, the committee system of the House, as well as that of the Senate, began to expand as a result of three factors. Smith and Deering explain:

> First, dramatic economic, geographic, and population growth placed new and greater demands on Congress, which responded with more legislation and new committees. Second, further development of American political parties and the increasing strength of congressional party leaders, especially in the late nineteenth century, led to an even greater integration of congressional parties and committee systems. Third, members of Congress, first in the Senate and then in the House, came to view service in Congress as a desirable long-term career, which in turn gave more personal significance to congressional organization, particularly the committee systems (Smith and Deering 1990, 32–3).

It appears, then, that this second period was a time for the entrenchment of party concerns within the committee structure of the House. Until 1911, the Speakership of the House remained a highly partisan office. The Speaker's office was clearly the locus of power within the House. The majority party caucus moved at his command. And the majority party caucus organized the House and its committees.

But seeds of committee independence lay and began to grow within the partisan committee structure. It was during the second period in Congress, for

example, that customs surrounding seniority emerged.

The principle of seniority among committees was simply that committee chairs went to members with the longest unbroken service on committee. Its use also allowed members to remain on committees as long as they desired. By 1900, the seniority principle had begun to limit the discretion of House leaders to the appointment of new members only. Then, in 1907, when Speaker Joseph Cannon of Illinois used his appointment power to block the reappointment of four incumbent progressive Republican committee chairs, the House revolted against even that much power. Members by now were used to the prerogatives of seniority and had come to view their seats as career positions. In eventual response to Speaker Cannon's power play, the House renovated the Rules Committee in 1911, stripping membership from the Speaker and expanding its size, and removed the Speaker's right to appoint members to committees.

Also in 1911, a newly Democratic House removed committee assignment authority from the Speaker altogether and located it in the Committee on Ways and Means. The authority which had effectively been removed from the Speaker was now given to the majority leader, who usually chaired the Committee on Ways and Means, and his coterie of party leaders.

Although these moves may have seemed at the time to strengthen partisan cohesion, they actually were part of a trend that promoted committee independence. Even toward the end of the period of committee expansion, committee chairs had become more central in the legislation process. Beginning about 1919, committee chairs had gathered so much power they acted as independently as had the electors of the Holy Roman Empire. Chairmen often delayed legislation in committee or refused to report it at all. They were granted

the exclusive power of managing the floor debate on legislation that originated in their committees, although their power was eventually somewhat constrained by party leaders.

From the 1920s to about 1946

According to Smith and Deering, "[t]he most striking feature of the 1919–1946 period" in Congress was "a decline in the number of standing committees" (Smith and Deering 1990, 35). The central committee issue in the 1920s was the restoration of appropriations authority in the House to the Appropriations Committee, in anticipation of the improved executive budgeting system mandated by the 1921 Budget and Accounting Act. More importantly for the committee system in the House, the leadership of both parties in effect abandoned captainship of their committees while at the same time shoring up the seniority rule. Power over committees was ceded to their chairmen.

The House majority Republicans of the 1920s, followed in large part by the Democrats, stripped the majority leader of chairmanship of any committee. Committee chairmen were prohibited from serving on the Rules committee. It was during this era that certain committees in the House—Appropriations, Rules, and Ways and Means—were earmarked as major assignments. They were also made exclusive; that is, members who were fortunate enough to gain major committee appointments were not required to sit on any other committee.

These developments greatly strengthened the Rules Committee, whose chairmen and members developed arbitrary, and sometimes even capricious, stances on legislation. During the late 1930s, the Rules Committee, dominated by a conservative majority that included both majority Democrats and minority

Republicans, blocked legislation backed by President Roosevelt. Its Democratic chairmen held to a more conservative agenda than that approved by the Democratic President, and this was true of other committees as well. This factional split in the majority party in the House beginning in the 1930s was exacerbated by the fact that many long-serving House Democrats were Southern conservatives who held chairmanships out of proportion to their numbers.

In sum, from the origins of the committee system through the period of the Civil War, committees of the House had served the interests of their parent chamber. After the Civil War and until the turbulent period beginning about 1910, party controls over committee activity were tightened, and committees did the bidding of majority party caucuses. By about 1919, however, House committees were well on their way to becoming independent hierarchies, dominated by the legislative barons who occupied the committee chairs. Members had already begun to view membership on particular committees as helpful toward re-election and the maintenance of their congressional careers, attitudes which were to mark the independent committee system of later years.

From 1946 until about 1965

During the 1930s, the committee system of Congress had come under increasing attack from progressive forces who wished to pry liberal legislation out from under the considerable weight of the aging Democratic conservatives who chaired most of the committees. At the same time, the rising executive establishment seemed to call for an effective congressional counterweight, which the old-styled Congress was unable to provide.

By the late 1940s, the committee system had become a gerrymander of overlapping jurisdictions and unequal distribution of work and participation among committee members of the House. Each member sat on several committees and lacked the time or ability to develop expertise in any one policy area. Staff assistance was short or nonexistent. Both House and Senate acknowledged the need to reform Congress. The result was the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946.

> [T]he act featured a series of important innovations. Sweeping changes were enacted in the number and jurisdictions of standing committees, with the number of standing committees reduced to nineteen in the House....This reduction in number primarily resulted from consolidating several groups of committees into single committees. The standing committees in each house were made nearly equal in size, and the number of committee assignments was reduced to one for most representatives....The act authorized committees to hire a staff of up to four professional and six clerical workers on a nonpartisan merit basis; the House and Senate Appropriations committees were permitted to appoint as many as they deemed necessary. The staff of the Legislative Reference Service was strengthened by the act, and many of these new staffers would be detailed to committees for special projects. Finally, the act directed the standing committees to exercise `continuous watchfulness' over the implementation of laws by the executive branch (Smith and Deering 1990, 37).

One outcome of the act was an even larger grant of power to the chairs of standing committee. They benefited from the expanding jurisdictions of their committees and from the increase in the size of their staffs, whom they controlled. The act concentrated power in the hands of the chairmen and insured that they would dominate House policy making for several decades to come. It also guaranteed the continuation of the autonomy committees had enjoyed since at least the 1920s.

After the enactment of the Legislative Reform Act of 1946, the House committee system stabilized. For the next 20 years, most of the chamber was

dominated by the Democrats. Sitting members were regularly re-elected from one Congress to the next (Bullock 1972). Committee chairs tended to remain in the same hands. Sixty percent or more of committee chairmen serving between 1947 and 1964 remained in their chairs for five or more years, and two dozen or so chairmen served more than a decade.

Three major features of the 1946–1965 era among House committees were the ongoing liberal struggle against the conservative coalition, the creation of new subcommittees, and the increase in committee staffs.

First, long-serving conservative Democrats continued to maintain themselves disproportionately as committee chairmen, and were extremely effective at bottling up liberal legislation in committee or killing it in the Rules Committee before it ever reached the floor. The most notorious of these conservative chairmen was Virginia's Howard W. Smith, longtime chairman of the Rules Committee. With the advent of the Kennedy Administration, executive muscle combined with liberal outrage and allied with the clout of sympathetic Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas to expand Rules by adding more moderately minded Democrats. The Rules Committee finally became a more pliable instrument of Democratic policy making.

Second, subcommittees proliferated. The Legislative Reorganization Act mandated fewer committees with broad responsibilities. One of the major outcomes of the new arrangements was a proliferation of subcommittees. Subcommittees enabled committees to handle larger, more complex workloads, allowed senior members not yet committee chairs more committee responsibility, and helped accomplish the purpose of prying widely favored legislation out of the hard grip of conservative committee chairmen. George B.

Galloway (1953) identifies 97 House subcommittees that existed before the 1946 reforms took effect. By 1964, there were more than one hundred subcommittees in the House, and counting (Smith and Deering 1990).

A third major outcome of the legislative reform of 1946 was the increase of committee staffs. The staffs of standing committees more than doubled from 1947 to 1964; the total number of staff members rose from 182 in 1947 to 489 in 1964 (Smith and Deering 1993, 43). However, committee staffs during this time were entirely controlled by the committee chairs. As a result, staffs worked for the interests of the majority party or, more importantly, for the political interests of the chair himself. Few committees allowed minority members to hire minority staff.

Between 1947 and 1964, then, committees dropped in number, subcommittees and staff proliferated, but committee chairs hardened their grip on committee activities. Junior members were relegated to secondary and tertiary roles, their activity in Congress almost entirely limited to committee activity.

Committees in the House after 1965

If the first 20 years after the passage of the Legislative Reform Act of 1946 was a period of stabilization, the next fifteen years, from about 1965 through 1980, generated a series of reforms. Smith and Deering (1990, 47) identify five important committee reforms of the period.

The first House committee reforms in the post-Civil Rights era were enacted through the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, as a result of the activity of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress. The Joint

Committee's recommendations were handed down in 1966, but powerful conservative interests in the House delayed their implementation for nearly five years. The result of the act's mandates on committee activity was important, if not profound. The act mandated for the first time public committee votes. It also limited voting by proxy and allowed a majority of members to call meetings, thereby taking a powerful scheduling tool out of the hands of the chairmen. The act also encouraged open committee meetings and committee hearings.

The second, third, and fourth committee reform waves of the 1970s were products in one form or the other of the Democratic caucus's Committee on Organization, Study, and Review. (This panel was known briefly as the Hansen Committee because it was chaired by Representative Julia Butler Hansen [D-WA].) First organized in March 1970 by the Democratic caucus, the Hansen Committee developed several groups of reform proposals. By late 1974 a fifth group of reforms, adopted by the Democratic caucus as a substitute for the Bolling Committee's proposed sweeping reforms of committee jurisdiction, was added, so that by 1975 the reforms of the committee system in the House were basically complete (Smith and Deering 1981).

The results of those reforms were extraordinary. Members were strictly limited as to how many committee and subcommittee chairs they could hold. Subcommittee autonomy was insured through the so-called "subcommittee bill of rights," and chairmen no longer dominated their colleagues. Indeed, the Watergate class (elected 1974) of Democratic freshmen ousted three long-serving chairmen from their posts—Poage of Texas from the chair of the Agriculture Committee; Hebert (D) of Louisiana from the chair of the Armed Services Committee; and, notably for this study, Wright Patman of Texas from the

Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs. Committee members seemed free, after the final reforms of the 1970s, of many of the strictures that had limited conduct for, in, and about committee members in the House since the early nineteenth century.

Curiously, however, the reforms seemed also to have an effect other than those intended—by increasing the power of the party caucus on committees. The revival of the Steering and Policy Committee by the Democrats and the placement of the Speaker on the Committee on Committees reestablished the influence of the party's leadership over committee assignments. The Speaker's other gains—appointment of majority members to Rules, referral of bills to multiple committees, ability to create ad hoc committees, and appointment of staff to Steering and Policy—seemed to grant the Speaker more power than the office had held since Speaker Cannon's day (Smith and Deering 1990, 55).

Nevertheless, the overall impression left by the reform wave of the 1970s on the House was that power in the House was fragmented, and that much of it lay not just in the hands of autonomous committees, but in the hands as well of subcommittees and of individual members.

Summary

It appears, then, that the committees of the House have passed through three periods of evolution and may currently be in the throes a fourth.

During the first period, committees were used as agents of the floor, which directed committee activity in minute detail.

During the second period, committees were agents of the party caucus. The more powerful majority caucus was in turn under the direction of the

partisan Speaker. Note that it was during this second period that students of Congress such as Wilson (1885) and McConachie (1898) began to record the importance of committees within the policy-making arrangements of Congress.

During the third period, after a time of turmoil in the 1920s and 1930s, committees emerged as comparatively independent agents within the House; members were relatively free to concentrate on their own constituency concerns.

Finally, after a series of committee reforms beginning about 1965 and culminating in the 1970s, it appears that partisanship may be re-emerging as a central theme within committee activity. The current House, in whose organization seniority has occasionally been ignored organizationally in favor of partisan concerns, may be a case in point.

APPENDIX C

Tables

Table 2-1
A Comparison of Committee Typologies for Standing Committees of the House of Representatives

Committee	Bullock	Smith-Deering	Stubben
Exclusive Committees			
Appropriations	Prestige	Prestige	Prestige
Budget	n/a	Prestige	Prestige
Rules	Undesired	Prestige	Prestige
Ways and Means	Prestige	Prestige	Prestige
Nonexclusive Committees			
Agriculture	Re-election	Constituency	Const./Re-elec.
Armed Services	Re-election	Constituency	Const/Re-elect.
Banking	Policy	Policy	Policy
Commerce	n/a	Policy	n/a
DC	Undesired	Undesired	Const./Re-elect.
Education and Labor	Policy	Policy/Const.	Policy
Foreign Affairs	Policy	Policy	Policy
Government Operations	Undesired	Policy	Const./Re-elect.
House Administration	Undesired	Undesired	Undesired
Interior	Re-election	Constituency	Const./Re-elect.
Judiciary	Policy	Policy	Policy
Merchant Marine	Re-election	Constituency	Const./Re-elect.
Post Office	Undesired	Undesired	Undesired
Public Works	Re-election	Constituency	Const./Re-elect.
Science	Undesired	Constituency	Const./Re-elect.
Small Business	n/a	Constituency	Const-Re-elect
Veterans' Affairs	Re-election	Constituency	Const./Re-elect.

Sources: Bullock (1976), Smith and Deering (1990), and Stubben (1989).

Table 2-2

Members of the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee, Ninety-seventh Congress through One Hundred and First Congress, January 1981–January 1991

	Name	State	Party	District
1.	Erdreich, Ben	Alabama	Democrat	Sixth
2.	Bethune, Ed	Arizona	Republican	Second
3.	Kolbe, Jim	Arizona	Republican	Fifth
4.	Dreier, David	California	Republican	Thirty-third
5.	Lehman, Richard	California	Democrat	Eighteenth
6.	Lowery, Bill	California	Republican	Forty-first
7.	McCandless, Al	California	Republican	Thirty-seventh
8.	Patterson, Jerry	California	Democrat	Thirty-eighth
9.	Pelosi, Nancy	California	Democrat	Fifth
10.	Shumway, Norman	California	Republican	Fourteenth
11.	Torres, Esteban	California	Democrat	Thirty-fourth
12.	McKinney, Stewart	Connecticut	Democrat	Fourth
13.	Morrison, Bruce	Connecticut	Democrat	Third
14.	Carper, Thomas	Delaware	Democrat	At large
15.	Evans, Thomas	Delaware	Republican	At large
16.	McCollum, Bill	Florida	Republican	Fifth
17.	Nelson, Bill	Florida	Democrat	First
18.	Stearns, Cliff	Florida	Republican	Sixth
19.	Barnard, Doug	Georgia	Democrat	Tenth
20.	Swindall, Thomas	Georgia	Republican	Fourth
21.	Saiki, Patricia	Hawaii	Republican	First
22.	Leach, Jim	Iowa	Republican	First
23.	Hansen, George	Idaho	Republican	Second
24.	Annunzio, Frank	Illinois	Democrat	Eleventh
25.	Grotberg, John	Illinois	Republican	Fourteenth
26.	Evans, David	Indiana	Democrat	Sixth
27.	Hiler, John	Indiana	Republican	Third
28.	Bunning, Jim	Kentucky	Republican	Fourth
29.	Hubbard, Carroll	Kentucky	Democrat	First
30.	Baker, Richard	Louisiana	Republican	Sixth
31.	Roemer, Buddy	Louisiana	Democrat	Fourth
32.	Frank, Barney	Massachusetts	Democrat	Fourth
33.	Kennedy, Joseph	Massachusetts	Democrat	Eighth
34.	Neal, Richard	Massachusetts	Democrat	Second
35.	Hoyer, Steny	Maryland	Democrat	Fifth
36.	McMillen, Tom	Maryland	Democrat	Fourth
37.	Mfume, Kweisi	Maryland	Democrat	Fifth
38.	Mitchell, Parren	Maryland	Democrat	Seventh
39.	Blanchard, James	Michigan	Republican	Eighteenth
40.	Levin, Sander	Michigan	Democrat	Seventeenth

Table 2-2 (continued)

Name	State	Party	District
41. Vento, Bruce	Minnesota	Democrat	Fourth
42. McMillan, Alex	North Carolina	Republican	Ninth
43. Neal, Stephen	North Carolina	Democrat	Fifth
44. Price, David	North Carolina	Democrat	Fourth
45. Bereuter, Doug	Nebraska	Republican	First
46. Hoagland, Peter	Nebraska	Democrat	Second
47. D'Amours, Norman	New Jersey	Democrat	First
48. Minish, Joseph	New Jersey	Democrat	Eleventh
49. Roukema, Marge	New Jersey	Republican	Seventh
50. Saxton, H. James	New Jersey	Republican	Thirteenth
51. Dio Guardi, Joseph	New York	Republican	Twentieth
52. Flake, Floyd	New York	Democrat	Twentieth
53. Garcia, Robert	New York	Democrat	Sixth
54. LaFalce, John	New York	Democrat	Thirty-second
55. Lundine, Stanley	New York	Democrat	Thirty-fourth
56. Manton, Thomas	New York	Democrat	Ninth
57. Paxon, Bill	New York	Republican	Thirtieth
58. Schumer, Charles	New York	Democrat	Tenth*
59. Wortley, George	New York	Republican	Twenty-seventh
60. Gillmor, Paul	Ohio	Republican	Fifth
61. Kaptur, Marcy	Ohio	Democrat	Ninth
62. Oakar, Mary Rose	Ohio	Democrat	Twentieth
63. Stanton, J. William	Ohio	Republican	Eleventh
64. Weber, Ed	Ohio	Republican	Ninth
65. Wylie, Chalmers	Ohio	Republican	Fifteenth
66. Coyne, Jim	Pennsylvania	Republican	Eighth
67. Coyne, William	Pennsylvania	Democrat	Fourteenth
68. Kanjorski, Paul	Pennsylvania	Democrat	Eleventh
69. Ridge, Tom	Pennsylvania	Republican	Twenty-first
70. St Germain, Fernand	Rhode Island	Democrat	First
71. Patterson, Liz	South Carolina	Democrat	Fourth
72. Cooper, Jim	Tennessee	Democrat	Fourth
73. Bartlett, Steve	Texas	Republican	Third
74. Gonzalez, Henry	Texas	Democrat	Twentieth
75. Mattox, Jim	Texas	Democrat	Fifth
76. Patman, Bill	Texas	Democrat	Fourteenth
77. Paul, Ron	Texas	Republican	Twenty-second
78. Parris, Stan	Virginia	Republican	Eighth
79. Chandler, Rod	Washington	Republican	Eighth
80. Lowry, Mike	Washington	Democrat	Seventh
81. McDermott, Jim	Washington	Democrat	Seventh
82. Kleczka, Gerald	Wisconsin	Democrat	Fourth
83. Reuss, Henry	Wisconsin	Democrat	Fifth
84. Roth, Toby	Wisconsin	Republican	Eighth

Source: Congressional Quarterly. Members listed alphabetically by state and by name.

Table 2-3

Members Who Left BFUAC,
Ninety-seventh Congress through One Hundred and First Congress

Name	Reason Left	Terms of Service
1. Dio Guardi, Joseph (NY, 20th)	defeated	99th
2. Grotberg, John (IL, 14th)	defeated	99th
3. Weber, Ed (OH, 9th)	defeated	97th
4. Coyne, James (PA, 8th)	defeated	97th
5. Swindall, Thomas (GA, 4th)	defeated	100th
6. Patman, Bill (TX, 14th)	defeated	97th to 98th
7. Hansen, George (ID, 2nd)	defeated	94th to 98th
8. Evans, Thomas (DE, at large)	defeated	95th to 99th
9. Patterson, Jerry (CA, 38th)	defeated	94th to 98th
10. Minish, Joseph (NJ, 11th)	defeated	88th to 98th
11. St Germain, Fernand (RI, 1st)	defeated	87th to 100th
12. McKinney, Stewart (CT, 4th)	died in office	92th to 99th
13. Bethune, Ed (AZ, 2nd)	other office	96th to 98th
14. Lundine, Stanley (NY, 34th)	other office	95th to 100th
15. Mattox, Jim (TX, 5th)	other office	95th to 97th
16. Roemer, Buddy (LA, 4th)	other office	98th to 100th
17. Evans, David (IN, 6th)	redistricting	94th to 97th
18. Blanchard, James (MI, 18th)	redistricting	95th to 97th
19. Wortley, George (NY, 27th)	retired	97th to 100th
20. Paul, Ron (TX, 22nd)	retired	96th to 98th
21. Stanton, J. William (OH, 11th)	retired	89th to 98th
22. Hoyer, Steny (MD, 5th)	moved to Appropriations	97th
23. Lowry, Mike (WA, 7th)	moved to Budget	97th to 98th
24. Lowery, Bill (CA, 41st)	moved to Appropriations	97th to 98th
25. Chandler, Rod (WA, 8th)	moved to Ways and Means	98th to 99th
26. Coyne, William (PA, 14th)	moved to Ways and Means	97th to 99th
27. Cooper, Jim (TN, 4th)	moved to Energy and Commerce	98th to 99th
28. Manton, Thomas (NY, 9th)	moved to Energy and Commerce	99th to 100th
29. McMillan, Alex (NC, 9th)	moved to Energy and Commerce	99th to 100th
30. Kolbe, Jim (AZ, 5th)	moved to Appropriations	99th to 100th

Source: Congressional Quarterly

Table 3-1

Test of Significance in Difference of Means, BFUAC and the House of Representatives, Ninety-eighth Congress through One Hundred and First Congress,

	98th	99th	100th	101st
Poverty	NS (-)	NS (-)	NS (-)	NS (-)
Employment	.01 (+)	.05 (+)	.01 (+)	.01 (+)
Housing	.01 (+)	.05 (+)	.01 (+)	.01 (+)
Personal	NS (+)	NS (+)	NS (+)	NS (+)
Population Density	NS (+)	NS (+)	NS (+)	NS (+)
N	389	388	384	385
n	45	47	51	50

Source: United States Census Bureau

Table 4-1
Ideology on House Committees

Committee	Hinckley	Krehbiel	C/M1	C/M2
Agriculture	Conservative	Balanced	Conservative	Conservative
Appropriations	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced
Armed Services	Conservative	Conservative	Conservative	Conservative
Banking	Liberal	Conservative	Conservative	Balanced
Education and Labor	Liberal	Liberal	Liberal	Bal./Lib.
Foreign Affairs	Bal./Lib*	Liberal	Liberal	Balanced
Govt. Operations	Liberal	Conservative	Liberal	Bal./Lib.
Interior	—	—	Balanced	Balanced
Commerce	—	—	Balanced	Balanced
Judiciary	—	—	Bal./Lib.	Bal./Lib.
Merchant Marine	Balanced	Conservative	Balanced	Balanced
Post Office	Balanced	Liberal	Balanced	Balanced
Public Works	—	—	Balanced	Balanced
Rules	—	—	Balanced	Balanced
Science	—	—	Bal./Cons.	Balanced
Veterans	Bal./Cons.	Conservative	Bal./Cons.	Balanced
Ways and Means	—	—	Balanced	Balanced

*Note: Bal./Lib. is abbreviated from Balanced/Liberal. Bal./Cons. is abbreviated from Balanced/Conservative.

Source: Krehbiel (1990) and Hinckley (1975), and Cox and McCubbins (1993). The fourth column is computed by Cox and McCubbins using difference of means tests for members' ADA, ACA, and conservative-coalition scores. The fifth column is computed by Cox and McCubbins (1993) using difference of medians using NOMINATE.

Table 4-2

Regional Representation on the BFUAC, Ninety-seventh Congress through One Hundred and First Congress

Region and States*	97th	98th	99th	100th	101st	Total
Western States						
Alaska	0**	0	0	0	0	0
Arizona	0	0	1	0	0	1
California	4	6	5	6	6	27
Colorado	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hawaii	0	0	0	1	1	2
Idaho	1	1	0	0	0	2
Montana	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oregon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Utah	0	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	1	1	1	0	1	4
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Representation	6	8	7	7	8	36
Midwestern States						
Illinois	1	1	2	1	1	6
Indiana	1	1	1	1	1	5
Iowa	1	1	1	1	1	5
Kansas	0	0	0	0	0	0
Michigan	1	1	1	0	0	3
Minnesota	1	1	1	1	1	5
Missouri	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nebraska	1	1	1	1	2	6
North Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio	4	3	3	3	4	17
South Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wisconsin	1	0	2	2	2	7
Total Representation	12	10	13	11	14	60

Table 4-2 (continued)

State	97th	98th	99th	100th	101st	Total
Southern States						
Alabama	0	1	1	1	1	4
Arkansas	1	1	0	0	0	2
Delaware	1	1	1	1	1	5
Florida	1	1	2	2	3	9
Georgia	1	1	1	2	1	6
Kentucky	1	1	1	2	2	7
Louisiana	0	1	1	1	1	4
Maryland	2	1	1	2	2	8
Mississippi	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Carolina	1	1	2	3	2	9
Oklahoma	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Carolina	0	0	0	1	1	2
Tennessee	0	1	2	0	0	3
Texas	4	4	2	2	2	14
Virginia	1	1	1	1	1	5
West Virginia	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Representation	12	10	13	11	14	60
Northeastern States						
Connecticut	1	2	2	1	1	7
Maine	0	0	0	0	0	0
Massachusetts	1	1	1	2	3	8
New Hampshire	1	1	0	0	0	2
New Jersey	2	2	1	2	2	9
New York	6	5	6	7	5	29
Pennsylvania	2	2	2	2	2	10
Rhode Island	1	1	1	1	0	4
Vermont	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Representation	14	14	13	15	13	69

*Note: Regional designations based on U.S. Bureau of the Census Divisions.

**Note: Figures represent numbers of representatives present on the BFAUC during the sessions listed.

Source: Congressional Quarterly.

Table 4-3

Regional Membership on the BFUAC (Percentages), Ninety-seventh Congress through One Hundred and First Congress

Region	97th	98th	99th	100th	101st
West	14%	16%	14%	14%	18%
Midwest	25%	20%	20%	20%	24%
South	30%	33%	36%	36%	33%
Northeast	32%	31%	30%	30%	25%
TOTALS	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Congressional Quarterly

Table 4-4

Regional Membership in the House of Representatives (Percentages), Ninety-seventh Congress through One Hundred and First Congress

Region	97th	98th	99th	100th	101st
West	18%	20%	20%	20%	21%
Midwest	28%	27%	27%	27%	26%
South	30%	32%	32%	32%	33%
Northeast	24%	21%	21%	21%	21%
TOTALS	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Congressional Quarterly.

Table 4-5

Regional Differences between the BFUAC and the House Ninety-seventh Congress through One Hundred and First Congress

Region	97th	98th	99th	100th	101st
West	-.90	-.81	-1.17	-1.17	-.37
Midwest	-.45	-1.04	-1.06	-1.06	.43
South	-.19	.10	.52	.52	.11
Northeast	1.19	1.42*	1.34	1.34	.64

*** significance < = .10
** significance < = .05
* significance < = .01

Source: Congressional Quarterly

Table 4-6

Differences in Ideological Group Ratings between the BFUAC and the House, 1981–1990

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
ADA										
House	47.82	48.89	49.82	46.99	45.74	46.32	50.58	52.68	49.23	49.27
BFUAC	53.30	54.00	53.29	52.56	42.86	43.13	52.62	53.94	51.47	50.84
Diff	5.48	5.11	3.47	5.57	-2.88	-3.19	2.04	1.26	2.24	1.57
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
ACA										
House	48.01	47.93	47.22	46.92	44.76	59.52	37.04	43.60	43.46	41.49
BFUAC	43.39	42.02	40.87	45.33	45.65	43.92	35.66	43.46	42.76	42.23
Diff	-4.62	-5.91	-6.35	-1.59	0.89	-15.60	-1.38	-0.14	-0.70	0.74
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
AFL-CIO										
House	55.66	54.39	55.44	53.03	54.54	59.15	60.97	67.88	56.26	55.68
BFUAC	58.00	57.98	57.71	51.31	53.08	57.92	58.10	80.40	59.37	55.31
Diff	2.34	3.59	2.27	-1.72	-1.46	-1.23	-2.87	12.52	3.11	-0.37
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
CCUS										
House	51.33	52.48	51.14	52.08	52.28	51.74	48.02	57.23	63.71	51.58
BFUAC	51.44	52.99	51.92	51.89	54.98	53.31	50.06	57.76	64.08	50.27
Diff	0.11	0.51	0.78	-0.19	2.70	1.57	2.04	0.53	0.37	-1.31
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Note: ADA is abbreviated from Americans for Democratic Action. ACA stands for Americans for Constitutional Action. AFL-CIO designates the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations. CCUS represents the Chamber of Commerce of the United States.

Source: Congressional Quarterly

Table 4-7
Differences in Voting Scores between the BFUAC and the House (Democrats), 1981–1990

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
CC-Sup										
House	44.15	38.72	36.63	35.95	36.73	38.42	3 .27	37.73	42.33	39.53
BFUAC	31.24	30.4	31.5	31.46	31.22	34.52	35.17	36.07	34.23	33.27
Diff	-12.9	-8.32	-5.13	-4.49	-5.51	-3.9	-4.1	-1.66	-8.1	-6.27
Sig	0.05	0.05	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
PU-Sup										
House	68.38	73.12	76.1	74.14	80.11	78.45	80.83	80.25	80.77	81.35
BFUAC	75.88	79.67	76.89	74.46	76.76	79.00	80.63	83.60	83.37	81.77
Diff	7.5	6.55	0.79	0.32	-3.35	0.55	-0.2	3.35	2.6	0.42
Sig	0.05	0.05	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Pres-Sup										
House	43.41	39.95	28.21	34.50	30.23	25.23	24.22	25.39	36.94	26.75
BFUAC	37.12	36.32	27.43	34.14	30.41	25.48	22.10	25.73	34.37	24.77
Diff	-6.29	-3.63	-0.78	-0.36	0.18	0.25	-2.12	0.34	-2.57	-1.98
Sig	0.05	NS	NS	NS	N	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Note: CC-Sup represents conservative-coalition-support scores. PU-Sup represents party-unity support scores. Pres-Sup represents Presidential-support scores.

Source: Congressional Quarterly

Table 4-8

Differences in Voting Scores between the BFUAC and the House (Republicans), 1981–1990

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
CC-Sup										
House	77.17	74.99	79.24	80.19	81.37	79.28	83.18	82.17	83.81	81.86
BFUAC	75.63	71.89	71.76	69.65	80.14	79.14	84.70	84.05	85.95	86.14
MnDiff	-1.54	-3.10	-7.48	-10.54	-1.23	-0.14	1.52	1.88	2.14	-4.28
Sig	NS	NS	0.10	0.01	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
PU-Sup										
House	74.73	69.52	74.73	71.25	74.78	70.46	73.33	73.78	71.88	74.05
BFUAC	75.21	72.84	72.88	66.24	77.86	70.41	75.65	75.10	72.90	77.33
Diff	0.48	3.32	-1.85	-5.01	3.08	-0.05	2.32	1.32	1.02	3.28
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Pres-Sup										
House	67.60	63.74	70.27	61.15	66.90	65.19	61.67	56.58	68.88	62.89
BFUAC	69.05	64.47	67.76	54.71	67.36	63.36	63.15	56.85	70.86	63.48
Diff	1.45	0.73	-2.51	-6.44	0.46	-1.83	1.48	0.27	1.98	0.59
Sig	NS	NS	NS	0.01	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Source: Congressional Quarterly

Vita

A native of San Francisco, California, Stan Buchanan was raised in the small California Central Valley community of Manteca. He was graduated from California Baptist College in Riverside, California in the spring of 1972 with majors in English and history/political science. The author studied history at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, from 1976 to 1977, then began work as an administrator for several federal and local entities in the Waco area, including the United States Census Bureau . He was married in 1981 to Anne Denise Christian. He continued his education at Baylor University while employed by the Heart of Texas Council of Governments in Waco. In 1985 was awarded a master's degree in public policy and administration (MPPA).

The author and his family moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1990 to enroll in the Ph.D. program in political science at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. As a graduate student, the author taught introductory courses in the department of political science, and from 1991 to 1995 he served as an adjunct professor for Pellissippi State Technical Community College of Knoxville. During the 1995–1996 academic year, the author was retained as an assistant professor by Mars Hill College of Mars Hill, North Carolina, in the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences. He completed the requirements for the Ph.D. degree in August 1996 and moved to Carbondale, Illinois, to serve as a lecturer in political science for the University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale. He was awarded the Ph.D. degree in December 1996.