

Government 30

Lecture 17

The Presidency and Executive Politics [after finishing material re Congress]

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Decline of Congressional Parties?

SUM: Party cohesion was weakening, but now is rising again



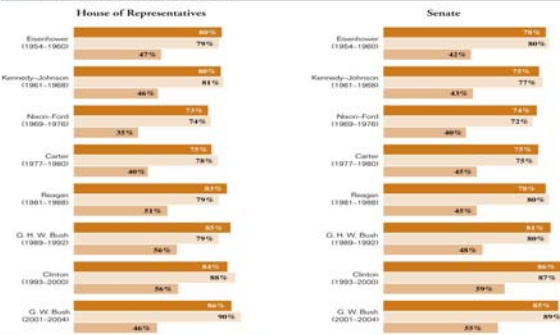
1. Incumbency advantage
2. ↓ of parties generally, esp through individualization of campaigns 
3. districts more heterogeneous; fewer big wedge issues
4. committee system 

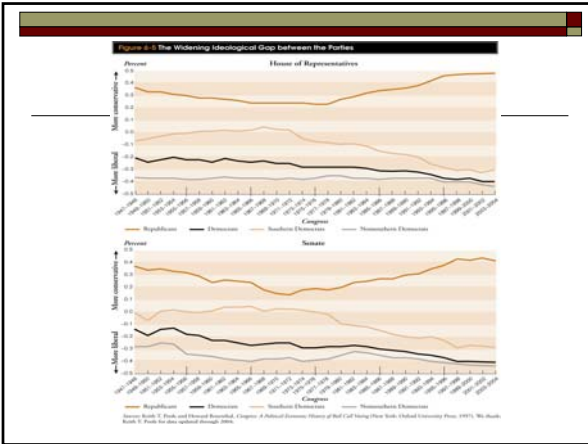
Figure 4-4 Rising Party Unity in Congress

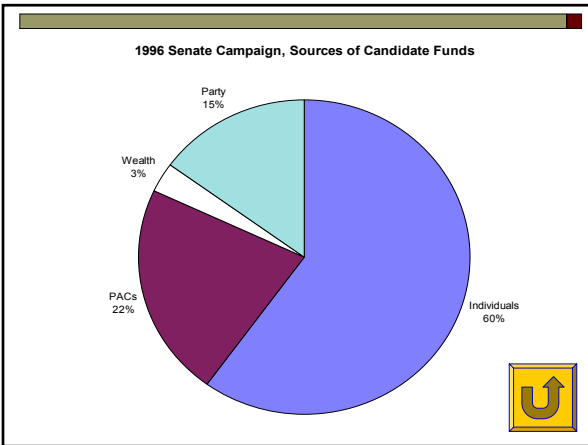


■ Percentage of Democrats voting with party majority
■ Percentage of Republicans voting with party majority

Source: Norman J. Ornstein, Thomas E. Mann, and Michael J. Malbin, *Vital Statistics on Congress 1997-1998* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1998), 210-213. Data for 1993-2001 are from CQ Weekly, January 6, 2001, 56, 67; data for 2001 are from CQ Weekly, January 12, 2002, 114, 142; data for 2001-2004 are from CQ Weekly, December 11, 2004, 293.

Note: Party unity votes are those votes on which party majorities took opposite positions.



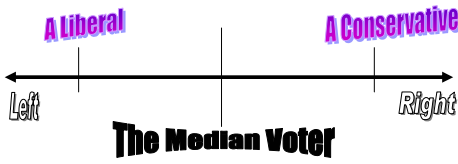


Voting in Congress

1. All sorts of votes occur -- in committee, approval voting (yeas and nays) on floor, roll-call voting
2. Small provisions complicate voter inference: Easy to say someone voted against a program when in fact they voted against a larger bill that contained an increase for the program.
3. Ideology and Party matter heavily, more so at some times than others...

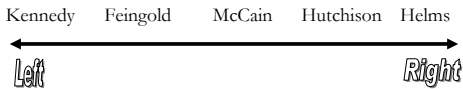
Spatial Voting...

Spatial Voting



Median Voter Theorem: Under certain conditions (well-behaved preferences, independence of irrelevant alternatives) median voter's position is decisive in majority rule contest.

Spatial (Ideological) Placement of Senators



SPATIAL VOTING: AN EXAMPLE USING SENATORS

Five Senators:

1. Ted Kennedy, 2. Debbie Stabenow, 3. John McCain, 4. Kay Bailey Hutchison, 5. Rick Santorum

Four bills:

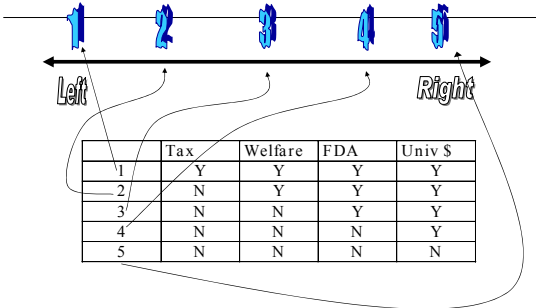
1. \$20B income tax increase
2. increase welfare spending by \$10B
3. expand FDA powers over tobacco
4. \$500M for univ research projects

Expected Votes on the Four Bills

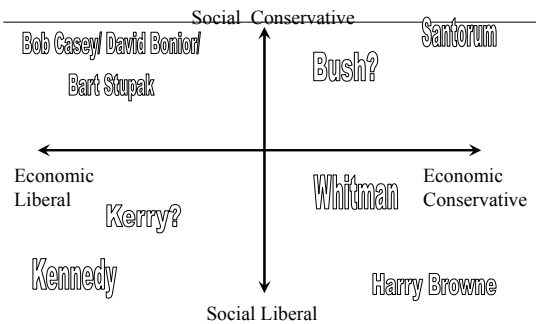
	Tax	Welfare	FDA	Univ \$
Kennedy	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stabenow	N	Y	Y	Y
McCain	N	N	Y	Y
Hutchison	N	N	N	Y
Helms	N	N	N	N

So political scientists often try to work backwards: given a distribution of votes (as above), can we infer anything about ideology, or general voting patterns?

Inferring Ideology from Votes



Ideology in Two Dimensions



Participation in Congress

Rick Hall [Michigan]: On each issue, MCs must decide (a) their position, (b) how much they care. Choice (b) can be as or more important than choice (a).

Example: Suppose I'm "conservative." Do I spend more time and energy on defense issues or tax cutting, pro-life cause or gay marriage?

Suppose I'm "liberal": Do I spend more time on welfare program or more time on environmental protection?

Hall [APSR 1993]: Difficult for moneyed interests to buy votes, but much easier for them to buy **time**.

[APSR 2006]: Lobbying best understood as legislative subsidy.

The Presidency: The Model of the Framers

A. Presidential power:

(1) directed

- executor of law passed by Congress
- appoints, but w/ advice and consent of Senate
- commander of troops called into action by Congress

(2) **little or no initiative** – law-making power of president consists in Art. II, S 3, "he shall recommend to [Congress] Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient";

B. The Arguments of Hamilton

Federalist #69: Fear not, anti-Federalists. Comparison of const president w/ King of Britain and governor of NY.

Federalist #70: like Madison's #10, a model essay. Desiderata: (1) energy, (2) safety in the executive (p. 424).

For energy, need unity and duration: "Decision, activity, secrecy, and dispatch will generally characterize the proceedings of one man in a much more eminent degree than the proceedings of any greater number; and in proportion as the number is increased, these qualities will be diminished." (p. 424)

"In the legislature, promptitude of decision is oftener an evil than a benefit...But no favorable circumstances palliate or atone for the disadvantages of dissension in the executive department." (pp. 426-27)

II. THE INSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENCY

A. Modern Presidency is Institutional:

- circumscribed by *rules, expectations, organizations*
- presidency is now a leadership ROLE.

B. Budgetary-power and legislative agenda-setting: The Budget and Accounting Act of 1921.

- set up BOB; now OMB (1970; Nixon)
- gave Prez 1st strike in budget politics

C. FDR and the Institutional Presidency

1. Agenda-Setting: The “Hundred Days”

2. “Personal” Presidency

- electoral connection
- importance of media (“Fireside Chats”)
- president as natl savior
- president as party leader (this goes back to TR and Woodrow Wilson)

3. The Bureaucratization of the Presidency

1939 Executive Reorganization Act:

- ◆ Executive Office of the President (EOP)
- ◆ White House Office (WHO)
- ◆ expansion of BOB/OMB’s role from auditing to policymaking and planning

Employment Act of 1946 – president takes initiative in economic goal and policy setting

- Gives to Truman a Council of Economic Advisers (CEA)
- Later, Truman gets National Security Council (NSC)

Presidential Power

1. Neustadt: authority is important but power means more than that. Prez is powerless unless he/she can persuade.
2. 19th c. model of presidency was one of clerkship -- following orders, executing laws.
3. In 20th c., big change is not institutions and bureaucratization but new possibilities for persuasion (TV, national media, etc.)
4. Result: Persuasiveness of individual in office more IMP now than then.

Going Public

1. Definition: A prez “promotes himself and his policies in Washington by appealing to the American public for support” (Kernell, 360).
2. Two ways of doing this:
 - general public appeal (thru TV, media trial balloons)
 - go to specific constituencies where swing votes for legislation lie (e.g., BUSH right now).
3. A uniquely presidential strategy. Save for occasional MC or Sen w/ national following (e.g., maybe Gingrich in ‘95), only president can appeal to whole public.

Does Going Public Work?

1. Maybe yes. Brandice Canes-Wrone (Princeton): Presidents get a boost in the legislative agenda for programs that they mention in their State of the Union address.
2. Maybe no. Bush’s strategy was risky. Crucial Dems were angered.
3. Ken Kollman (Michigan), Outside Lobbying [1998]: Before going public, better be sure that (a) have public opinion on your side, (b) a counter-mobilization won’t occur
