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**THE UNPREPOSSESSING MR. RYAN: UNDERSTANDING
EXEMPLARY LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP**

by

Barbara A. K. Adams

**A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Public Administration
School of Public Affairs and Administration**

**Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1994**

THE UNPREPOSSESSING MR. RYAN: UNDERSTANDING EXEMPLARY LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

Barbara A. K. Adams, D.P.A.

Western Michigan University, 1994

This study focuses on the character attributes, philosophy, political skills, policy agenda, and administrative activities of William A. Ryan, Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives from 1969 through 1974 and a House member from 1958 through 1982. The case study is embedded in a history of Michigan's political culture, which is characterized by moralistic and individualistic strands often in conflict with one another.

The research hypothesis was that administrative virtue in legislative leadership is best described in terms of utilitarian ethics, the ability to control and manage factionalism in the interest of incremental change. The rival hypothesis was that an adequate understanding of exemplary legislative leadership must account for the significance of character ethics, attributes that form an essential part of the leader's moral authority.

This qualitative study used a combination of oral history, historical source materials, and content analysis of legislative documents to achieve "qualitative triangulation." Comparative analysis was achieved through study of the regimes of the two Michigan House Speakers preceding Mr. Ryan and the one following him. The method borrowed significantly from psychohistory. Particular attention

was paid to the concept of the identity crisis in political entities and the role of government leaders in facilitating resolution of competing moral claims, leading to healthy maturation of the state.

The findings were that Mr. Ryan's reputation as an exemplary legislative leader was based only partially on his repeated demonstration of superb political skills. Of at least equal significance were character attributes such as humility, modesty, and asceticism, as well as a strong identification with the state legislative institution. Exemplary legislative leadership may best be understood in terms of the leader's ability to facilitate sustained democratic discourse characterized by: (a) meaningful representation of and input from all affected stakeholders, (b) civility and compromise among political leaders who may strongly disagree with one another, and (c) policy resolutions that, though imperfect, reflect lines of convergence on what public values are and ought to be.

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My dissertation Chair, Dr. Ralph Clark Chandler, brought to life for me the moral battlefields on which the American republic was founded and from which it has again and again rediscovered its soul. This work bears witness to the reality that political courage, personal salvation, and bureaucratic control can sometimes be mutually reinforcing goals of the life well lived in the service of the state.

Barbara A. K. Adams

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CHAPTER I

AN INQUIRY INTO ADMINISTRATIVE VIRTUE IN THE AMERICAN STATES

Introduction

This is a history of the political life and times of William A. Ryan, who was Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives from 1969 through 1974 and a member of the Michigan House from 1958 through 1982. It is also a history of the evolution of the state political culture from 1805, when Michigan became a separate territory, through the years spanned by Mr. Ryan's legislative career. Thus, it is, on one hand, a case study of an outstanding legislative leader and, on the other, a history of Michigan public policy and legislative process that focuses on the interfaces between organizational systems and personalities.

The purpose of this research project is to explore and describe the connections between the developmental process of the State of Michigan as a political entity, the institutional transformation of the state legislature that began in 1965, and Mr. Ryan's roles and relationships with other government actors, as well as his own philosophical orientation and perceptual framework. To this agenda must be added consideration of the philosophical orientations of the writers of the United States Constitution, as well as reflection on what the Ryan

story may suggest about the fundamental task of each generation of Americans to continue the process of state and national identity formation.

The interconnecting focal points of this project more or less grew out of one another in consideration of the issues to be accounted for in an effort to make the case study of Mr. Ryan an historically probable account of a moral exemplar in a state legislative setting rather than a polemic. This chapter will describe the stages of development of the research project with attention to the intellectual antecedents upon which the inquiry rests, the formulation of the research question and hypotheses, the research strategy and perspective, and the structure of the dissertation.

The Research Project

The Unprepossessing Mr. Ryan

The first chore in any research project is to decide what one is going to pay attention to and why. I decided early on to pay attention to Mr. Ryan. My reasons for doing so were several, and I will describe them here.

The Mythic Mr. Ryan

The term "mythic" is used here and elsewhere to refer to the symbolic side of leadership. "The dominant view of decision-making as the crucial process in

organizations and the dominant empiricist approach within that decision school of thought are the roots of the bias [against] and the neglect of the other side of decision" (Broms & Gahmberg, 1982, p. 15). The "other side" of leadership and decision-making is actually another dimension, an "alternate reality" that stems from both cultural and individual histories and values and that has its own laws, internal consistency, and mode of change. This "mythic reality" is composed of archetypes, which are symbolic, universal psychological images.¹

The mythic reality bases change in the mythic mode, which includes methods of symbolic creation. Change in the mythic mode often appears paradoxical when viewed from the analytic mode that characterizes logical positivism. This is because the "mythic leader" structures events to create new meanings. "The mythic inventions that are successful in creating large-scale change are those that are in tune with the needs of the system—that is, where the inventor senses what a culture needs, what will capture its energy" (McWhinney, 1989, p. 178).

Although he retired from the legislature over a decade ago, William Ryan continues to be what Berne (1963) called a "euhemerus," a psychological leader of mythic proportions who is held in universal high esteem by those involved in state policy making. This in itself is no mean feat, given Michigan's fractious political climate. In the history of the Michigan House of Representatives over the past 20 years, Ryan has come to be viewed by many as an archetypal figure

who both reflects and represents certain positive aspects of the institutional character of the Michigan Legislature, as well as of the cultural character of Michigan itself.

A major thesis underlying this work is that the character and developmental process of a democratic society, its political systems and institutions, and individual political actors are intimately connected. "The difficulty in understanding the link between individual and social change is based in part on a bias we have inherited from the Western cultural storehouse: the tendency to distinguish clearly between individual persons and their environments" (Frei, Hugentobler, Schurman, Duell, & Alioth, 1993, p. 28). The synthesis achieved through the flow of energy from individuals through organizational cultures to institutional forms and policy outcomes and back around again cannot be accounted for through the "taking-apart" analytic process alone. A systems approach using synthetic thinking is also required to understand the role and function of the human elements in the containing whole (Patton, 1990).

The character of a society has enormous impact on the nature of its governmental institutions, and those institutions in turn help shape the development of individuals who join their membership through the electoral process. At the same time, however, "at the deepest levels, an organization's culture is made up by the special set of characters it consciously and unconsciously

selects to represent "it" (Mitroff, 1989, p. 120). For the Michigan legislature, Mr. Ryan appears to be such an "organizational icon."

Ryan the Legislator

A second interesting feature is Ryan's legislative career pattern and the period in which he served. First elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in 1958 as a representative from a multi-member Detroit district, Ryan was serving as a Democratic member in 1959-60 when the House split 55-55 and the Republicans took control. When the legislature was reapportioned in 1964 and Democrats suddenly gained sweeping majorities, Ryan turned down the position of majority floor leader because he wanted to work on social issues. When the House split down the middle again in 1967-68 and Republicans again gained the upper hand, Ryan was the Democratic candidate for speaker and became the minority leader. When the Democrats gained control of the Michigan House in 1969, Ryan was elected Speaker by a hair's breadth. Two years later, however, he was elected by a unanimous House vote. He served in the post of Speaker of the House until the end of 1974.

Early in his speakership, Ryan selected a putative successor, and, in 1975, he voluntarily relinquished the speakership because the press of administrative duties kept him from working on legislative subject matter and "the attainment of solutions to basic human problems" (personal communication,

December 17, 1991). Mr. Ryan returned to the ranks, now as a member of the majority party, and continued to serve as a House member until 1982. At this point, he (again voluntarily) stepped down from elected office.

Since his retirement from the Legislature, Ryan has maintained a continuing interest and involvement in many areas of public policy development. He is unique among living former legislative leaders in that his continuing close contact with public policy development emanates solely from a position of "citizen activist." Since his retirement from the legislature, Ryan has never served as a paid lobbyist nor occupied a governmental position that pays anything more than per diem expenses.

To summarize Ryan's 25-year legislative career, he was a member of the (real or structural) House minority for nine years and of the majority for 15. Michigan had a "divided government" for the duration of Ryan's time in office, with the exception of the last two years (1981-82). Mr. Ryan was a formal leader for eight years but a psychological leader almost from start to finish. Perhaps one reason for the almost universal high esteem in which he is held is his consistent refusal to capitalize on his reputation to his personal material benefit.

Ryan the Philosopher

Still another fascinating element of this complex character is his extremely coherent philosophy of government. In Ryan's own words:

The individual human being is the target of all social policy. The balancing act is between justice and liberty. Justice has to do with ensuring the adequacy of the twelve basic human needs. These are *cooperative* needs because they are unattainable except through cooperative activity. They are also *natural* needs because they are predestined in nature and creation, inherent in how the human being was created or evolved. In a cooperative framework, liberty must be relinquished to the extent—but only to the extent—that is necessary to ensure the adequacy of the twelve cooperative necessities for everyone in the society.²

This ability to articulate and act upon a set of ethical principles that ground both philosophy and social action suggests that Ryan is at the highest rung (Stage 6) in Kohlberg's (1976) framework of moral development:

At Stage 6, Kohlberg's highest stage, a person is able to articulate universal ethical principles underlying the assertion of human rights, such as the principle that persons should be treated as ends, not merely as means. Although Kohlberg's longitudinal subjects are all now adults in their 30s, none of them has manifested Stage 6 thinking. Kohlberg now views Stage 6 as a philosophical position, espoused by some philosophers and other individuals, rather than as a natural psychological stage in moral development. (Lickona, 1980, p. 107)

If Ryan's degree of moral development is unusual per se, it is even more an object of curiosity in an individual whose career can best be described as that of a successful professional politician. What characterizes the rise to political power of such an individual? How is moral autonomy maintained in the face of competing pressures? Or is it maintained? Did Ryan become a more or less moral person, in terms of character ethics, as a result of his legislative career? These and other questions become even more compelling in light of the current disregard in which politicians are generally held by the American public and the

difficulty we continue to experience in attempting to wrestle with the problem of political ethics.

The Unprepossessing Mr. Ryan

Stereotypical images of the legislative opinion-molder tend to take the form either of "the aggressive, self-confident personality" or that of "the charming leader who whistles through legislative tasks like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, picking up a coterie of friends who follow on many occasions" (Davies, 1986, p. 97). James MacGregor Burns (1978) noted that:

[T]he American legislature would seem to offer a useful testing of the potential of autonomous legislative leadership. And so it does—but the results do not suggest the existence or the potential of great leadership. . . . [L]egislatures do not seem to generate their own *parliamentary* leadership capable of aggregating support behind legislation, setting the lines of conflict . . . and enacting measures into law. One can find exceptions where great parliamentary leaders are able to dominate legislatures through the power of personality and principle, but in the twentieth century the examples are few. (p. 367)

In terms of his image, Mr. Ryan fails to pass muster as a dominating personality type. Even at the height of his career, he was described by one newspaper writer as "a rumped, drab-looking man with climbing hairline . . . [whose] complexion is pasty from long hours indoors, his posture slouchy" (Lane, 1971). Another called him "one of the least pretentious and possibly the most unprepossessing politician in Michigan's history" (McDiarmid, 1976).

What is the relationship between this total lack of charisma and Ryan's effectiveness as a legislative leader? Did he succeed in spite of being physically "unprepossessing"—or because he was?

Life History, Political Culture, and Identity Formation

The question naturally arises as to whether Ryan has been iconized simply by virtue of his having been the Speaker under whose leadership the Michigan House evolved as a full-time, professional body and having been in positions of key influence during a particularly favorable period in terms of the state's political climate, the composition of the Legislature, and the agendas set by the federal government and the state Governor.

In developing this work, I have been guided by Eric Erikson's (1973, 1975) concept of the identity crisis as an historical tool, which he developed in conjunction with his pioneering work in psychohistory. Erikson (1973) defined "psychohistory" as "the study of individual and collective life with the combined methods of psychoanalysis and history" (p. 13). In his American studies particularly, Erikson (1975) focused on the usefulness of the concept of the "identity crisis" as a tool for historical analysis, observing that there seemed "to be enough of the adolescent in every American to suggest that in this country's history fate has chosen to highlight identity questions together with a strangely

adolescent style of adulthood" (p. 44). He speculated that "problems of identity become urgent wherever Americanization spreads" and enjoined serious consideration of "not only the stance of self-made men but also the question of adulthood" (p. 45).

The question of what constitutes "adulthood" is one of the unifying themes of Erikson's own "psychohistories."³ One of Erikson's concerns was with what may be "wrong" with being "normal." He suggested that an efficient adaptation to role specifications by groups of individuals who have successfully mastered their individual identity crises may include "pervasive group retrogressions" that "represent a joint fixation on historical formulae mortally dangerous to further adaptation" (1975, p. 109).

In Erikson's (1975) theoretical framework, one purpose of a psychohistory was to conceptualize a "'great' man's crises and achievements as communal events characteristic of a given historical period" (p. 128). Another was to explore the connections between historical "greatness" and the meaning of "adulthood," for both individuals and communities. For Erikson, genuine adulthood was not so much a life stage as a principle. It corresponded "to what in Hinduism is called the maintenance of the world, that middle period of the life cycle when existence permits you and demands you to consider death as peripheral and to balance in certainty with the only happiness that is lasting: to

increase, by whatever is yours to give, the good will and the higher order in your sector of the world" (1974, p. 124).

This work is not a true psychohistory in the Eriksonian sense, as it does not draw upon the methods of psychoanalysis. But Erikson (1975) also recognized the need for studying "tradition building and institution forming" in order to understand how "the sense of a wider identity" created by the presence of a great leader is absorbed by the community and influences the "metabolism of generations," as well as "the world image and the life stages of the led" (p. 166). This is the particular strand of Erikson's line of inquiry that is followed here. Erikson (1975) proposed a number of rules and methods for maintaining intellectual honesty and increasing plausibility in the development of a life history. These included the need for the author to "be reasonably honest about his own relation to the bit of history he is studying" and to "indicate his motives without undue mushiness or apology" (p. 88), as well as to account for the stages of development of the community both at "the historic moment" and at the "moment" the record is made and demonstrate the developmental probability of the account given both the historical and the contemporary culture of the community.

It was in obedience to these principles that I embarked upon the history of Michigan from its territorial days that comprises Chapters III and IV of this work. One cannot speak of an "identity crisis" of a political entity without some

grasp of the process of identity formation and the stages of maturation of that entity. Elazar's (1966) classic work on American political subcultures provides a framework for analyzing the components of the "political personality" of the State of Michigan.

The Virtuous Politician--An Oxymoron?

Moral Exemplarship and Moral Action

A number of eminent scholars of political science and public administration have recently turned away from a quantitative, organizational focus and toward a study of individual characteristics that may help to define public morality in a manner consonant with American pluralism. Specifically, Cooper and Wright (1992) and 12 other scholars recently published under the title Exemplary Public Administrators the results of research focused on isolating the reasons why certain public administrators had been more successful than others in demonstrating personal virtue and serving the public good. None of the exemplars, however, was an elected officeholder or a member of the legislative branch of government.

As part of this work, Hart (1992) provided a taxonomy of "The Moral Exemplar in an Organizational Society." Distinguishing characteristics of the moral exemplar are: (a) good moral character as a constant (rather than intermit-

tent) aspect of the personality; (b) free and intentional action; (c) relative "faultlessness," i.e., striving for virtue in most things; and (d) actions that bring about real good. While "the moral problems of modern America are unique in some respects, . . . most of them will yield to such classic virtues as courage, justice, magnanimity, and prudence" (p. 15).

To the above qualities, Hart added the attribute of "expressive obligation," which has both internal and external aspects.⁴ The internal (or psychological) aspect, which may be seen as following from Aristotle's conception of virtue, relates to the quality of being emotionally engaged—doing the right thing for the right reasons, and acting from the heart as well as the head. The external (or social) aspect of expressive obligation is what raises moral actions to the level of exemplary acts through the process of capturing the attention and imagination of the observing public. The process of persuasion, fundamental to a democracy, does not emanate from reason alone, but also from the quality of charisma. In addition, however, "[t]he expressive obligation must *never* be false or self-aggrandizing, but must flow honestly from one's unique moral character" (p. 19).

Hart also provided a framework for identifying the general types of moral action in which "the moral hero" and "the moral worker" may engage. "Moral episodes" may take the form of a "moral crisis" or a "moral confrontation." "Moral processes" include "moral projects" and "moral work." The dramatic nature of moral crises and confrontations makes these "the events most often reported by

the media and most often cited as cases in organizational ethics" (p. 23). Such moral episodes involve events of restricted intervals that present the opportunity for an individual to display moral heroism or championship in response to immoral or amoral activities by others.

By contrast, moral processes involve "the intentional introduction of morality into the ordinary actions of everyday life, in recognition that true morality belongs to our every action and thought, not just to the heightened moments." Moral projects are actions undertaken to create "new, more principled ways of doing things. Although such moral projects are bounded by time, their ultimate purpose is to bring about permanent moral improvement, and thus they are converted into moral work" (p. 24).

The second category [of moral processes] is *moral work*, and this is the most important one, for it is the key to a worthy life for the vast majority of us. It refers to the intentional decision of an individual always to think and act in virtuous ways during the routine conduct of his or her personal and organizational life. The exemplar here is a *moral worker*. Moral work must be constant throughout a complete lifetime, and it should bear the unique stamp of each moral individual. (pp. 24-25)

Virtue, Practice, and Political Community

Cooper (1992) combined Hart's typology of moral conduct with Alasdair MacIntyre's theory of virtue and practice within organizational settings. MacIntyre (1984) defined "practice" as:

[A]ny coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended. (p. 187)

The internal goods of a practice are defined by standards of excellence that have been developed throughout the history of the practice. Sequences of development reflect "progress towards and beyond a variety of types and modes of excellence" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 189). Participation in a practice means subjecting oneself to standards of excellence that are recognized by the community of practitioners. As a corollary, only practitioners are competent to judge the extent to which one of their number has achieved the standards of excellence.

The internal goods of a practice are in tension with what MacIntyre (1984) called external goods, such as fame, wealth, and power.

External goods are . . . characteristically objects of competition in which there must be losers as well as winners. Internal goods are [also] the outcome of competition to excel, but it is characteristic of them that their achievement is a good for the whole community who participate in the practice. (p. 190)

But practices require for their existence institutional hosts which are the "social bearers" of the practice, and institutions are naturally oriented to external goods, often at the expense of the internal goods of the practice. The continued integrity of a practice is dependent upon the exercise of the virtues by at least some of the

practitioners. "A virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 191). The presence of virtuous practitioners is all that stands between the continued development of a practice and the decline thereof that is inevitably induced by the goal-displacing influence of institutional hosts.

Practitioners' relationships to one another are defined partially by shared standards and purposes characteristic of their practice and partially by reference to standards of truthfulness, trust, justice, courage, and other classic virtues. Character traits such as courage and truthfulness—i.e., the virtues—must be cultivated by at least some of those who engage in a practice for "two purposes: to support the pursuit of higher standards of the internal goods of the practice in its routine activity and to protect these internal goods from displacement by the external goods of host institutions" (Cooper, 1992, p. 328).

The relationship between character virtues and advancement of a practice might be depicted as shown here:

CHARACTER —→ VISION —→ ACTION⁵

MacIntyre (1984) pointed out that there is a crucial distinction between this conception of the relationship between individual moral character and political community and the relationship envisioned in modern liberal individualism:

For liberal individualism a community is simply an arena in which individuals each pursue their own self-chosen conception of the good life, and political institutions exist to provide that degree of order which makes such self-determined activity possible. . . .

By contrast, on the particular ancient and medieval view which I have sketched political community not only requires the exercise of the virtues for its own sustenance, but it is one of the tasks of parental authority to make children grow up so as to be virtuous adults. (p. 195)

MacIntyre (1984) explicitly rejected the possibility that modern pluralist politics can be defined in terms of his Aristotelian conception of the connection between moral character and social structuring because no consensus exists about ultimate goods. Political institutions exist to control and manage factionalism; they are driven by utilitarianism. "[M]odern politics cannot be a matter of genuine moral consensus. And it is not. Modern politics is civil war carried on by other means" (p. 253).

In developing the concept of the public moral exemplar, Cooper (1992) implicitly repudiated MacIntyre's assertion that lack of agreement on ultimate ends precludes application of an Aristotelian virtue model in the sphere of public administration. His argument rested on two additional considerations. First, as Pincoffs (1986) argued, "we share a good deal of well-grounded agreement on the question of who is the right sort of person in general. Assuming that nearly anything worth having will require a good deal of concerted effort, then persistence, courage, and unflappability in the face of setbacks will be universally desirable instrumental virtues—instrumental, that is, to the attainment of anything

that is difficult to attain" (p. 153). Even the glossy Cosmopolitan published an article a few years back proclaiming:

Most of us do not require a detailed analysis of ethics or an agonized history of its triumphs and failures to understand what the word means. Most of us know. And common sense is our great instructor. We admire people who are brave, generous, honorable, faithful, just, temperate, truthful, and loving. (Hamill, 1988, p. 255)

The second consideration that Cooper (1992) brought to bear is the broad agreement that exists as to certain public values that we do all hold in common even in this multi-cultural, hyper-pluralistic American society at the close of the twentieth century. These include respect for all human beings, certain constitutional values, and the rule of law, to name a few.⁶

Yet the on-going highly public debate over America's "loss of values" and the need for moral education rarely focuses on these areas of common ground, on how our system of constitutional government is nourished and moved forward by sustained discussion among political actors who strongly disagree with each other in many areas but who at the same time model affirmation of our common ground. Anthropologist Katherine Newman noted disturbing trends toward xenophobia, increases in intolerance, and destruction of the social contract that are accompanying the realization of the "age of limits" in the United States (MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, 1993).

U.S. Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell recently reported with dismay a news reporter's comment that he doesn't believe anything that any

elected official tells him (MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, 1994). The current "culture of disbelief" or "confidence crisis" stems partially from an inability to make critical distinctions between the "good guys" and the "bad guys."

Cooper (1992) asserted, "[W]e in the public administration community need to spend more time in judging others, not in the sense of condemning them from a presumed position of moral superiority, but to assess character.

Evaluating character is a risky venture; the requisite methods are not apparent, and the possibilities for error are great. Character assessment cannot be neatly packaged in a set of efficient techniques for inclusion in preemployment and performance reviews. It clearly involves more than demonstrating that someone has great skill in ethical analysis and reasoning, however much that is valued for its own contribution to administrative competence. Assessing character certainly goes beyond the examination of adherence to some official dogma, creed, or statement of appropriate conduct. It requires no less than the examination of the central tendencies of a life. (p. 338)

Through the narrative method, the authors of Exemplary Public Administrators did just this, and, in so doing, point to an understanding of both "the public good" and the internal goods of public administration that are produced, protected and developed by the varying forms of moral conduct identified by Hart.

The Research Question and Hypotheses

In terms of organizational and public policy analysis, the question to which this study is addressed is under what conditions the American state legislative institution can be a generative force in society, contributing to genuine social

change as measured by the intent of lawmakers and by the establishment of structures and policies that contribute to the satisfaction of human needs and expectations in the state community.⁷ The specific focus is on the role and character of legislative leadership. Are periods in which a state legislature functions with a high degree of responsibility, accountability, and creativity simply fortunate historical accidents? Or can such a period be identified with an authentic brand of exemplary legislative leadership specifically associated with the legislative institution itself—its history and role in society and in the balance of governmental powers, its character and organizational structure, its methods and dynamics, or a combination of these attributes? What is the matrix of administrative virtue in the role of legislative leader, as reflected by William Ryan's career?

Is it possible to be **both** a virtuous human being, exercising moral choice and promoting universal ethical principles in the practice of politics, **and** an effective legislative leader? Ryan's history suggests that the answer to this question is "yes, at least under some conditions." The purpose of the study is to examine the internal and external conditions that enabled Ryan to maintain and in fact develop his own understanding and exercise of his moral philosophy while also achieving success at the levels both of legislative leadership and social policy-making.

The study of moral exemplarship is relevant with respect to public leadership in general and legislative leadership in particular because of deep confusion over what constitutes "good politics." In the legislative branch of government, a great part of this confusion stems from the meaning of "representation." It is by no means clear to whom the individual legislator or the legislative leader is ultimately responsible, let alone how competing responsibilities can be met while, on the one hand, maintaining personal moral autonomy and, on the other, accomplishing public policy results congruent with the goals of a mature society. These concerns will be addressed through an extended problem statement in Chapter II, "The Confidence Crisis, the Madisonian Dilemma, and the Problem of Representation."

This work seeks to extend the analysis presented by Cooper (1992), as well as MacIntyre's framework, to a legislative setting, with the following research hypotheses:

Research hypothesis: Administrative virtue in legislative leadership, as exemplified by the career of William A. Ryan, is best described in terms of utilitarian ethics. In the role of Speaker of the House, the virtuous administrator is one who is able to control and manage factionalism in the interest of incremental change, thereby ensuring that "interest will play the role of virtue."

Rival hypothesis: The virtues of utilitarianism are insufficient to explain why Ryan has been iconized as an ideal legislative leader. An adequate

definition of administrative virtue in legislative leadership, as exemplified by the career of William A. Ryan, must draw upon the framework of character ethics, personal qualities to which others are drawn (although possibly out of awareness) that form an essential part of the leader's moral authority.

These guiding hypotheses were used to generate questions and look for patterns. Although the unit of analysis in this study is an individual legislator, the results of this exploratory inquiry may have implications for the broad question of what constitutes "virtuous legislative practice" and what implications this may have for whether the American state legislative institution can (and should be) be a generative force in society or whether its function is (and should be) largely one of overlaying a technical-legal ordering on economic and social priorities that are determined primarily through other channels.

The Research Strategy and Perspective

Research Methods

Oral History

A primary source of data for the central portion of this dissertation has been a series of structured in-depth interviews, as well as informal conversations, with William Ryan. In addition, in-depth interviews lasting between two and four hours were conducted with a number of other key informants. The group of six

informants included two former Speakers of the Michigan House, one Republican and one Democratic; one former Republican legislator; one sitting Democratic legislator; one former head of a legislative agency; and three former members of legislative staff.

Excerpts from these elite interviews form major portions of the text in Chapters VI through X. I have tried to retain the color and flavor of the informants' speech. The interview material has been heavily edited, however, for the purpose of providing greater "sense-making." Thus, colloquial word usage has been changed when it tended to distract attention from the content of the given quotation, but not changed when it did not seem to do so. In addition, material relating to a given area of questioning has frequently been consolidated into a single quotation even though different parts of the informant's "quotation" may have been made at various points in the interview. Correspondingly, I have often eliminated my own "pushing" questions and comments, which I view as coming under the broad general heading of "qualitative technology."

The interview excerpts are indented and single spaced. My own questions and comments are in italics; quotations of respondents are in the same type face as the main body of the text.

Documentary Sources and Content Analysis

A broad range of documentary sources was used. Five sources were particularly helpful in constructing Chapters III and IV, the historical overview. The first was Willis F. Dunbar's Michigan. A History of the Wolverine State, which, as revised by George S. May in 1980, continues to stand as the definitive history of Michigan. The second was Peter Kobrak's thoughtful study of Michigan's political culture, which was published in 1984. A Sesquicentennial Look at the Michigan Legislature, written by Christopher Carl and Theodore Ruseky (1987) and published by the Michigan Legislative Council, was particularly useful for its specific focus on legislative history. A fourth perspective was supplied by James V. Campbell's Outlines of the Political History of Michigan, published in 1876 as a contribution to the nation's centennial celebration; and a fifth by Bruce Catton's (1976) history of Michigan, published 100 years later as part of the nation's bicentennial celebration.

For Chapter V, "The Greening of State Government," the primary sources were monographs published during the time period covered by the chapter (1948-1964), McNaughton's (1960) biography of G. Mennen Williams, Sachs's (1987) study of the battle over legislative reapportionment in Michigan, and Stieber's (1970) analysis of the politics of change in Michigan during the 1960s.

With Chapter VI, the documentary sources changed to "insider" materials used to fill in the picture of William Ryan's life and times. Particularly useful was the daily Michigan Report issued by Gongwer News Service. Other major documentary sources were the journals of the Michigan House of Representatives, the Legislative Status, and directories and handbooks published annually or semi-annually by the State Legislature.

With few exceptions, the "insider" sources are broadly available at libraries housing collections of Michigan documents. I have used the Library of Michigan. Past years' copies of the week-daily Michigan Report issued by Gongwer News Service are maintained in bound volumes at the Library of Michigan, as are the journals of the Michigan House of Representatives and Michigan Manuals dating back to the nineteenth century. I am calling them "insider" sources for two reasons. First, some sources, such as the Gongwer reports, are unknown except to "insiders." Second, the sheer magnitude of these materials is such that using them requires a knowledge of legislative scheduling and roughly where to look to find given information.

The major exception to the rule regarding the general availability of these sources materials is the category comprised of the legislative handbooks. Unfortunately, these are not maintained as part of the government document collection in the State Library; I was able to use them systematically only because Mr. Ryan lent me his collection.

Content analysis of material contained in these "insider" documentary sources constitutes the third leg of the "qualitative triangulation" that was used for this research project. A variety of types of content analysis were used, ranging from counting the number of bills introduced, bills enacted, and pages in House journals for various legislative sessions to analyzing the number, type, and member composition of House standing committees.

Although the Michigan Legislature formally had single-year sessions until the Constitution of 1963 took effect, I have presented legislative sessions throughout in two-year intervals. My rationale is that legislators have consistently been elected for two-year cycles, and the leadership and committee structure established at the beginning of each odd-numbered year has consistently set the pattern for the "new House" coming into office at that time. The movement to formal two-year sessions was largely a matter of efficiency, as bills could then be carried over to the second year instead of having to be reintroduced and reprinted.

Research Perspective

To say, as I did earlier, that I "decided" to pay attention to Mr. Ryan is something of a misstatement. In fact, I have been paying attention to Mr. Ryan for most of my adult life. In the first instance, this was because he was my "big boss" when I became a member of the staff of the Michigan House of

Representatives in 1971. This is surely a good enough reason to pay attention to anyone, but I can honestly say that my attention grew rather than diminished after Mr. Ryan stepped down from the speakership and reached its height only after he had retired from the Legislature.

This increasing focus was due to my own stages of development. I came to the Legislature as a young adult but a highly seasoned political hack. I was born and raised in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, the child of two New Deal Democrats who somehow flourished in a river of Republicanism. My father, Paul Adams, a former mayor of "the Soo," was a renegade from a staunchly Republican family; his grandfather had served as a Republican member of the Michigan House in 1901-02. Dad's values had been inexorably changed (twisted, in the view of his family) by his years in that hotbed of liberalism, Ann Arbor, where he gained a bachelor's degree, a master's degree in English, and then, since it was still the Depression and there was little work available, a law degree from the University of Michigan. He also gained a wife, Ruth Karpinski, the child of Louis C. Karpinski, a member of the University of Michigan mathematics department and a red-hot radical.

While in law school, Dad became acquainted with two like-minded leftists, G. Mennen ("Soapy") Williams and Neil Staebler, who were to become lifelong friends and allies. My parents were prominent in Upper Peninsula Democratic politics, and, in 1957, Dad was appointed Attorney General of Michigan by

Governor G. Mennen Williams. I became a member of an extended state Democratic "political family," as Dad was elected twice in his own right to the position of Attorney General and then went on to serve on the Michigan Supreme Court until his retirement in 1973. The Young Democrats at that point was a vibrant organization, and when John F. Kennedy won the Democratic nomination and then the presidency, the joy of us "political children" knew no bounds.

I attended the University of Michigan, where I received a B.A. in English in 1966, as well as a full indoctrination in the leftist politics of the 1960s. In 1963, two things happened that completely changed my view of politics and public office holding. President Kennedy was assassinated. And my father lost an election. I decided that the American public was an ignorant, ungrateful lot and went to live abroad for the next few years (in Germany and Canada).

Returning to Michigan in 1970, I went to work for a special commission that was reviewing the Judicial Article of the Michigan Constitution. From there, I went onto the staff of the Michigan House of Representatives. My primary reason for going to work for the House was in the first instance economic, as my mindset toward politics was still in that state of extreme cynicism that is the Janus face of idealism. My first position, which I held for several years, was that of committee clerk for several standing committees. This lowly post provided me with a worm's-eye view of the interface between politics and policy making, as well as of the full range of both political and policy-making behavior.

In 1980, I became administrative assistant to David Evans, an Episcopalian minister and a state representative from Macomb County. When I speak of Michigan's mixed political culture, I am drawing on my personal and professional past, both on my own familial past and my contact with Macomb County politics during the years I worked with David Evans. In both cases, there appears to be a process of dynamic reaction in which those who become politically engaged find themselves at one extreme or the other of the justice-liberty continuum. In the spectrum of state legislative politics, Macomb County epitomizes the concept of the "swing district." Evans, who made no bones about his orientation to social activism, survived politically for four election cycles but lost his bid for re-election in 1984, in the second Reagan landslide.

The year 1985 was a turning point for me. Evans's electoral defeat naturally resonated for me with my father's election defeat over 20 years earlier. Evans's defeat was attributed largely to his vote for an income tax increase in 1983—a vote he had cast despite even Democratic Party leaders' urging that he "take a walk." Although he represented an area that was part of the hotbed of Michigan's taxpayer revolution, Evans's conscience dictated that he vote for the tax increase because it was the right thing to do for the state in its entirety. And he was willing to pay the price of losing his seat in the House of Representatives.

Of course, that meant I lost my "seat," too. Although I admired Evans's moral convictions, I was by no means as clear in my mind as he was in his that

electoral defeat was an acceptable price to pay, and I continued to wrestle with my own demons. After a year spent doing consulting work for the state Department of Licensing and Regulation, I came back to House staff in 1986 as a research analyst. But in the meantime, in 1985, I took my first courses in Western Michigan University's Master of Public Administration program. The year spent away from legislative staff, in addition to the viewpoint provided by my graduate studies, meant that I came back to the House of Representatives with a substantially different perspective than that with which I had left it. This was the second session in the speakership of Gary Owen, and the Michigan House had become far more politicized than it had been under the Ryan speakership or even that of Bobby Crim. Although this process had been going on for some time, my new perspective enabled me to "notice" it far more than I ever had before. In addition, the defeat of several House Democrats who had represented swing districts, which followed on the recall of two Senate Democrats who had supported the income tax increase, had served to make many of those Democrats still holding political office far less willing to take a stand on issues that might prove offensive to the voters. It is fair to say, I believe, that it was during the next several years spent as a member of House staff and witnessing the increasing loss of a policy focus, that I made my own calculations about "Evans's choice" and decided that there are worse things than losing an election.

My continuing graduate studies in public administration provided frameworks for understanding what I was seeing and experiencing in the legislative environment, as well as the political past to which I had been a witness. It was in connection with my on-going interest in political leadership, as well as my growing bemusement with the equation being drawn between "ethics in government" and conflict-of-interest legislation, that I began to center on the notion of the "political exemplar." And this is when I really began to pay attention to William Ryan.

Structure of the Dissertation

This research attempts to bring together several different lines of inquiry and analysis, as described above. In an effort to manage the analytical complexities, the dissertation is organized as follows:

Chapter II, "The Confidence Crisis, the Madisonian Dilemma, and the Problem of Representation," explores the broad philosophical dimensions of the problem to which this research is addressed. The basic thesis is that the way "virtue in public office" was framed by the founders resulted in placing an emphasis on certain aspects of social structuring at the expense of others. This was neither perceived nor intended to be the case, but rather was the result of a particular way of thinking characteristic of the Age of Reason. The founding framework has combined with the disconnection between the realm of law and

politics and that of developmental psychology, the disjunction of deontological and teleological ethics, and the rise of logical positivism to lead inexorably to what we call the "confidence crisis."

Chapters III and IV, "The Michigan Historical Context," present a brief history of Michigan, with a particular emphasis on the foundation period. The thesis here is that states, like people, owe much of their character to their formative years. Although the events and characteristics of such a period do not predetermine the development of the collectivity, they may well suggest the kind of patterns that are likely to emerge in varying forms.

Chapter V, "The Greening of State Government," describes developments between 1948 and the mid-sixties that turned Michigan into a competitive two-party state and resulted in the professionalization of state government. Both major political parties underwent significant reconstruction during this period. In addition to possessing strong, well-disciplined organizations, Michigan's parties offered voters distinct alternatives, in terms of candidates and policies, with a sharply defined ideological distance clearly translated into rival programs for state government.

Chapter VI, "The Michigan Legislature Comes of Age," relates the impetus behind the professionalization of the Michigan Legislature and some of the consequences. In the election of 1964, Michigan voters elected overwhelming Democratic majorities to both houses of the Legislature. This set in motion a

"juggernaut" (as one informant calls it) of institution-building within the Legislature and new social policies without. This chapter relates both the rationale for and the results of change from the standpoints of legislative insiders.

Chapter VII, "An Embattled Government," moves still deeper into the time period on which this study is specifically focused. At the beginning of 1967, the Michigan House of Representatives was evenly divided between the two major political parties. The two candidates for Speaker of the House in many ways personified the distance between the political parties, with respect to both their personal and professional backgrounds and their philosophies of government. This chapter describes the battle for control of the House and the subsequent contest for the minority-party leadership during 1967. It continues the administrative history of the Michigan House with a focus on the three key areas of legislative politics, administrative leadership and policy initiatives.

Chapter VIII, "The Unprepossessing Mr. Ryan," describes the state political environment and the organizational conditions under which William Ryan became Speaker of the House in 1969. It continues the administrative history of the Michigan House with a direct focus on Ryan's role as Speaker in the three major areas of legislative politics, administrative leadership and policy initiatives. It also seeks to paint a picture of the turbulent social climate as it was reflected in the nature of Michigan's political theater and to portray the roles played by Mr. Ryan in response to this social turbulence.

Chapter IX, "Speaker Emeritus—the Ryan Legacy," zeros in on the personality attributes and leadership characteristics of Mr. Ryan as perceived by other members of the legislature and legislative staff. It explicates the connections between Mr. Ryan's attributes and skills, his activities as a legislative leader, and the development of a "better society," as well as between the finding of identity that he himself went through and through which he led the Michigan House.

Chapter X, "Internal Goods, Reward Systems, and the Role of Administrative Virtue," returns to the framework of analysis presented in this chapter and the next. It attempts to sort out the problems brought about by a hostile environment from the problems of institutionalism run amuck. In a way, this is an artificial distinction, since these problem sets are clearly intertwined. However, it is fair to say that one of the reasons for the institutional slippage of the professionalized Michigan Legislature has to do, not only with organizational overburdening, but also with a failure to understand, articulate and value the internal goods of legislative life and the legislature as an institution. As a mature society cares for its young, a mature institution cares for its values.

Endnotes

1. See LeShan (1976), Alternate Realities—The Search for the Full Human Being and McWhinney (1989), "Meta-Praxis: A Framework for Making Complex Changes." LeShan and McWhinney identified four different reality modes that exist simultaneously and that by their nature cannot be integrated with one

another. The modes are sensory, social or transpsychic, unitary or clairvoyant, and mythic.

2. Personal communication, December 3, 1991.

3. These include psychohistories of Martin Luther (Young Man Luther, 1958), Mahatma Gandhi (Ghandi's Truth, 1969) and Thomas Jefferson (Dimensions of a New Identity, 1974).

4. This is something of a recasting of Hart's (1992) formulation of "expressive obligation." Hart uses the term "expressive obligation" in reference to what I am calling the "external aspect."

5. This formulation is derived from Meilaender (1984), The Theory and Practice of Virtue. The graphic rendering is my own.

6. This particular set of public values was cited by Amy Gutman of Princeton University in an interview televised on the MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, March 21, 1994.

7. This definition of "social change" is adopted from Burns (1978, p. 3).

CHAPTER II

THE CONFIDENCE CRISIS, THE MADISONIAN DILEMMA, AND THE PROBLEM OF REPRESENTATION

Introduction

In its broadest formulation, the problem to which this research project is directed has three major dimensions. These are:

1. The inherent disjunction between the pluralist legacy and the civic virtue traditions in American politics. The triumph of logical positivism and utilitarianism has led to a mechanistic view of politics in which the individual citizen is defined in terms of his or her aggregate characteristics (Gawthrop, 1987). Similarly, the legislator's role of "representing" is defined in terms of the aggregate demographic characteristics of his or her electoral constituencies and the "interests" of those constituencies as extrapolated from the results of public opinion polling.

2. The contemporary crisis of confidence and culture of cynicism regarding government institutions and actors and political processes themselves. The lack of confidence cuts both ways: "The public's" contempt for politicians is fully matched by many politicians' contempt for the voters. Political actions such as voting are as likely to be expressions of vengeance against leaders who have

"let us down" as they are to be expressions of socially cooperative behavior, and meaningful political debate has been replaced with a "soundbite democracy" that trivializes and atomizes public policy issues. These phenomena not only undermine the legitimacy of American government institutions; they also tend further to erode the connective tissue needed to restore legitimacy.

3. The underlying beliefs about the nature of political community and why and how change occurs, which lead to repeated iterations of legal-technicist "solutions" to problems that are rooted in issues having to do primarily with human development at the levels of the individual, the group, and the society.

Early in The Liberal Tradition in America, Hartz (1955) asserted that the liberal faith means that "all problems emerge as problems of technique," with the result that "law had flourished on the corpse of philosophy in America" (p. 10). This chapter attempts to paint in extremely broad strokes a picture of the exalted lineage to which contemporary American technicist politics owe their origins, to suggest what has been lost in the process of deifying logical positivism, and to indicate how these overarching philosophical concerns relate to this research project.

The Confidence Crisis

Political Theater in the 1990s

Electoral Politics

The research for this project began in 1990 and ended in 1994. This has been an extraordinarily tumultuous period in both national and Michigan politics. In 1990, the incumbent Michigan Governor, Democrat James Blanchard, was defeated by the Majority Leader of the Michigan Senate, Republican John Engler, by an electoral margin of .01%—an upset victory that had failed to be predicted by the modern equivalent of the Oracle at Delphi, the pollsters.

Blanchard's defeat was the first of a sitting Michigan governor in 30 years. It was attributed largely to Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's "sitting out" the election. Young, the first Black mayor of Detroit (and also one of the first African-Americans to have held a leadership position in the Michigan State Senate), had an increasingly acerbic relationship with Blanchard. The extremely low (approximately 25%) voter turnout in the Detroit metropolitan area reflected a growing frustration among traditional Democrats with Blanchard's failure to defend Michigan's human service programs from Republican assaults at the levels of both social contract theory and state appropriations.

While the 1992 election broke the pattern of steadily declining voter turnouts that has otherwise characterized American elections since the 1960s, many voters' primary motive for "turning out" was apparently to register their protest with the *status quo ante* through the two major vehicles of Ross Perot's candidacy for President and the term-limits movement. Despite Perot's in-again, out-again campaign and his outbursts of paranoia in the last months before the November election, he captured a significant percentage of the votes. Psychohistorian David Beisel pointed to "John Taylor's postmortem on the 1992 presidential race in which he finds Perot's campaign to have been 'almost entirely an experience in imagination,' a candidacy 'from start to finish . . . little more than a projection of various fantasies—his own and other people's'" (Taylor, 1992, cited in Beisel, 1994). Term limits were also approved in a number of states, including Michigan.

At the same time, large numbers of incumbent officeholders either resigned or were turned out of office by dissatisfied voters. The incumbent President lost his bid for re-election, and there was the greatest turnover in Congress in 40 years. In Michigan, the bias against professional politicians created a particularly bizarre twist. The same election that saw Michigan "go Democratic" with respect to the presidential election for the first time in almost 30 years also gave Republicans almost total control of state government as, for the first time in 25 years, Democrats lost the majority in the state House of

Representatives, partially through the electoral defeat of the reigning Speaker of the House, Lewis Dodak. This was the first defeat of a sitting House Speaker in Michigan in the twentieth century.

Clashing Cultures

John Engler's election as governor in 1990 ushered in a dramatic change in how public policy is "done" in Michigan, as well as a major rewriting of the social contract. William A. Sederburg, currently vice-president for public policy of Public Sector Consultants, Michigan's leading public issues research firm, is a former Republican state senator and former member of House Republican staff. Shortly after Governor Engler's election, Sederburg (1991a) wrote:

Most political debate can be interpreted in terms of the underlying beliefs about the nature of mankind and whether conflict or consensus is the norm.

A corollary is that political leadership consists of forming coalitions (consensus building) or marshaling an army of "true believers." In the first two months as governor, Engler clearly is operating from the latter point of view. His inaugural address and State of the State Message referred to the mandate given to him: property tax relief, no new taxes, and budget reductions. (p. 1)

Sederburg suggested that Engler's "Hobbesian leadership style" was predicated on a change in the attitudes of Michigan voters from a normal distribution along an ideological continuum to a "camel-backed" distribution accompanied by "a substantial shift to the political right" (p. 3). The "two humps of the camel,"

Sederburg hypothesized, reflect a change from Michigan's traditional moralistic political culture to a culture split between moralism and individualism. Sederburg was referencing the theoretical framework of political subcultures introduced by Elazar (1966), which will be discussed in substantial detail in the next chapter.

The idea of multiple clashing subcultures was also used by Bellah et al (1985) as a way of understanding the "culture of separation" that characterizes the contemporary United States:

So long as it is vital, the cultural traditions of a people—its symbols, ideals, and ways of feeling—is always an argument about the meaning of the destiny its members share. Cultures are dramatic conversations about things that matter to their participants, and American culture is no exception. From its early days, some Americans have seen the purpose and goal of the nation as the effort to realize the ancient biblical hope of a just and compassionate society. Others have struggled to shape the spirit of their lives and the laws of the nation in accord with the ideals of republican citizenship and participation. Yet others have promoted dreams of manifest destiny and national glory. And always there have been the proponents, often passionate, of the notion that liberty means the spirit of enterprise and the right to amass wealth and power for oneself. The themes of success, freedom, and justice . . . are found in all three of the central strands of our culture—biblical, republican, and modern individualist—but they take on different meanings in each context. American culture remains alive so long as the conversation continues and the argument is intense. (pp. 27-28)

But lately the conversation seems to have broken down. In 1991, focus-group research conducted in cities across the nation drew widespread attention when it revealed that most "Americans believe that politics is out of control and irrelevant in their lives." The study by the Harwood Group undercut the conventional interpretation of the "confidence crisis," which saw voters as being

"apathetic." Far from being uninterested or listless, citizens appeared to be deliberately "abstaining from a political system they believe doesn't address their concerns, doesn't solve problems and doesn't give them a chance to participate."¹

The Confidence Crisis

The crisis of U.S. citizens' confidence in public officials, institutions and processes is well documented. In fact, public confidence in and esteem for elected officeholders has never been robust in the U.S. political culture, although cynicism appears to have reached new heights in recent decades. The problem of "political ethics" is not new in American history, but rather may be seen as a vivid subplot that has run fairly constantly through our various stages of political development.

By contrast, the idea that any politician may ever serve as any kind of a moral exemplar has had a rocky road, and in general it is safe to say that, in the American belief system, the only moral politicians are dead politicians. Indeed, in today's cynical political climate, even dead politicians aren't faring so well. Today's young Americans learn early that George Washington wanted to be called "Your Excellency," that Thomas Jefferson owned slaves and had unacknowledged children by his African American mistress, that John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King were both philanderers, and that thus the ideal

of the heroic politician is a chimera, for in reality there are no heros—at least in American politics.²

Elovitz (1994) noted that as part of the process of "further democratizing our society and raising our standards of public behavior we seem also to have denigrated and weakened" public offices themselves:

What does [it] say about America that a year into a four-year presidency, Clinton's alleged sexual activity during his governorship is front-page news? It certainly says to nations abroad that we have amazingly little respect for our President. It says that we are focused on personal issues rather than issues that are best for our country or how this president is leading our country in a difficult period. It says that we are trivializing the most important office in the land. (p. 277)

The problem broadly described as the public leadership "confidence crisis" has two important aspects. The first is the public's lack of confidence in its elected leadership, dead or alive. Media attention to and public titillation with the misdeeds of elected officials has led to a skewed perception of the body politic as composed of knaves and fools. The second aspect of the "confidence crisis," on which considerably less attention has focused, is elected leaders' generalized lack of confidence in the public, each other, or the institutions in which they serve.

"It turns out that Congress may be as fed up with the public as the public is with Congress," an Associated Press article run nationwide during the 1992 election cycle proclaimed. "And if you grant them anonymity, members of Congress will say so." The article was reporting on research conducted by

Lawrence Hansen with members of Congress during the winter of 1991-92.

Hansen found:

The voters weren't only to blame, but the lawmakers mostly agreed that the system's failures can be partly traced "to a public that believes there can be gains without pains, demands instant solutions to complex problems, expects too much from government, takes its political responsibilities casually, does not understand governmental processes and is politically inattentive and disengaged."³

Author William Greider (1992), in commenting on "the betrayal of American democracy," observed:

At its best moments and its worst, the democratic system is a kind of two-way mirror between the people and those who are chosen to represent them. It reflects the warts and virtues back and forth between them. . . .

This tension is as old as the Republic, but a peculiar dimension has developed in modern politics. Politicians are held in contempt by the public. That is well known and not exactly new in American history. What is less well understood (and rarely talked about for the obvious reasons) is the deep contempt politicians have for the general public. (p. 17)

To the extent that Americans dislike and mistrust their elected leaders, and the leaders dislike and mistrust the electorate, things are very bad indeed. Still another dimension of this problem, and one which grows out of the elements of the confidence crisis, is the lack of "ownership and responsibility" on the part of either the public or the elected officials who constitute their membership for the very institutions in which they serve. One of Ross Perot's great attractions was being a political outsider; presumably this meant that he was untainted by having

sunk to the level of public service. But it has become commonplace for even political insiders to run against government.

The orphaning of the very institutions of government that comprise what McSwain and White (1988) called "the last remaining connecting fabric of our society" and "the only thing that we all still hold in common" is a disturbing phenomenon (p. 58). It should be noted that McSwain and White used this language to refer to executive-branch agencies, as they saw the legislative branch as being increasingly subject to essentially random value inputs that render it impotent. The view of this author is that the direct electoral connection between "the people" and the members of the legislative branch is a visceral bond, the positive side of which it is absolutely essential to develop. The "new public administration" cannot become a reality at the level of practice unless the "new politics," its dead twin, is resurrected.

The Madisonian Dilemma and the Utility of the Virtues

The Madisonian Dilemma

We need look no further than the Federalist Papers to understand the source of the institutionalized bias against politicians and politicized institutions of government. Indeed, the irresponsibility and arbitrariness of state legislatures

was a primary impetus for the revision to the Articles of Confederation, as James Madison indicated in the Federalist Paper Number 10:

Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens . . . that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. However anxiously we may wish that these complaints had no foundation, the evidence of known facts will not permit us to deny that they are in some degree true.⁴

The Federalists' dilemma was this: The "mischief of factions," which Madison defined as "a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community," threatened the existence of our young nation. Yet the development of factions is an inevitable consequence of a government that embraces individual liberty as an end value:

Liberty is to faction, what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be a less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air . . . because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.⁵

Since factions could not be removed, the answer must lie in controlling their negative effects. The Constitution of the United States embodied the perceived solution to the "factious spirit" that "tainted our public administrations." That solution was largely structural—an elaborate and delicately balanced system that would impart stability and moderation through dividing power among the

three branches and levels of government and, in the legislative branch, delegating government to "a small number of citizens elected by the rest," which would serve to "refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations." The answer had to lie in structural arrangements, Madison argued, because:

It is in vain to say, that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and render them all subservient to the public good. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm. Nor, in many cases, can such an adjustment be made at all, without taking into view indirect and remote considerations, which will rarely prevail over the immediate interest which one party may find in disregarding the rights of another, or the good of the whole.⁶

The Utility of the Virtues

Out of the solution to the Madisonian dilemma came a critical interpretation of what constitutes virtue in American political behavior, an understanding reflected in the phrase, "Interest will play the role of virtue." This is a utilitarian definition of virtue, as it was intended to be. In the pluralist framework the preeminent values are stability and accommodation—the ability to control and manage factionalism in the interest of incremental change. In Chandler's analysis, pluralism as a political reality

has largely displaced the ideals of civic virtue in the American republic. Just as Madison predicted in his doctrine of countervailing power, public policy today is largely the product of compromises resulting from interest group conflicts and accommodations. Interest does indeed play the role of virtue in American government (1987b, p 62).

Chandler points out that pluralist theory explicitly rejects morality as a standard for defining the public interest. "Instead, pluralism lays great store in the constructive role of responsive and responsible elites" (1987b, p. 62). The division of power among three co-equal branches, as well as between the federal and state governments, and the elaborate system of checks and balances built into each tier of the American system speak to the faith the founders put in structure and process as a means of forwarding the democratic vision. This had to be the case, due to the varying concepts of the virtues embodied by the original subcultures. The vision of a just society, the ideal of republican civic friendship, and the dream of manifest destiny represent incommensurate moral goods. The one thing that everyone could agree on, as Schlesinger (1986) points out, was that:

life was a ghastly risk and that this was a time of probation for America. For the history of antiquity did not teach the inevitability of progress. It taught the perishability of republics, the transience of glory, the mutability of human affairs

This apprehension of the mortality of republics pervaded Philadelphia in 1787. Not only was man vulnerable through his propensity to sin, but republics were vulnerable through their propensity to corruption. History showed that, in the unceasing contest between corruption and virtue, corruption had always—up at least to 1776—triumphed. (p. 6)

At the same time, however, the doctrine of countervailing powers includes as a basic premise the presence of moral human agents. "As naive as it may sound, the founders addressed this problem by calling for *virtue* in public administration," Chandler (1987b) said. "By virtue they meant at least good character and civic concern and at most heroic love for the public good, a devotion to justice, a willingness to sacrifice comfort and riches for the public interest, and an elevation of the soul" (p. 105).

But this is a different concept of virtue than that embedded in the phrase "interest will play the role of virtue." Yet it is clear that at least some of the founders did have something besides a purely utilitarian concept of virtue in mind, as for instance when Madison speaks of how the elected delegates will "refine" and "enlarge" the public views through a wisdom which "may best discern the true interest of their country," and through a "patriotism and love of justice" that "will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations," or when he speaks of "representatives whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and to schemes of injustice" (Federalist Paper No. 10).

Hickok (1992) noted that "For Publius, the character of those chosen for representative office is very important. In later essays in The Federalist, Madison went on for some length to discuss the role reputation and civic virtue will play in representative government" (p. 9). This ideal of "civic virtue" is shadowy and

indefinite, though, in comparison to the utilitarian (pluralist) concept. There was at least one excellent reason to keep it this way. This was the need to deal with the Anti-Federalist concern that representation should reflect every element of society. For instance, one of the Anti-Federalist "Federal Farmer" papers defined "full and equal representation" as:

that which possesses the same interests, feelings, opinions, and views the people themselves would were they all assembled—a fair representation, therefore, should be so regulated, that every order of men in the community, according to the common course of elections, can have a share in it.⁷

The ideal of civic virtue is premised on the belief that some people are more virtuous than others. The Anti-Federalists saw that as being elitist, and, of course, they were right. I will return to this issue later, in the section on representation. For the moment, however, I will focus on the extent to which the idea of "virtue" or "the virtues" had already taken on a distinctly utilitarian tone, and how this came to be. MacIntyre (1984) used Benjamin Franklin's account to delineate the crucial differences between classical conceptions of the virtues and the concept that typified much of American thought:

Franklin's account, like Aristotle's, is teleological; but unlike Aristotle's, it is utilitarian. According to Franklin in his *Autobiography* the virtues are means to an end, but he envisages the means-ends relationship as external rather than internal. The end to which the cultivation of the virtues ministers is happiness, but happiness understood as success, prosperity in Philadelphia and ultimately in heaven. The virtues are to be useful and Franklin's account continuously stresses utility as a criterion in individual cases. (p. 185)

As the virtues were to play a utilitarian role for the individual, so public virtue was to play a utilitarian role for the collectivity, that role being to form an ever more perfect union out of rival concepts of happiness, justice, and virtue itself, concepts embodied by various factions, or what we now call interest groups. A central problem now becomes whether pluralism as a political reality has displaced the "civic virtue" model, not only at the level of an ideal type, but in terms of actual behavioral possibilities. This is to say, has the United States become such an "interested" society that the individual who accepts a position of political leadership must redefine virtue for himself or herself exclusively in utilitarian terms?

An Ethics Framework

The distinction to be drawn here is between utilitarian ethics, which are connected to a politics of having and doing, and character ethics, which are concerned with human being—or, to make clearer the delineation—"beingness." MacIntyre (1984) saw both Aristotelian character ethics and modern utilitarian ethics as being essentially teleological.

Teleological ethics are ethics of results or consequences. In a broad ethics framework, the distinction is between teleological and deontological ethics. "Teleological" is derived from the Greek *telos*, end, purpose, ultimate object or aim. "Deontology" comes "from the Greek verb stem *deont-*, to bind," as

Chandler (1993) explained: "It is then a short step to deontology as the knowledge or study of moral obligation or commitment" (p. 4). Chandler cited utilitarianism and egoism as "the two primary manifestations of teleological ethics."

[E]goism, elaborated by Niccolo Machiavelli and Max Weber, . . . holds that the right thing to do is what increases my own good, or that everyone really wants what is best for themselves. Given the demonstrable logical deficiencies of egoism, however, egoists move easily from the personal consequences of action to the consequences of action for everyone, or utilitarianism. Thus consequential ethical action exists along a continuum from one's interest in power and influence, perhaps for a humane end (Machiavelli), to one's interest in the honor of executing conscientiously the order of superior authority, a disguised act of ego (Weber), to "this sacred trust—that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the foundation of morals and legislation" (Bentham). (Chandler, 1993, pp. 1-2)

Whereas the *telos* in utilitarianism is "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," the *telos* in Aristotelian ethics is human being, the concept of the good life for man by virtue of the fact that she or he is a member of the human species. Actually, Aristotle would probably have a hard time dealing with the modern distinction between teleological and deontological ethics because in his account of the virtues means and ends are parts of an organic whole.

Moral Minimalism and Moral Zealousness

The sharp distinction between means and ends is one of the hallmarks of the Age of Reason. Machiavelli's theories marked a sharp turn away from the transcendent frameworks of earlier classical philosophers such as Aristotle, as

well as of Christian philosophers such as St. Augustine. Indeed, the birth of realpolitik was motivated by what Machiavelli perceived as the real failure of transcendent sources of order. Instead, he proposed a framework based on immanence, which:

consists in immersion in the contingencies of situations, leading to effective intervention through growing familiarity with regularities in their workings and interconnections. Whereas the transcendental strategy affords compensation to humankind for the disorder of the human situation, the strategy of immanence provides means to achieve order. (Norton, 1991, p. 18)

An important feature of Machiavelli's framework is the way he used linguistics to shift from the Greco-Christian moral high road to a system of moral minimalism. A primary example is his use of the term "virtue." The Greek *arete* "connoted moral excellence based in commitment to the actualization, conservation, and defense of certain objective values, and implying strength of character" (Norton, 1991, p. 20). This term corresponded roughly to the Latin *virtus*. With St. Augustine, *virtus* became equated with purity, concern for and submission to the will of God. With Machiavelli, "virtue" took on a double meaning. Although he sometimes used "virtue" in the classic sense, Machiavelli more often used "virtue" to connote "virtuosity" or "ability," the range of personal abilities needed to wield the instruments of power.

Fortuna is another term that acquires completely different connotations as used by Machiavelli. For Augustine, *fortuna* was associated with divine

providence, otherwise known as the Will of God. In Machiavelli, *fortuna* came to mean "luck," "favor," or a "'condition' of life, a favorable or unfavorable position in relation to other men, or for attaining power." *Fortuna* became, not a guiding force to which one must sensitize oneself, but rather a set of conditions with which one should familiarize oneself in order to seize opportunity (*occasione*) when it presents itself.

Norton (1991) pointed out that such linguistic shifts typify modern moral minimalism. When "virtue" becomes an instrument for the preservation of the social order, little can be required in the way of moral development:

Social order requires the observation by (almost) everyone of rules that are understood and acknowledged as authoritative by (almost) everyone. This means that the rules must be very simple and straightforward, and acting in accordance with them must require very little in the way of developed moral character, for as more is required, the numbers of persons possessing the requisite development diminish. . . .

For Machiavelli, Aristotelian ethics was unworkable because it made excessive demands, requiring developed moral character that few persons possessed; it was therefore unsuited to persons "as they are or as they are capable of speedily becoming." (Norton, 1991, pp. 21-22)

The legal-technical approach to "public virtue" that is characterized by this modern (relatively speaking) fundamental separation between developmental psychology and the realm of law and politics carries a high price tag. The social consequences of moral minimalism and a nondevelopmental conception of the individual in the sphere of political leadership may be broadly described as those of the negative self-fulfilling prophecy.

The ramifications go far beyond simply a real or perceived degeneration in the quality of those seeking or holding elective office. There is reason to believe that the problem of moral underdevelopment is a serious one for the broader population. A recent survey by the Josephson Institute of Ethics provided significant evidence that an alarmingly high percentage of the current generation of young (15 to 30 years of age) American adults lie, cheat, and steal in all arenas of their lives. Institute president Michael Josephson said, "There's a hole in the moral ozone, and it is probably getting bigger."⁸

The 1993 annual survey of high achievers conducted by Who's Who Among American High School Students found nearly 80% of survey respondents admitted to "some dishonesty, such as copying someone else's homework or cheating on an exam."⁹

Chandler (1993) observed with heavy irony:

It can be argued that lying comes close to being a universal law in America as some 91% of 2,000 randomly selected people recently admitted that they lied regularly at work and at home. The same survey, which promised anonymity to the respondents on every page as it sought "total honesty," also reported that only 13% of Americans believe in all Ten Commandments, most workers admit to goofing off about seven hours a week, and half say they regularly call in sick when they are not. (pp. 8-9)

One of the primary ways in which the concern for the loss of morality finds expression is through the activities and language of the religious right. As Chandler (1987b) explained:

Many of us are unaware of the message that has always been close to the surface in American social and religious history: when economic downturns come, a large number of Americans read them as moral judgments and precise punishments for the nation's sins. Setbacks of any kind are seen as evidence of unrighteousness. In times of insecurity, when old certitudes are shaken and unanswerable questions are posed, Americans in this tradition look for simple answers, visible enemies, and assurances that they are right. Such a situation is ripe for the kind of authoritarian leadership which both the religious and the political right provide[d] in the late 1980s. (p. 218)

Sadly, the "sintalk" of the religious right is based in an understanding of what constitutes high moral development that in many respects collides either directly or indirectly with fundamental values of a constitutional democracy. But what is even sadder is that distaste for the hyper-moralism of the religious and political right combines with the moral minimalism and attachment to proceduralism that characterize the "reasonable" children of the Age of Reason to render those on the progressive side of the political spectrum morally speechless, incapable of grasping the public imagination with an alternate moral vision. This is a failure in what Hart (1992) called the "expressive obligation" of leadership. A call to reason and the rule of law is an inadequate response to the compelling imagery of a mythic belief system. An essential aspect of restoring legitimacy to our democratic institutions is making public leadership interesting and exciting, creating a "new mythology" that adequately portrays the perils and triumphs of public life.

The Problem of Representation

The Mythic Reality—Is It Really Real?

But why should it be so difficult for liberal Democrats to enter into a mythic reality? Why has "law flourished on the corpse of philosophy in America," as Hartz (1955) put it? The answers to these questions are interconnected. In Chapter I, I defined "mythic reality" as a mode of thinking, feeling, and acting that derives from archetypes—symbolic, universal psychological images. By its very nature, a mythic reality is both transcendental and unitary.¹⁰ When people are in a mythic reality, they are dealing not with that which is on a sensory plane, but with what was, is, and ever will be on a transcendent, symbolic level. This is not the same as the way one perceives the past, present, and future when in the sensory reality, where the mode of reasoning is analytic and logical.

But this goes back to the reason why MacIntyre (1984) asserted his model of "practice" cannot be applied to the public bodies through which the political community of modern liberal individualism is reified. The existence of a practice depends on a communal understanding of what constitutes excellence, MacIntyre said, an understanding that is based in the history of the practice and that is also continually evolving. Although MacIntyre did not use the term "mythic reality," his discussion of how practices are sustained and forwarded by practitioners suggests that the "communal understanding" is based at least

partially in a mythic mode. This is why so many practices are thought and spoken of as a combination of science and art, and also why we commonly distinguish, as MacIntyre did, between practitioners and technicians. MacIntyre saw the evolution of a practice as being impossible in modern liberal individualism because there is no communal understanding of excellence and political bodies are not "institutional hosts," but rather "arenas" in which various interests do battle.

Given the *telos* of "the greatest good for the greatest number," MacIntyre (1984) saw the only shared principles that bind political community and political combatants as being essentially legalistic and procedural. This understanding of the nature and object of political community owes a good deal also to the rise of logical positivism in the early part of the twentieth century, and the understanding that all problems are "either questions of fact or questions of logic" (Barrett, 1979, p. 10). In this scheme of things, there is no room for a reality that is neither logical nor factual, nor for one that is either transcendental or unitary, let alone both.

There is a good deal to be said for MacIntyre's (1984) view. Even in the area of "ethics in government," the American approach is almost exclusively legal and technical. The Watergate chapter (which certainly had all the elements of a great myth) gave birth to volumes of federal and state legislation directed at raising ethical standards with respect both to financing political campaigns and

to government operations. That the creation of Political Action Committees (PACs), now viewed as the root of much political evil, was one of the post-Watergate reform measures is an inescapable irony. Less well known but equally problematic is the rising ratio of "reviewers to doers" in the federal government. The "ethics bureaucracy" spawned by post-Watergate reforms is now not only the fastest growing, but virtually the only growing part of the federal workforce, a growth frequently effected by moving positions within an agency from service delivery to the office of the inspector general (Conference on the Study of Government Ethics, 1991).

Widespread instances of abuse of office by both appointed and elected officials at all levels of government since Watergate, contemporary campaign techniques, the burgeoning cost of political campaigns largely supported by financing from PACs, the mushrooming presence and influence of special-interest lobbyists, and a variety of other systemic problems suggest that the effects of Watergate have not included an improvement in the moral climate. The mixed effects of post-Watergate reforms have not, however, caused any lessening of faith on the part of either the American public, mass media, public interest groups, or those within government in the efficacy of bureaucratic and legalistic solutions to the "ethics problem."

This discussion has important implications for what I will call (in defiance of MacIntyre) the practice of representation. Thompson (1985) elaborated on the

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major challenges to the potential for the exercise of significant moral judgments and resulting behavior on the part of individual public administrators. One of the most serious objections to the practice of administrative ethics is "the ethic of neutrality," which "portrays the ideal administrator as a completely reliable instrument of the goals of the organization, never injecting personal values into the processes of furthering these goals" (Thompson, 1985, p. 555). In the legislative arena, the counterpart of the ethic of neutrality is the "ethic of representation" as representation is currently interpreted. The view was stated by Naisbitt (1984):

The fact is we have outlived the historical usefulness of representative democracy and we all sense intuitively that it is obsolete . . . We continue to elect representatives for two key reasons: 1) That is the way we've always done it, and 2) it is politically expedient . . . Essentially, we are telling our elected officials, "Okay, we've elected you to represent us, but if anything comes up that impacts on our lives, you've got to check back with us." (p. 77)

This understanding of representation presents a framework in which the choices of a legislator are limited to obedience to the will of the public or resignation.¹¹ The increasing energy that legislators devote to polling their constituencies on public policy issues on the one hand, and widespread anti-incumbency sentiments and the term-limits movement on the other, suggest that both officeholders and the public widely subscribe to this view of representation.

But wait a minute. When we look at the data on the eroding level of public morality, it seems fairly clear that politicians who lie, cheat, and steal are, if

nothing else, at least representative of the population at large. But apparently this is not what we have in mind, especially when we look at all the energy and resources we are putting into keeping public officials from lying, cheating, and stealing. So when we say we want politicians who are "of the people," so they will be properly representative, we must mean something else. But what could it be?

The Problem of Representation

A classic distinction in theories of representation is between delegation and trusteeship. Mosher (1968) distinguished between active and passive representation. Passive representation "concerns the source or origin of individuals and the degree to which, collectively, they mirror the total society." By contrast, with active representation, "an individual is expected to press for the interests and desires of those whom he is presumed to represent" (p. 12).

Mosher (1968) related these two concepts of representation to two aspects of responsibility, objective responsibility and subjective responsibility. Objective responsibility "connotes the responsibility of a person or an organization to someone else, outside of self, for some thing or some kind of performance" (p. 7). With subjective responsibility, the emphasis "is not upon to whom or for what one is responsible but to whom and for what one feels responsible and behaves responsibly" (p. 8).

Hickok (1992) reasoned that

Certainly both representation and responsibility as discussed by Mosher can be applied to legislators at all levels of government. When we think of elected representatives we think of their obligation to act in our behalf. . . . In addition, they are expected to recognize that they are accountable to the voters who place them in office. But our approach to representation typically goes beyond this to embrace the understanding that elected representatives must sometimes make decisions regarding issues that the voters have little or no understanding of or interest in. Therefore we tend to feel our elected officials should exercise the sense of subjective responsibility Mosher refers to: they should make a decision bearing in mind the loyalty and duty they owe to the citizens. And because of this, we tend to argue that elected officials should be of the people so that they might reflect the values, mores and attitudes of the people when making decisions for them. (p. 2)

As Thompson (1987) pointed out, the role of legislator presents especially perplexing ethical dilemmas. The electoral connection to a particular constituency requires the legislator to balance concern for the whole with concern for the particular group she or he represents, as well as to balance his or her autonomous moral judgement with appropriate attention to the desires of the electorate. An additional set of problems is posed by the absolute dependency of the individual legislator on the cooperation of his or her colleagues to accomplish anything at all with respect either to process (institutional arrangements) or outcomes, the two basic forms of which are appropriations and substantive changes in the law.

The problems of "legislative morality" become particularly nettlesome at the level of legislative leadership. Legislative leaders are directly elected by the

members of their own caucus and, upon election, assume a new set of responsibilities and relationships as institutional administrators. Rosenthal (1990) pointed out that the weakening of legislative leadership, a phenomenon most evident in Congress but also rapidly spreading to state assemblies, is dangerous both for legislatures themselves and for the states. It undermines legislative ability because "a body made up of individuals looking out for themselves cannot act responsibly."

Legislative leadership is required to mediate among members, bring disparate views together, arrive at the best consensus possible, and negotiate with the governor. Furthermore, leaders, far more than most members, can take the heat for action on controversial or unpopular issues. Without leadership the legislature functions as an assemblage of individual entrepreneurs, each representing a particular constituency and array of interests. . . .

An absence of legislative leadership . . . also fails to serve the purposes of the governor. A governor is better off negotiating with strong leaders, even though they may drive a hard bargain, than negotiating with many individual members. The product that emerges is more likely to represent what the state needs. (Rosenthal, 1990, p. 212)

The tendency toward weaker legislative leadership appears to be accelerating as a result of term limits. The knowledge that they have only a limited time in office seems to make many legislative members think that they have nothing to lose and everything to gain by acting as individualistic political entrepreneurs. Term limits will almost inevitably exacerbate another problem, the loss of institutional memory.

The Legislative Institution

Representation has both individual and institutional dimensions. As Hickok (1992) pointed out:

Individual representation has to do with the way the individual elected to public office understands his responsibilities to those who elected him. Institutional representation has to do with the way the organized or assembled group of elected officials proceeds to act to represent the interest of the public that is to be served by the institution. Both dimensions of representation are important, but they are very different (p. 10).

At the level of the state legislative institution, reform efforts have appeared over and over again in American history. Indeed, as discussed above, the institutional arrangements established in the U.S. Constitution may be viewed as the first such reform effort.

The period during which William Ryan served as Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives was one in which intense institutional reform was taking place in many state legislatures. Alan Rosenthal, one of the preeminent scholars of American state legislatures, observed in 1971 that a certain set of ideas for legislative improvement had "carried over virtually intact" for at least two decades. The "contemporary agenda for reform" comprised a set of nine "extremely durable ideas." These included:

1. Elimination of many constitutional limitations on the authority of state legislatures. . . .
2. Increase in the frequency and length of legislative sessions. . . .

3. Reduction in the size of legislative bodies. . . .
4. Increase in compensation and related benefits. . . .
5. The adoption of more rigorous standards of conduct. . . .
6. Adequate space and facilities for committees and individual members. . . .
7. Improvement of legislative operations, to ensure efficiency in the consideration of bills and the widespread dissemination of procedural and substantive information.
8. Strengthening of standing committees. . . .
9. Increasing the number and competence of legislative staff, including staff for the leadership, committees, and rank-and-file members. (Rosenthal, 1971, p. 4)

And, indeed, many of these reforms were adopted in a number of state legislatures, especially after the publication of Margolis's The Sometime Governments, which rated every state legislature on five performance standards, in 1971.¹² Yet, demands for the reform of state legislatures are once again on the rise. Hickok (1992) concluded:

Today's state legislatures are more "professional" than ever, and yet citizens are registering their disappointment with state legislatures more than ever before. . . . The costs of representative government—members' salaries and expenses, salaries for professional staff, and money for sophisticated equipment—have skyrocketed, yet the operating efficiency of state legislatures remains poor. And all of this is taking place against a backdrop of renewed interest in federalism and policy initiatives aimed at increasing the visibility and governing responsibility of states. Perhaps the greatest challenge to future attempts at revitalizing federalism will be the inability of state governments to manage their new responsibilities adequately. (p. 135)

Conclusion

Ehrenhalt (1992) pondered, "What gnaws at many of the most thoughtful legislators these days . . . is the idea that their institutions are unpopular not so much in spite of the reforms of the past two decades, but because of them" (p. 32). The reader will see this "careerism" argument advanced later in this work by a former speaker of the Michigan House. The argument, as Ehrenhalt explained it, is that "as legislatures have evolved into full-time professional bodies, they have produced members whose obsession with politics and holding office collides with sensible long-term public policy" (p. 32).

Another possibility is that, as reforms instigated by exemplary legislative leaders such as William Ryan have been analyzed and as efforts have been made to replicate them, vital components have been left out of the equation. These are the elements that have to do with the character of the leader, the character of the legislative institution, and the character of the state society. How does the legislative leader act to refine and enlarge the public view? These are the elements on which this study will focus.

Endnotes

1. Citizens and Politics: A View from Main Street America, The Harwood Group, reported in "American Voters Aren't Apathetic, Just Disillusioned," State Legislatures, v 17, No. 11 (November 1991), p. 7.
2. Also see Spicer and Terry's (1993) "Legitimacy, History and Logic: Public Administration and the Constitution in PAR 53, pp. 239-245. Spicer and Terry argued that the historical Idealists' "romanticized view of the founders is

problematic and makes the Constitutional School vulnerable to attack because it ignores their conduct and character," which they see as being reprehensible. Rohr (1993) responded:

Spicer and Terry criticize my position on the founding fathers from several angles. The first and most elementary gravamen is that I admire them and try to understand their motives and intentions. To this charge, I plead guilty—not only guilty but unrepentant and incorrigible. (p. 246)

3. Congress isn't in love with public, either. (1992, April 5). Lansing State Journal.
4. James Madison, Federalist Paper Number 10, cited in Kammen (1986, p. 145).
5. James Madison, Federalist Paper Number 10, cited in Kammen (1986, p. 146).
6. James Madison, Federalist Paper Number 10, cited in Kammen (1986, p. 148).
7. "Federal Farmer," October 9, 1787, cited in Kammen (1986, p. 270).
8. State Legislatures, v 19, no. 1, January 1993, p 11.
9. Top Students Cheat--And That Isn't All. (1993, October 20). Lansing State Journal.
10. In fact, LeShan's (1976) name for what McWhinney (1989) and I call the mythic reality is "unitary."
11. Note that the mechanisms of generalization, deletion, and distortion apply.
12. Ehrenhalt (1992). Ehrenhalt credited California Speaker Jesse M. Unruh with inaugurating the legislative reform movement and Margolis (a "one-time Unruh aide") with taking the movement nationwide.

CHAPTER III

THE MICHIGAN HISTORICAL CONTEXT (1805-1849)

Introduction

This chapter and the next seek to examine the fabric of Michigan's political culture. There are essentially two reasons for undertaking this task, one retrospective, the other prospective. With respect to the first, no circumscribed time period such as "the Ryan years" can be meaningfully examined without reference to both the recent and the deep past. The present work is, in a sense, a character study not only of an individual but also of an institution and a state at a particular point in time.

The history of a state, and the political culture that both spawns and develops from that history, are the underlying components that help shape both the actors in and actions of its government at any given moment. This chapter is an attempt to capture an understanding of the culture, history and legislative past that helped to shape the dynamics during the Ryan years, to "look at the complete mosaic of politics" (Hickok, 1992, p. 55).

Elazar and Zikmund (1975) defined political culture as "the particular pattern of orientation to political action in which each political system is imbedded" (p. 5). Elazar (1972) described "cultural geology" as resulting from

sequences of migration, externally generated events and internal conflicts, the passage of time, and a variety of other factors. Each state has its unique pattern of political culture, the understanding of which relies on an examination of the state's cultural geology.

The second reason for examining the state's history in its entirety is to understand how the particular stratum of the "cultural geology" that is the object of this inquiry fits within the overall political ecology of the state, not only the prior history but also the events that have transpired since.

The Michigan Cultural Matrix

A Framework for Analyzing Political Cultures

Elazar (1972), in his pioneering work on American political subcultures, demonstrated how early patterns of migration lend an element of predictability to the particular subculture that will tend to dominate in given states. Elazar (1966) based his "American cultural matrix" on:

two contrasting conceptions of the American political order, both of which can be traced back to the earliest settlement of the country. In the first, the political order is conceived as a marketplace in which the primary public relationships are products of bargaining among individuals and groups acting out of self-interest. In the second, the political order is conceived to be a commonwealth—a state in which the whole people have an undivided interest—in which the citizens cooperate in an effort to create and maintain the best government in order to implement certain shared moral principles. (pp. 85-86)

Elazar's (1966) theory delineates three cultural patterns, individualistic, moralistic, and traditionalistic. The individualistic political culture emphasizes the

marketplace concept of government. In the individualistic culture, government is viewed in "strictly utilitarian" terms, and politics is "just another means by which individuals may improve themselves socially and economically" (pp. 86-87).

The moralistic political culture is based on the commonwealth concept of government. Government is elevated to the level of secular community, and politics to that of "a public activity centered on some notion of the public good and properly devoted to the advancement of the public interest" (Elazar, 1966, p. 90).

The traditionalistic political culture couples an ambivalent attitude toward the marketplace with "a paternalistic and elitist conception of the commonwealth." In this culture, social hierarchy is accepted as part of the natural order of things, and political power is generally kept in the hands of self-perpetuating elites whose primary objective is to maintain the status quo.

Michigan's Political Culture

In Elazar's (1966) framework, Michigan's political culture is primarily moralistic--tending toward the "commonwealth vision" of government. Kobrak's thoughtful discussion of Michigan's political culture, style, and pattern of interactions, which was published in 1984, presents a detailed portrait of the elements of a civil, moralistic political community. Kobrak described Michigan politics as "a vehicle through which virtually every major group at one time or another attempts to gain the resources necessary to cope with the state's rapidly

changing economic and social environment" (p. 99) and used Elazar's terminology to characterize Michigan as a state with "a moralistic political culture in which government functions as a commonwealth seeking to achieve the 'good community' through positive action" (pp. 101-102).

To some extent, Kobrak's (1984) analysis may be seen as a "snapshot" of Michigan's political culture taken at the close of a period of high moralism. Elazar himself characterized Michigan as having a secondary cultural strand of individualism. Kobrak saw the "commitment to progressivism" as having been "an easy one to make" as long as the state's resource base was large and expansive enough not to require "painful choices between heavy taxation and extensive services" (p. 101).

In the decade since Kobrak's (1984) study was published, however, there have been marked changes in the way politics is practiced and what government seems to be about in Michigan. Sederburg (1991a) traced this to a "polarization of the voting public" accompanied by a "substantial shift to the political right." He saw this polarization as having been brought on in the early 1980s by "the high unemployment rate (17%), the election of Ronald Reagan, and the rise of the fundamentalist right" (p. 3).

Governor Blanchard, faced with the state's fiscal problems, and without bipartisan support pushed through a tax increase that further polarized the state. The Detroit Free Press and Detroit News reflected this polarization in editorials strongly supporting or opposing the plan, two state senators were recalled, and control of the state Senate shifted to the Republicans. John Engler benefitted from this polarization by becoming Senate Majority Leader. (Sederburg, 1991a, p. 3)

Changes in the political climate since then led Sederburg to postulate that Michigan's political culture is becoming "camel-backed," with one hump of moralism and the other of individualism.

The question then becomes whether this shift reflects a change in identity or rather a shift in the manifestations of a complex identity, the cathexis of a different part of the state's "political personality." As this historical profile seeks to draw out, Michigan's political ecology contains layers of moralism *and* individualism. As Erikson (1975) pointed out, historical reinterpretation is bound to four interlinked variables: the moment of the review both in the stage and conditions of the reviewer's life and in the state of the reviewer's community, and the sequence of the review both in the reviewer's life history and in the history of the community. These chapters attempt to capture an understanding of the *history* of the community, the better to understand the *stages and state* of the community, not only at "the Ryan moment," but also at the present moment.

The second question is the nature of the connection between the political style of civility, pragmatism, and bipartisan cooperation described by Kobrak (1984) as manifestations of the pattern of high political moralism and the ability of the state successfully to master difficult periods of identity formation. Kobrak, too, saw the trends of the early 1980s as having marked a critical juncture for Michigan and draws attention to the "altered tone and style" of the 1982 gubernatorial campaign:

The 1982 election marked something of a departure for Michigan's moralistic political culture. Its three gubernatorial giants [Williams,

Romney and Milliken] had all previously assumed the expected stance of competing to win office in such a political climate, as Elazar has put it, for a greater opportunity to implement policies and programs. . . . Blanchard and Headlee, by contrast, stood for election. (p. 223)

Later in this study, I will examine in detail Ryan's behavior as a legislative leader and how this may have contributed to keeping in abeyance the rise of a consumer politics that has steadily eroded the programmatic focus of the 1960s and 1970s.

The third question, which is the major question for the present time period, is whether the combative leadership styles that have been adopted by both gubernatorial candidates and legislative leaders since the early 1980s offer hope for positive resolution of Michigan's current difficulties. Is it helpful deliberately to surface the tensions between the moralistic and the individualistic strands in the state's political culture? Might this confrontational strategy, akin to that used on the individual level in the encounter groups of the 1960s, force the state's citizenry to come to grips with irreconcilable ambitions and make the difficult choice of which path to follow?

Developmental Periods Defined

In this chapter, primary emphasis is placed on the foundation period, which may be roughly divided into two parts: the territorial period (1805-1834) and the "birth and childhood" of the State of Michigan (1835-1849). Although Michigan was not formally admitted to the union until 1837, the first state

constitution was written and ratified by the voters in 1835. Thus, the period of 1835 to 1837 may be viewed as a period of gestation.

Chapter IV begins with the period from 1850 to 1907, which I am describing as Michigan's "middle years." I have selected 1850 as the beginning of the "middle years" primarily because this was the year in which the state adopted her second constitution, as well as the approximate beginning of a period of tremendous economic expansion and diversification. At the levels of both symbol and substance, then, it is fair to say that the state entered a new period of identity formation at this point. The kind of social legislation that characterized this period began, however, to be enacted earlier—notably Michigan's pioneering prohibition of capital punishment, adopted in 1846. For the sake of organizational clarity, reforming legislation of this period is all discussed under the section, "The Middle Years." This period and the next are discussed in Chapter IV.

Having commenced with a constitutionally dictated framework, I have selected 1908, the year in which Michigan adopted her third constitution, as the beginning year for Michigan's period of maturity, "The Growth of an Industrial Giant." Eighteen ninety-six, the year in which both R.E. Olds and Henry Ford perfected a gasoline-powered automobile, is surely a strong competitor. This chapter closes with a discussion of the impact of the Great Depression and World War II. During this period, two dominant forces, the automobile industry

and the American labor union, emerged. They became the two poles of gravity around which the political energy of the state began to gravitate.

The constitutional framework breaks down here, for Michigan did not adopt her fourth constitution until 1963. The years from 1948 to the mid-1960s are discussed in Chapter V, "The Greening of State Government." G. Mennen Williams's first election as Governor of Michigan marked the beginning of a new political era in Michigan, one of strong party competition that continues to the present day. This reflects a significant departure from Michigan's previous political history, which is characterized by single-party domination and, for the most part, by "alternating frequencies" of moralism and individualism. In her territorial days, however, Michigan was governed by men with conflicting visions of government.

The Foundation Period in Michigan History

The Territorial Period

The first "Michigan Legislature" was the Territorial Council established when Michigan became a separate territory. Legislative, as well as executive and judicial powers, were vested in the five-member body. Officers included a governor, secretary, and three territorial judges, all subject to appointment by the President of the United States, with advice and consent of the Senate. Michigan became a separate territory on January 11, 1805, under Thomas Jefferson, with Detroit becoming its capital city. Campbell (1876) saw the first decade of

territorial life as being "unfortunate," in large part due to lack of adequate consideration being given to the persons appointed to the Michigan Territorial Council.

No sufficient heed was given to the character of the population or its ways. No wiser or better men were to be found in the United States than those who had settled in the Northwest Territory after the Revolution. They were men of sagacity and adaptability, . . . possessing the confidence and regard of their neighbors. The Indians also knew both their worth and their prowess, and had a wholesome respect for the Long Knives. The Governor of Indiana, General Harrison, had been wisely chosen from this class, and that Territory had gone on rapidly in improvement, while the new State of Ohio was increasing with wonderful speed. Michigan needed a western governor and western ideas, but it failed to get the benefit of either. (p. 236)

William Hull, Michigan's first governor, was a native of Massachusetts. Hull, while "nominally a member of Jefferson's party," "possessed a conservative streak that seemed to place him closer in spirit to the New England Federalists" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 135). The secretary, Stanley Griswold, was another New Englander. Augustus Woodward, one of the three territorial judges, was a close friend of Thomas Jefferson's and equally an intellectual child of the Enlightenment. A second judge, John Griffin, was a Virginian. Frederick Bates, initially appointed as a judge, was the only territorial official who had lived in Michigan prior to his appointment. He resigned within a year, however, to become secretary of the Louisiana Territory.

Campbell (1876) described the members of the initial territorial council as follows:

Of these persons, Governor Hull was an old Revolutionary officer from Massachusetts; Mr. Griswold an able man but a red-hot politician from

Connecticut, who had left the pulpit to become an editor, and who was only comfortable when he had his own way; Judge Bates was a resident land officer at Detroit, of sterling worth, and admirably fitted in all respects for his place; Judge Griffin was a man of elegant accomplishments, but no great force of character or convictions; and Judge Woodward was one of those strange compounds of intellectual power and wisdom in great emergencies, with very frequent caprice and wrongheadedness that defy description. (pp. 237-38)

Even when the cast of characters in the territorial government shifted, as it did over the years, Michigan continued to be subject to an on-going tug-of-war between leaders who embraced different philosophies of government.

A vivid manifestation of the philosophical division between the two factions of the Territorial Council was the rebuilding of the town of Detroit, which had been destroyed by fire just before the arrival of the new territorial officials. Hull and Woodward agreed that Detroit needed to be rebuilt on a new plan and secured a grant of 10,000 acres from the federal government for this purpose. Woodward used Pierre L'Enfant's plan for Washington as a guide for developing a city plan for the new Detroit:

A number of circular parks ("circuses") were to form the center of municipal districts or wards. Radiating from these, as spokes from the hub of a wheel, were to be wide and spacious avenues and streets. . . . But Woodward, who is now recognized as one of America's pioneer city planners, was far ahead of his time. (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 137)

Although Detroit's reconstruction began in accordance with Woodward's plan, Judge Witherall joined with Governor Lewis Cass in 1817 to undo the plan for what is now downtown Detroit. Streets were narrowed or their direction changed or simply cut off, often in order to "avoid penetrating certain farms, including one belonging to Cass (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 137).

In discussing the community plan of Washington, D.C., Young (1975) pointed out that:

[T]he community plan of 1791 projects—as the constitutional plan of 1787 does not—an image of the new government as seen by the men who actually ran it. The community plan for Washington is not only the first unambiguous evidence on record but also, in its way, the most eloquent statement on record about the kind of government that was envisaged and desired by the pioneer politicians whose job it was to rule the new nation. (p. 44)

In a similar vein, it is fair to observe that the conflicted plan for the City of Detroit, which left the city physically ill-equipped to meet the demands of explosive expansion in the twentieth century, was a stunning manifestation of the conflicting visions of governance that characterized various of Michigan's major political actors during the formation period.

William Hull's shortcomings as a territorial administrator have been largely lost in popular memory, but not his failures as a military officer. It was under Hull's leadership that the British captured Detroit in the war of 1812. The war of 1812 marked the first appearance in Michigan history of Lewis Cass, who commanded one of three regiments of Ohio militia brought to bear in the war. With the aid of federal troops, Detroit was recaptured by the Americans in 1813, and President James Madison appointed Cass governor of Michigan within the month. However, the Michigan territory was definitively restored to the United States only through the Treaty of Ghent, signed on Christmas Eve, 1814 (Dunbar & May, 1980).

As early as 1809, largely due to the dissension in the appointed territorial council, there had been discussion of an elected legislature. The Northwest Ordinance stipulated the right to an elected territorial house of representatives at the point that a territory had a population of 5,000 free adult males. The elected representatives in turn were to nominate 10 men as members of the territorial council, or upper house of the legislature, and Congress was to select five of the nominees to serve on the council.

In 1823, Michigan became a territory of the second grade, with a nine-member Territorial Council. (Members were selected by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, from 18 persons nominated by the voters.) Contrary to the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance, no measures were taken to provide for a house of representatives, with the result that Michigan had a unicameral legislature until it became a state.

Political rivalry in territorial Michigan was of the knock-down-and-drag-out variety. A fierce spirit of liberty and individualism is evident in the political contests of the day. Newspapers were rabidly partisan, asking and giving no quarter. The pioneers were intensely interested in politics. Religion and political partisanship provided emotional outlets that were important as a release from toil and loneliness. (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 219)

In 1831, Lewis Cass resigned as Michigan governor to accept appointment as Secretary of War to President Andrew Jackson. Stevens T. Mason, the 19-year-old territorial secretary, became acting governor upon Cass's departure. Mason had become territorial secretary upon the death of his father, the previous secretary. Jackson appointed a new governor, George B. Porter, who served until 1834, when he died of cholera; Mason again became acting governor.

Between 1834 and 1835, Jackson made several unsuccessful attempts to appoint a new governor: one nominee was rejected by the Senate, one declined the appointment, and the third, appointed after the state constitution had been framed, was rejected by the people of Michigan. In September of 1835, Jackson dismissed Mason as secretary of the Michigan territory, presumably due to his "leadership of armed resistance against Ohio's attempts to take over jurisdiction of the disputed Toledo strip" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 249). In the meantime, however, Mason had been selected by the Democrats as their candidate for governor, and was elected in October by a vote of 7,508 to 814 for the Whig candidate, John Biddle. Mason was the first state leader selected by Michigan voters rather than imposed upon them.

Statehood

The Struggle for Statehood

Michigan's elevation to the status of state continued to drag on for over a year, largely due to the border dispute with Ohio. As is well known, the "Toledo War" was ultimately resolved by a congressional compromise. This action gave the 468-square-mile Toledo strip to Ohio and granted Michigan the western four-fifths of the Upper Peninsula, which had not previously been considered part of the Michigan Territory. Although Michigan was not happy with this arrangement, Ohio's status as a state gave it the upper hand, and the people of Michigan were

more or less forced to accept this "compromise" in the greater interest of achieving statehood.

The formal admission to statehood is now recognized as January 26, 1837, the date that President Andrew Jackson signed the bill admitting Michigan to the union. Michigan's first "boy governor," Stevens T. Mason, was re-elected in 1837 and continued to serve until the end of his second term, 1839.

Cultural Expressions of a New Identity

One of the youthful Mason's first actions upon resuming the acting governorship in 1834 had been to call the Territorial Council into special session to propose a strategy to hasten Michigan's admission to statehood.

He asked the Council to authorize a census to ascertain the size of the population of Michigan, which, he wrote, "is beyond doubt, over sixty thousand," and then to proceed to call a convention to institute a state government, to elect a representative and two senators, and to send them to Washington to *demand* admission into the Union, the course that Tennessee had successfully taken some forty years before (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 245)

(Sixty thousand was the population requirement under the Northwest Ordinance for admission to statehood.) The Council readily followed this course of action, and the census returns indicated there were more than 90,000 people living in the area then defined as the Michigan Territory.

The next step was to convene a constitutional convention to draw up a state constitution. The Council ordered an election of delegates, who convened in Detroit on May 11 and drafted a proposed constitution within 45 days. (This

surprisingly short time frame is perhaps attributable to the fact that only 10 of the 91 delegates were attorneys.) To a large extent, the first Michigan constitution was modeled on other state constitutions. It has, however, been widely acclaimed for its clarity, simplicity, brevity, and progressive spirit. Some notable features include:

1. Extension of the franchise to every white male over the age of 21 residing in Michigan at the time the constitution was ratified and to others (including aliens) following six months' residence.
2. Provision for the appointment of a state superintendent of public instruction (the first such constitutionally established position). The education article stipulated that the legislature should encourage "the promotion of intellectual, scientific, and agricultural improvement," and earmarked federal land grant revenues for education.
3. Popular election of only the governor, lieutenant governor, and legislators, with other state offices filled by appointment of the governor with advice and consent of the senate or entire legislature. The legislature had the right to remove a judge by a two-thirds vote.
4. Authorization for state government to engage in works of internal improvement, with a prohibition of lotteries as a fund-raising mechanism.

The establishment of a separate Michigan identity is evident in the selection of Stevens T. Mason as governor and the people's defense of his leadership even against the power of the President. The Constitution of 1835 is

another manifestation of state identity. A third is the state shield and motto. The new state motto became "*Si Quæris Peninsulam Amoenam Circumspice*" (If You Seek a Pleasant Peninsula, Look About You." "The Great Seal of the State of Michigan was . . . designed by Territorial Gov. Lewis Cass from the pattern of the Seal of the Hudson Bay Fur Co. (Weeks, 1987, p. xii). Campbell (1876) observed:

The motto of the Territory had been *Tandem fit Surculus arbor* (the sprout at length becomes a tree.) This simple and graceful sentiment, with the device expressing it, looked at the future and was now accomplished. The conglomeration of mottos and devices on the State seal, which remind one of the character in Shakspeare [sic] who had been at a feast of languages and stolen the scraps, is devoid enough of meaning to give a wide range to the imagination. But, in spite of its heraldic confusion, the State has suffered no damage from it; and her great seal, though not attractive as a work of art, can certify a very honorable history. (p. 479)

Location of the State Capital

The Constitution of 1835 had provided that the legislature was to determine a permanent site for the state capital in 1847. The legislative debate on the issue began in 1846 and reflected a bitter rivalry between Detroit and out-state factions. While Detroiters sought to retain Detroit as the state capital, a variety of other sites were proposed, as members from other geographical areas sought to capture this prize. When James Seymour of Ingham County volunteered to donate acreage and erect buildings to house the government, it was viewed by many as a joke. Lansing was then a swampy wilderness, with no access by railroad. However, this "joking proposal" was able to overcome the

geographical rivalries, with the result that Lansing became the permanent site of Michigan's capital.

Economic Activity During the Foundation Period

The fur trade is closely associated with the territorial period in Michigan history. The period immediately following the War of 1812, although the last in which the fur trade was the dominant economic activity, was also one in which it enjoyed substantial growth. As a result of the Treaty of Ghent, John Jacob Astor was able to squeeze Canadian competitors out of the American fur trade. Catton (1976) stated:

If Cass was devoted to the development of the territory's potentialities, Astor was devoted to the notion of making money. He had one basic idea about the way to exploit the natural resource that interested him, furs: take all there was, as quickly as possible, and then go on to something else. It was complained later that the lumber barons who destroyed Michigan's forests followed the simple rule of "cut and get out." That was precisely the rule Astor followed about the furbearing animals. (p. 65)

Through various political maneuverings, Astor's American Fur Company established a virtual monopoly on the fur trade in Michigan. Lewis Cass served Astor's interests in a variety of ways both as governor of the territory and later as secretary of war; some evidence suggests that he was bribed to do so. Astor's American Fur Company, headquartered on Mackinac Island, employed between 2,000 and 3,000 boatmen and trappers and more than 400 clerks at the height of its lifetime. By 1834, however, the year in which Astor sold the American Fur

Company, the fur trade was shifting westward. In addition, a fashion shift from beaver to silk high hats reduced overall fur demands.

The decline of the fur trade coincided, however, with a tremendous population influx, popularly known as "Michigan fever." The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 provided a direct route for settlers bound for the Michigan Territory. This, coupled with a period of increased overall prosperity, enabled many families to acquire the funds needed to make the move to the West. The booming economy yielded handsome profits for investment. The combination of low tariffs and reciprocal trade treaties helped cause imports and exports to double between 1830 and 1836.

Factory owners made unprecedented profits by employing women and children to work long hours at low wages. The cost of living increased seventy percent in three years, but wages failed to keep pace. These conditions gave rise to the spread of trade unionism between 1834 and 1837. Relatively few factory workers moved west, but many farm families that might have moved to the cities were repelled by the declining status of the factory worker and chose to become pioneers. (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 261)

President Andrew Jackson's "War on the Bank," which terminated the charter of the Bank of the United States, moved federal deposits to selected state banks, and provided easy credit, was a major factor in the Michigan land boom. Jackson's bitter condemnation of the Bank of the United States made it fashionable to "regard banks as being monopolies of the monied interests and to view with suspicion the charters granted by state legislatures" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 263). One of the first acts of the first Michigan state legislature was passage of the General Banking law of 1837, which empowered any 12

landowners to form a banking association. This law, the first of its kind in the nation, resulted in the organization of 49 banks, many of them "wildcat banks" that, despite the lack of hard cash, issued enormous quantities of handsome bank notes (Dunbar & May, 1980).

The availability of easy credit resulted in riotous land speculation, and the promotion of land speculation schemes provided another arena for duping the innocent. Coinciding with the land boom was national excitement over new methods of transportation, canals, and railroads. New York's funding and construction of the Erie Canal provided the model for many states to see the role of government as one of providing for internal improvements (as specified in the Michigan constitution).

"[T]he young State launched out, like an heir just emancipated, into the most lavish display of her new freedom, and fancied opulence," said Campbell (1876, p. 483). Another of the initial acts of the first Michigan legislature was passage on March 20, 1837, of "An act to provide for the construction of certain works of internal improvement," and, the next day, another act authorizing the state to borrow \$5 million to finance works of internal improvement.

These were to make possible the construction of three railroads across the state, a network of roads, and a system of canals to facilitate river transportation. This act was a continuation of a commitment to railroads which saw the Territorial Legislature grant a charter in July of 1830 to the Pontiac and Detroit Railway Company. This was the first railroad to be chartered in the Old Northwest Territory. Indeed, this program to embrace the railroad was very significant for its time, for the technology of the "iron horse" was extremely new. Taken as a whole, the proposed internal improvement play was visionary and could have altered the development of this state. However, the depression of 1837 that soon followed

severely curtailed the effectiveness of the internal improvement program and the state's financial strength was crippled (Carl & Ruseky, 1987, p. 11).

Thus, within the first year of statehood, Michigan experienced an economic boom-bust cycle in which visionary dreams of improvement were rapidly overtaken by harsh fiscal realities. According to Dunbar and May (1980), the state's financial problems resulted, not only from the national recession, but also from Governor Mason's mismanagement of the sale of Michigan's internal improvement bonds. This led to a situation in which the State of Michigan incurred major financial obligations for bonds from which it had never received any proceeds. Michigan joined a number of other states that had also proceeded on aggressive programs of internal improvements in seeking to repudiate her debts, one result of which was serious damage to the credit standing of American states in Europe.

Political Party Alignment During the Foundation Period

The early infrastructure debacle, the collapse of the wildcat banks, and other severe financial problems resulted in the temporary ouster of the Democratic Party, which had controlled both the governorship and both houses of the legislature, from state politics. Stevens T. Mason, "now bitterly maligned . . . very wisely declined to run for re-election" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 277). In the election of 1839, the Whig candidate, William Woodbridge, was elected governor of Michigan, and the Whigs also took control of both houses of the

legislature. As hard economic times continued, however, the voters' sentiments turned against the Whigs, and in 1841 John S. Barry, the Democratic candidate, was elected governor.

For the next twelve years the Democratic candidate for governor won every election. Barry served three terms, the only nineteenth-century governor to do so. He stood for rigid economy in state government. It was even told that he had the grass on the capitol yard cut and sold, turning the proceeds into the hard-pressed state treasury. (Dunbar & May, 1980, pp. 280-81)

Democrats continued to dominate the political landscape in Michigan until 1854. Lewis Cass, who had served as governor of the Michigan Territory for 18 years and subsequently as U.S. Senator, became the Democratic nominee for President in 1848, and ended his long and distinguished political career as secretary of state to President James Buchanan. In many ways, Cass, a native of New Hampshire, was typical of Michigan's leadership cadre during the first half-century of statehood. All but three of the 18 men who served as governor or U.S. Senator during the years between 1835 and 1860 were born in New York or one of the New England states. All but two were attorneys (Dunbar & May, 1980). Likewise, a majority of early legislators came from either New York or New England. In the Michigan Legislature of 1871, 69 members were natives of New York and 26 of New England (Carl & Ruseky, 1987). Although about 10% of the state's residents lived in Wayne County, only 5 of the 18 top office-holders were Detroiters (Dunbar & May, 1980).

Conclusion

Kobrak (1984) pointed out that, although "[t]he highly cyclical and volatile nature of Michigan's economy is associated in modern times with the automobile industry" (p. 99), this pattern has repeated itself several times in the state's history. As this section has attempted to demonstrate, this pattern was established in the foundation period. Also important to note is the key role of the new state government, both Governor Mason and the legislature, in contributing to the boom-bust cycle.

Catton (1976) directed attention to two other key elements that he saw as contributing to this volatility. First, he said:

The point to bear in mind—now that all of the losers and all of the losses have gone beyond recall—is that the settlers in this new state were subject to runaway optimism, not because of villainous promoters, but because they actually could see a new world taking shape before them. The limited, pinched world all men were used to was being rolled up like a scroll, and something new was being brought forth. Here was a land in which all old rules, seemingly, were off. Anything could happen and people did not really need the sharp prod of inflation to see gaudy visions. (p. 97)

The second element to which Catton drew attention is that "Too much happened too fast. The several stages in the state's development were pressed together, so that past and future overlapped and obscured the present" (p. 112).

CHAPTER IV

THE MICHIGAN HISTORICAL CONTEXT (1850-1947)

Introduction

This chapter continues the examination of Michigan's political culture launched in the last chapter, with a focus now on some of the major trends of the latter part of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century. These may be roughly subsumed under the general headings of economic development and social reform. Michigan adopted two new constitutions during this time period, one in 1850, the next in 1908. In 1854, the Republican Party came into being at a meeting in Jackson, Michigan; this marked the beginning of a new period of single-party dominance in Michigan.

The development of the automobile industry, the rise of the industrial unions, the Great Depression, and World War II all had decisive influences on the shape of mature Michigan. This chapter is divided into two major sections, "The Middle Years (1850-1907)" and "Mature Michigan (1908-1947)."

The Middle Years: Economic Development and Social Reform

Catton (1976) described the two strands of culture that had clearly emerged in Michigan by the end of the foundation period:

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Michigan's development was carrying the state to contradictory extremes. It was becoming the home of an individualism so intense that each man seemed to be pitted against all other men, and the land-looker's desperate race to the land office might stand for every man's condition. Yet, at the same time, these individualists who pursued unlimited opportunity with unlimited desires knew that they owed their very existence to a profound unity with other men whom they never saw but whom they could not possibly ignore. (p. 148)

The Constitution of 1850

In 1846, Michigan's experiment with publicly owned and operated railroads ended when the state sold off its remaining shares in all parts of the state's internal improvements system that continued to have any market value. State government's role in envisioning and attempting to carry out major infrastructure improvements doubtless had a stimulating effect on private-sector investment and the development of railroads. However, the negative consequences of the state's role combined with continuing hard times to lead to substantial public disenchantment with state government. One result was the adoption of a new state constitution in 1850. Provisions of the new constitution included a prohibition on state involvement in any internal improvements, including roads. The new constitution also placed a very low ceiling on the state's authorization to borrow money, another provision that was clearly responsive to the infrastructure debacle and reflective of a new desire to pull in the reins on state government.

The call for the new constitutional convention had been approved in 1849 by the overwhelming majority of 33,193 to 4,095. Dunbar and May (1980) credited the impetus behind the new constitution to "the ferment of Jacksonian democracy" (p. 366). Although some of the features of Michigan's first constitution were clearly reflective of the Jacksonian revolution—e.g., the absence of a requirement for property ownership as a condition of the franchise—the full impact of Jacksonianism was not fully understood or implemented at the state level until the period of Michigan's second constitution.

One clear reflection of the Jacksonian vision of government was that many additional offices were made elective, including all state officers, supreme court justices, circuit judges, and university regents. The constitution also made the board of regents of the University of Michigan an autonomous corporate body with complete authority over university appointments, policies, and expenditures. Dunbar and May (1980) speculated that "[t]his was done, in all probability, to get the university 'out of politics,' and to prevent legislative interference in university affairs" (p. 339). (The pattern set in the Constitution of 1850 with respect to university governing boards has been retained to the present day; whether it has served to keep the universities out of politics is a matter of opinion.)

The net effect of the changes was to place significant limitations on the powers of both the governor and the legislature. Rather than being able to select his own administrative officers, the governor now had to work with whomever the voters elected (a provision that was not modified until the constitution of 1963).

Although the terms of members of the state house of representatives were extended from one year to two, the arenas for legislative action were significantly circumscribed, as broadly described above. Salaries of state officers were constitutionally fixed, the governor's at \$1,000 a year, legislators' at \$3.00 a day. (The latter was a continuation of the provision in the constitution of 1835 and was not abolished until 1948).

Although the constitution of 1850 was probably Michigan's worst, it was not replaced until 1908. The low view of government that typified Jacksonianism combined with the sense of unlimited opportunity that typified the latter part of the nineteenth century in America to lend, perhaps, a sense of self-congratulatory complacency about having mastered the perils of identity formation. The good thing about having low expectations of government is that people are less likely to be disappointed. This is the sense one gets from reading Campbell (1876), who was writing in roughly the middle of this period:

The beginning of our existence as a State was rendered unfortunate by the mistaken notion that wealth and capital could be made up out of confidence, instead of patient industry. The land was rich and lay directly in the pathway to the further west. . . . The future was sure, but too uncertain in date to be wisely discounted. . . . And yet in a vague way the hopes of the new settlements kept up with all the possibilities. . . .

The population which would not have crowded a large village has now extended beyond a million and a third. The improved lands exceed five and a half millions of acres, and there are more than 113,000 farms occupied almost entirely by owners and not by tenants. Besides agricultural products, the products of industry include lumber, copper and iron, . . . as well as sugar, fish, salt, and an infinite variety of manufactured articles. . . .

During the whole period of the State existence there has been unbroken peace with her neighbors. . . . No capital sentence has been executed during this time. There has been no general famine, and no very fatal epidemic. Political rancor has not degenerated into treason or sedition, and serious riots have been rare and confined with narrow bounds. (pp. 580-81)

Economic Development

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Michigan's timber and mineral resources had provided significant economic development and employment opportunities in the copper and iron mines of the western Upper Peninsula and the lumber camps and mills in central and northern Michigan. Commercial lumbering took place in the Saginaw Valley, on the western coast of the lower peninsula, and in the upper peninsula. There were 29 lumber mills in the Saginaw Valley alone by 1854, a number that increased to 72 by 1860. In the same year, 33 companies formed with outside investments of \$4 million and employing almost 4,000 workers were engaged in copper mining in the western upper peninsula. Mining and shipment of iron ore, held down due to transportation problems for several years after discovery of Michigan's iron ranges, jumped from 1,449 tons in 1855 to 114,401 tons in 1860, following completion of the Soo Locks (see Dunbar & May, 1980).

When timber resources were exhausted, the railroad lines that had been built to serve these economic interests were eliminated, with the result that the communities that had sprung up around them, denied the means of intercourse with the rest of the state, became ghost towns. Mines in the Upper Peninsula

were either played out or abandoned when more accessible and modern mines elsewhere led these substantial investments to be discontinued or postponed indefinitely. But Michigan diversified early into the field of transportation. By the 1890s, the state possessed a thriving wagon and carriage industry that included approximately 125 firms.

These horse-drawn vehicle manufacturers were replaced by a whole gamut of small automobile companies that in turn were consigned to oblivion as Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler eventually squeezed or bought them out.

One might expect that such experience with relentless cycles of industrial prosperity and decay would have left the state shellshocked and socialistic in self-defense. Instead, the state developed a confidence and faith in economic growth as the burgeoning earnings of the rapidly expanding corporate winners greatly overshadowed the economic hardship of the losers. Such faith in unlimited economic growth and technology became a substitute for economic planning and a surrogate for concern about the future. (Kobrak, 1984, p. 101)

Social Reform

As in the arena of economic development, so in the arena of social legislation Michigan's middle years were varied and prolific. During the latter years of Jacksonianism and the era of the Radical Republicans, a period that (with the exception of the Lincoln presidency) is widely viewed as one of fairly constant decline in American political life, Michigan racked up an impressive record in legislating on behalf of vulnerable populations, natural resource conservation, workforce development, and human rights. This was a period in which civic republicanism lay dying, "the quality of men entering public life

declined," (White, 1958, p. 10) and "the determination of parties to evade pressing issues" solidified (Schlessinger, 1986, p. 264). Yet Michigan's legislative chronicle presents a substantially different picture.

In 1846, the Michigan Legislature abolished capital punishment, making Michigan the first English-speaking jurisdiction to adopt such a prohibition. Legislation was adopted in 1854 to establish the Kalamazoo Asylum for the Insane and the state institution for the deaf and blind in Flint. In 1879, the facility for the blind was founded in Lansing. In 1871, a state school for dependent children was opened at Coldwater.

While economic activity in the private sector was characterized by rampant exploitation of the state's natural resources, some legislative initiatives of this period suggest a growing sensitivity to the need for conservation. In 1859, legislation was adopted to set hunting seasons for many types of animals and birds. Restrictions on net fishing in the inland lakes were adopted in 1859 and 1865. In 1873, Michigan established a Board of Fish Commissioners with responsibility for increasing the fish population. Legislation in 1881 prohibited taking deer for consumption outside of the state. In 1887, Michigan pioneered the establishment of paid conservation officers by creating the position of Game Warden (Carl & Ruseky, 1987).

Beginning in 1845, Michigan policy makers actively encouraged immigration to the state. During the 1840s, the state hired agents to live in New York and encourage new immigrants to move to Michigan. Following the Civil

War, the program was reestablished, with agents now going after potential immigrants still living in Europe. Women's rights was another issue that captured the attention of Michigan legislators from early on.

The act setting up the University of Michigan as a state institution specifically provided that in "every such branch of the university, there shall be established an institution for the education of females in the higher branches of knowledge." As early as 1846 legislators . . . firmly advocated the vote for women. In 1849 . . . a Senate committee also called for a state women's suffrage amendment. The long struggle to achieve women's suffrage also included a measure passed by the Legislature on March 19, 1974, which proposed a suffrage amendment to the constitution. After a fierce campaign . . . the measure was defeated by a large margin by the voters. . . . (Carl & Ruseky, 1987, p. 18)

The most dramatic arena of social reform, in Michigan as elsewhere, was the movement to abolish slavery. Michigan was a hotbed of anti-slavery societies and the site of major movement on the underground railroad. In 1855, legislation was enacted that forbade Michigan jails to be used for runaway slaves and required Michigan prosecutors to defend escaped slaves. The anti-slavery movement was the major impetus behind the formation of a new political party that was to become the dominant force on the Michigan political landscape for close to a century.

Jackson, Michigan, was the site of the birth of the Republican Party on July 6, 1854. The slate of candidates for state offices "drawn up in Jackson was victorious in the fall elections, and Michigan rarely deserted the GOP thereafter for nearly a hundred years" (McLaughlin, 1970, p. 258). Between 1854 and 1948, Democrats placed their man in the governor's office only four times.

Between 1854 and 1965, Democrats took control of the legislature on only three occasions.

Mature Michigan--The Growth of an Industrial Giant

Between 1850 and 1900, Michigan's population increased from 396,654 to 2,420,982—over 600% (Carl & Ruseky, 1987). The demographics had also changed substantially, with more than 40% of the state's population living in urban areas. As the twentieth century dawned, the population continued to grow and diversify with respect to national origin, as Eastern Europeans, Italians, and Greeks were drawn to the state by new industrial opportunities (Kobrak, 1984). By 1920, 61% of the population lived in urban areas, according to U.S. census figures (Dunbar & May, 1980). During the first half of the twentieth century, these trends continued, as Michigan became the national leader in the automobile industry and grew to the status of an industrial giant.

The Constitution of 1908

The Constitution of 1850 had required that the question of calling a new constitutional convention be automatically submitted to popular vote every 16 years. However, not until 1906 was such a question approved. The Constitution of 1908, while largely a reformulation of the 1850 Constitution, included some provisions that altered the workings of state government. The constitution was

responsive in only a limited way to the national Progressive movement, which gained significant impetus with the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt.

The new constitution included a prohibition on the enactment of local and special acts where a general law could be made applicable. It also required the state legislature to provide general laws for the incorporation of cities and villages. These changes resulted in a major shift in the legislative work load. During the 1890s, the Legislature had adopted 985 local acts; from 1901 through 1907, it adopted 1,290 such acts. Since the adoption of the 1908 Constitution, fewer than 300 local acts have been adopted, many of them repealers (Carl & Ruseky, 1987).

The Progressive reforms of initiative and referendum were rejected, but the Legislature was provided with the authority to refer a measure to a popular vote. Women's suffrage also continued to be rejected, although taxpaying adult women were given the right to vote on questions involving public expenditures. Juveniles were placed under the jurisdiction of probate courts, and the Legislature was empowered to enact legislation regulating working hours and conditions for women and children (Dunbar & May, 1980; Carl & Ruseky, 1987). The prohibition on capital punishment (which continues to stand symbolically for Michigan's moralistic tendencies) was not to become part of the state's constitutional framework until 1963.

Changes in election practices occurred a few years later, with the passage of Michigan's first statewide primary law. This was a Progressive-sponsored

reform designed to curb the control of party "bosses," as candidates had previously been selected through party conventions. The Constitution of 1908 largely retained the restrictions on government authority that had characterized the Constitution of 1850.

Economic Development

The most important feature of Michigan's development during the first part of the twentieth century centers without doubt on the growth of the automobile industry.

By the end of the twenties, the Big Three auto companies, as they were now dubbed, produced about seventy-five percent of all the cars in America. Although General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler had production facilities throughout the country, their main operations were centered in Michigan. Among the smaller companies, Hudson, Packard, and Reo gave Michigan a sizable share of the remaining United States auto production, leaving the non-Michigan companies with an ever shrinking share of the market. (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 589)

The number of farms in Michigan peaked in 1910, and the amount of farm land in acreage peaked in 1920. More and more, typical Michigan life was urban rather than rural. Until almost the end of the nineteenth century, Michigan had still been in a partially "frontier stage of development since it was not until that period that the last major undeveloped area in the state was settled. Until that time [the 1890s], Michigan's major attractions had been the potential offered by its undeveloped lands" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 558). Now the new Michigan frontier became industrial, as thousands of workers from abroad and from other

parts of the nation were drawn to the state because of work opportunities provided largely by the automobile industry.

Detroit's population increased by nearly 600% between 1910 and 1930. Until this period, the city had been noted for its beauty; now "[t]he old slogan of 'Detroit the Beautiful' was replaced by 'Dynamic Detroit.'" Detroit became the city in America "that best typified the new machine age of the twentieth century" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 590). The population in Detroit and other urban areas continued to diversify. "In some parts of Detroit the foreign-born element in 1930 was as high as sixty percent of the population" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 592). After World War I, when rigid immigration restrictions were imposed by Congress, population growth continued through the influx of workers from the southern United States; this brought about a large increase in the Black population. In 1910, there were 5,741 Blacks living in Detroit; by 1930 Detroit's black population was about 120,000 (Dunbar & May, 1980).

The Great Depression

The story of the Great Depression always begins with the mania of the 1920s. In Michigan, booming automobile production brought an unprecedented degree of prosperity to the majority of residents. Despite this,

Senator James Couzens of Michigan was one of the few public figures who expressed concern about economic conditions. He became convinced that the trend toward installment buying that fueled so much of the consumer purchases of the twenties was not good for the economy and he became a crusader against the system. In 1928, Couzens headed a Senate committee that investigated the problem of unemployment, a

problem that few people took very seriously at that time. Out of the committee's investigations came a remarkable report, largely the work of Couzens, which stated that in a democracy "every man is entitled to the opportunity to provide for himself and his family. That is a fundamental right and society cannot consider itself successfully organized until every man is assured of the opportunity to preserve himself and his family from suffering and want." (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 595)

Social Welfare Legislation

In 1827, the Territorial Council had passed a law making the township the unit responsible for dispensing relief for the poor. This basic pattern was not changed until 1930, when a law was enacted authorizing counties to erect poorhouses. Wayne County built a poorhouse in 1932, and eventually almost all counties followed suit. In 1912, Michigan's first workers' compensation law holding companies fully responsible for providing for workers injured on the job was passed. The next year, legislation providing a "mother's pension" of between \$2 and \$10 a week for mothers without other means of support was adopted (see Dunbar & May, 1980).

By 1932, however, 50% or more of the workers in the industrial belt were laid off, a situation echoed in the mining areas in the northern part of the state. This dramatic downturn resulted in a changing attitude toward public assistance. By 1932, welfare expenditures in Michigan had risen to over \$30 million, most of which was paid from taxes by cities, townships, and counties, with about one-fifth being provided by the state government (see Dunbar & May, 1980).

Under President Herbert Hoover, the federal government stayed relatively uninvolved in the relief effort, although the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, established in 1932, loaned limited amounts to states for relief purposes. Mayor Frank Murphy was one of the leaders of a mayoral delegation that tried unsuccessfully in 1932 to get the federal government more involved in providing additional relief assistance. Father Charles E. Coughlin, the "radio priest" of Royal Oak, violently attacked President Hoover and told his nationwide audience to vote for the Democratic candidate for President, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In the election of 1932, Michigan went completely Democratic, ending the almost 80 years of domination by the Republican Party. In 1924, there had been **no** Democrats in the Michigan Legislature; in 1933 they took control of both houses. The new Democratic Governor, William A. Comstock, was a conservative businessman who had been the party's unsuccessful candidate in the three previous elections.

President Roosevelt acted immediately to involve the federal government in providing relief to people hit hard by the Depression. Under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration established under an act passed by Congress on March 22, 1933, federal relief administrations were appointed for each county, with the costs being borne by the federal and state governments, relieving townships and cities of what had become an onerous burden. By the summer of 1933, 640,000 people in Michigan were on relief.

After the federal government withdrew from direct relief provision in 1935, the Michigan legislature passed an act in 1939 that gave each county the responsibility for establishing a department of social welfare. Other New Deal programs were aimed at reducing the number of people on welfare. The Civil Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Youth Administration enabled many to obtain gainful employment or higher education, thus reducing the number on direct relief.

Under Governor Comstock and the Democratic Legislature, a state law providing old-age assistance was passed in Michigan on July 7, 1933. The adoption of a constitutional amendment limiting property taxes to more than 15 mills of assessed valuation in the election of 1932, a move largely responsive to the serious increase in tax delinquency, led to a series of other legislative initiatives. The legislature canceled penalties on delinquent taxes, postponed tax sales, and passed legislation that required property taxes to go entirely to local governments. New revenue measures included a 3% state sales tax, "sin taxes" on alcohol and horse-race wagers, and a variety of other taxes.

In 1934, Republicans once again secured control of state government. However, the trend in social welfare legislation continued. In 1936, following adoption of the federal Social Security Act, Michigan established an Employment Security Commission to operate a state employment service and oversee the payment of unemployment insurance benefits.

In 1936, Roosevelt's landslide election to a second term turned Michigan Democratic once again. This time, the Democratic candidate for governor was Frank Murphy, the former mayor of Detroit and a committed New Dealer. Murphy had been backed by Roosevelt for the nomination, partly based on their shared philosophies, but also partly in order to keep Michigan Catholics from defecting to the new Union party that had been formed by Father Charles Coughlin of Royal Oak; Murphy was also a Catholic.

Growth of the Labor Unions

Although labor unions had operated to a limited extent in Michigan since territorial days, unions emerged as a major force as a direct result of the Great Depression and New Deal policies. The economic devastation of the Depression resulted in a deteriorating employment situation for those fortunate enough to be employed, as companies held workers hostage to low pay and poor working conditions. The passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA) in 1933, the labor provisions of which were reenacted by the Wagner Act in 1935 (after the U.S. Supreme Court had found the NRA unconstitutional), set the stage for massive growth in industrial unions. Between 1933 and 1935, the membership of the industrial unions increased by well over 100%. In 1935, the United Automobile Workers of America (UAW) was organized, and in September 1936, the UAW joined with the Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO).

On December 30, 1936, the first major sit-down strike in the nation began at Fisher Body Plant Number One in Flint, Michigan. An injunction ordering the ejection of the workers was discredited after union leaders revealed that the issuing judge, Edward S. Black of the Genesee County Circuit Court, held stock in General Motors. Governor Murphy was pressured to send the National Guard to Flint to enforce the injunction. Although he did eventually send in the Guard, their instructions were only to keep order, not to evacuate the workers. In the meantime, Murphy worked to further negotiations between management and labor. In February, 1937, the strike ended; a final agreement was reached on March 11.

Until the United States entered World War II, the strength of the industrial labor unions continued to grow. It would be another decade, however, before they would emerge as a major force with respect to the state's political culture.

Civil Service Reform

The Depression years marked a rare phenomenon in Michigan's political history—a see-sawing back and forth between the two major political parties in the control of state government. The centerpiece of the Progressive reform initiatives had been development of a merit-based, politically neutral civil service system at the federal level. The first major milestone in achieving this objective on a national level had been adoption of the Pendleton Act in 1883. However, most states had been slow to move in this direction.

In Michigan, beginning in 1932, Democrats and Republicans traded control of the governorship and the Legislature back and forth in alternating terms for close to a decade. The absence of a civil service system led to major turnovers in the state workforce as jobs were doled out on the basis of patronage. The Democratic legislature of 1937 created a civil service commission, but largely undermined it by providing a "blanketing-in" provision to help protect Democratic appointees. The Republican legislature of 1939 retaliated by exempting thousands of positions from the civil service. Impatient with these legislative antics, "good government" groups got a constitutional amendment providing for a civil service commission to run a classified state system put on the ballot in 1940. It was adopted.

Dunbar and May (1980) attributed Murphy's failure to be reelected in 1938 despite his leadership in labor negotiations, civil service reform, and implementation of New Deal reforms at the state level, to his lack of political partisanship.

Murphy was . . . an individualist in politics who was not really interested in the party. He had an opportunity to use his position as governor and his sincere commitment to humanitarian ideals to build a coalition of fellow liberal intellectuals and the newly emerging forces of labor to create an organization that could have mobilized the strong pro-Democratic sympathies that the Depression had created among many Michigan voters. But Murphy disdained such an effort. (p. 613)

World War II

World War II saved Michigan economically. In the course of the war, the automobile industry delivered almost \$50 billion worth of war materials, the greatest share of these produced in Michigan (Dunbar & May, 1980). Michigan's role as the "Arsenal of Democracy" became the primary focus of state government, as reflected by the remarks of the Speaker of the Michigan House on the opening day of the 1941 legislative session:

Michigan is a key state in the defense program. Her people's skilled hands turn out the tools of defense. Her factories manufacture the things needed in the grim business of war. Production must move at a faster and faster pace—and this legislature must do everything within its power to guard against interruption and to keep the wheels turning. (cited in Carl & Ruseky, 1987, p. 42)

Close to 700,000 Michiganians served in the armed forces during World War II. The employment opportunities created by war production, combined with the lack of both skilled and unskilled labor, brought thousands of new workers to Michigan's industrial centers. Detroit's population went from 1,623,000 in 1940 to over 2,000,000 by 1943.

The war effort in Michigan, in addition to bringing sustained economic revival to the state, had two significant subsidiary consequences. The first was the shape of the economic recovery:

From Michigan's contribution to the war effort flowed the shape of Michigan's future in the postwar world. The reemergence of heavy industry slowed diversity, keeping the state's economy yoked to its most dynamic region—the area around Detroit. Change and experimentation were left to the more marginal areas. It would not be until the first oil crisis of the mid-seventies, and then the sustained challenge of high-technology

computer-oriented developments, that the basic pattern established in the wake of peace would change. (Kleiman, 1989, p. 256)

The second major effect of the recovery was the shape of the Michigan workforce, with particular emphasis on the population of Detroit. "Nearly fifty thousand of the new residents [between 1940 and 1943] were Negroes, whose arrival intensified long-simmering racial tensions in that community" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 618). The problems surfaced in a number of incidents of anti-Black mob riots. In August 1942, *Life* magazine published an article entitled "Detroit Is Dynamite" (Dunbar & May, 1980, p. 619). Under the leadership of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the issue of civil rights began to be clearly articulated.

Yet another impact of World War II was its effect in terms of "nationalizing" and "internationalizing" Michigan's political leadership. Until Pearl Harbor, Michigan's U.S. Senator Arthur G. Vandenberg had been a national leader in isolationism. With the entry of the United States into the war, Vandenberg did a complete about-face and became a major player in the new policy of internationalism and courageous world leadership.

The war effort not only called many Michigan men and women both to the armed services and to Washington to work in the national government in civilian positions. When the war ended, many of these men and women would return home with new ideas about government at the levels of both philosophy and implementation. These Michigan New Dealers were to join forces with labor

leadership and civil rights activists to bring to birth a new Michigan Democratic Party and a new era in Michigan government.

Conclusion

Between 1852 and 1932, Democrats elected a governor only four times and won control of the Legislature only once, in 1890. The Great Depression produced a sharp alteration in the pattern of almost exclusive Republican domination of Michigan state politics. The decade between 1932 and 1942 was a period of *alternating* state government. Democrats captured the governorship and both houses of the Legislature in the election of 1932, lost everything (except the position of state highway commissioner) in 1934, regained both gubernatorial and legislative control in 1936, lost both again in 1938, and regained the governorship in 1940. For the six years following the election of 1941, Republicans again reigned supreme.

The election of 1948 brought another sharp change in the nature of Michigan's political theater. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE GREENING OF STATE GOVERNMENT (1948-1963)

Introduction

The upset election of G. Mennen Williams as governor in 1948 marked the beginning of a period of *divided* government in Michigan that was to continue almost uninterrupted for the next 45 years. Although Democrats were not to gain control of either legislative chamber again until 1965, Williams held the governorship for the next 12 years, winning elections six times—a record unprecedented not only in Michigan but in the nation.

The period ushered in by Williams's election was distinctive not only for the division of state government along partisan lines. Perhaps the even more outstanding characteristic was the distinctly articulated ideological and programmatic orientation of each of the major political parties. In 1960, University of Michigan political scientist Norman C. Thomas remarked:

In addition to possessing strong, well-disciplined organizations, Michigan's parties offer the voters of the state clearly distinct alternatives, in terms of candidates and policies. In practically no other state is the ideological distance between the two major parties so well marked. The differences between the two parties are popularly viewed as the reflection of a titanic struggle between the automobile manufacturers on the one hand and organized labor in the auto industry on the other. . . .

Generally the Democratic party favors increasing the extent and scope of services provided by the state government. The Republican

party advocates programs calling for a much lower level of state services. The parties differ sharply regarding taxes. The Democrats have long championed personal and corporate income taxes as the primary source of new revenue for the state. The Republicans have favored increased sales taxation and so-called "nuisance" taxes on alcohol, tobacco and certain business transactions. The philosophy of the Michigan Democratic party is dominated by New and Fair Deal liberalism. The Michigan Republicans present a mixture of cautious conservatism and 19th century laissez-faire economics. (pp. 6-7)

The Rise of the New Michigan Democratic Party

At the beginning, probably no one was more surprised at Williams's election than he and those who backed his campaign, a coalition of leaders of organized labor and a band of "New Deal" liberal Democrats. Williams's biographer, Frank McNaughton (1960), observed:

The Michigan Democratic party hit bottom in the election of 1946. In that year, it lost everything in sight, including its self-respect. The Detroit News, in a lead editorial the day after the election, chortled: "And so died the New Deal! That strange political conglomeration is no more. For more than thirteen years it has regimented and restricted the country, but now it passes." (p. 93)

But it was not the voters who had rejected New Deal programmatic politics; it was the Michigan Democratic party itself.

Prior to the Depression, the Michigan Democratic party had been dominated by a group of tight, self-perpetuating leaders. Intra-party Democratic politics were oriented toward personalities and patronage rather than policy. Frank Murphy's disdain for partisan machinations resulted in a perpetuation of this pattern following his single term in office. Indeed, his leadership role in establishment of a state civil service further embittered the old guard Democrats.

Murphy's contempt for the politics of patronage was fully matched by the old guard's contempt for the politics of policy.

The New Deal, under which for the first time since the Federalist presidents the national government took on a broadly programmatic focus, also changed the role of factions within political parties. World War II delayed the application of New Deal programmatic politics to Michigan state government. Even during the Depression, only the two years of the Murphy governorship had a consistently programmatic focus--and that was at the expense of internal cohesion within the Democratic party.

Until the last years of the 1940s, state party factions were largely personality dominated, with the main focus of attention being the twofold goals of winning the direct primary nominations for governor and United States senator and controlling state conventions. The goal was influences within the party--the potential for state and national patronage. By winning control of the state convention, a faction could position itself to name the state member of the national committee, which was particularly important to the Democrats, since the person holding that office had control of federal patronage for most of the years between 1933 and 1953 when there was a Democratic national administration but no Democratic senator from Michigan (Sarasohn & Sarasohn, 1957).

Subordinate positions in the executive branch of state government were important because of the independent election and essential autonomy of a number of department heads under the constitution of 1908. Indeed, the

victorious Democratic candidate for governor in 1940, Murray D. Van Wagoner, who served as Highway Commissioner from 1934 through 1939, illustrates this point. Van Wagoner made Michigan the leading state in employing federal grants for road construction work. In addition to building roads, Van Wagoner also built a highly effective political machine and won both the Democratic nomination and the governorship handily.

In 1942, however, Van Wagoner lost his bid for re-election to Republican Harry F. Kelly. Kelly stepped down after two terms, to be replaced by the flamboyant Kim Siegler. Siegler had made his political reputation in his role as special prosecutor in a grand jury investigation of legislative corruption.

For two decades, rumors [had] swept Michigan's capital city . . . of lawmakers who had accepted money and gifts in return for votes on sausage manufacturing, commercial fishing, barber and beautician regulation, naturopathy, chain banking, taxation, kerosene inspection, legalizing of dog racing and slot machines, horse racing, small loan company interest rates, the manufacture of oleomargarine, and the size of bakery bread pans. By 1943, those in the know knew that the newly dubbed "Arsenal of Democracy" was mired in the cesspool of undemocratic political behavior. (Rubenstein & Ziewacz, 1987, p. 2).

The investigation ultimately resulted in 41 convictions for graft and corruption, more than half of them of members of the Legislature. Not only Michigan Democrats, but Michigan politics in general, had hit rock bottom. Siegler's personal arrogance and lack of interest in either administration or political coalition-building combined with his corruption-fighting anti-establishment background to place him at loggerheads with the Republican-dominated

legislature. Still, few realized that Michigan politics was due for a serious shake-up.

One of those few was G. Mennen ("Soapy") Williams, a 35-year-old naval veteran who returned to his home state in 1946. Williams, whose mother was an heir to the Mennen soap fortune, had become a New Deal Democrat during his years at the University of Michigan Law School (1933-1936). Although the Williams family was staunchly Republican, it was Williams's mother who introduced him to Frank Murphy, whose political protege he rapidly became. Murphy—who after losing his bid for re-election as governor in 1938 went on to become U.S. Attorney General and Supreme Court Justice—saw in Williams the leadership potential to build a liberal, programmatically oriented, Michigan Democratic party.

Although the Michigan Republican Party was suffering from serious internal divisiveness, there was no organization capable of fighting it at the electoral level. In 1945, Republicans elected 95 of the 100 members of the state House and 28 out of 32 state Senators. The GOP also controlled, not only the governorship, but all seats on the state administrative board. Thus, the task confronting Democrats was to build a viable political organization.

The Democratic Party, too, was seriously fragmented. The void left by the collapse of the Van Wagoner organization was being gradually filled by the entrance of organized labor into the partisan arena. However, organized labor was itself divided; the AFL, the CIO-UAW, and the Teamsters each constituted

separate factions. Moreover, it was not entirely clear that organized labor would join the Democrats. On November 21, 1947, Williams, long-time Democrat Neil Staebler of Ann Arbor, and other liberals met to discuss a strategy for gaining control of the Democratic Party. At this meeting

it was generally agreed that there would have to be a ten-year program of taking over the party, building the organization, educating Michigan voters, before the group could ever hope to elect a governor. First, they would organize Democratic clubs throughout the state on an openly avowed policy of putting some spark and sense into Democratic politics. Second, the clubs would sponsor candidates for precinct delegates to the County conventions, with the frankly admitted purpose of gaining influence and control in the party. This, in some instances, would mean open warfare with the already existing "rotten borough" organizations. Third, they would encourage good people to run for local office, against Democrats who were running simply to perpetuate inactive local organizations, frequently without desire to win and most office with the connivance of unprincipled local chairmen. (McNaughton, 1960, pp. 100-101)

The event that dramatically changed this timetable and the course of Michigan politics was the formal entry of Michigan labor into the gubernatorial contest. Michigan labor was hardly a newcomer to politics in 1948. However, like organized labor generally in the United States, it had a relatively weak background in the political arena in terms of policy advocacy. The enactment of an effective piece of labor legislation had tended often to be due as much to middle-class pressure upon lawmakers as to labor's lobbying efforts.

For example, Michigan's first workmen's compensation legislation, enacted in 1912, was preceded by almost a decade of mounting public insistence that employers adequately compensate their employees for job-related injuries and fatalities. When the law was passed, the Michigan Manufacturers' Association had already been won over to that point of view and was at least as responsible for pushing the bill through the

legislature as was the Michigan Federation of Labor. (McLaughlin, 1970, p. 259)

What changed the picture was the New Deal, which to a great extent was responsible for the very existence of the new industrial unions. Passage of the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 over President Truman's veto provided the incentive for labor to become fully politicized. "Its enactment really drove home to union leadership the fact that organized labor's stake in politics was substantial and permanent, involving the possible loss of all the gains labor had made since the Great Depression" (McLaughlin, 1970, p. 261). One example was the provision of Taft-Hartley authorizing states to forbid union shop agreements, which provided the underpinning for "right-to-work" laws. The threatening political climate presaged by passage of Taft-Hartley led the Michigan labor movement, in early 1948, to abandon nonpartisanship and align itself exclusively with the Democratic Party. This decision was further reinforced by the growing strength of the alignment between the automobile manufacturers and the state Republican party.

The problem for union leadership was not dissimilar to the problem the Williams-Staebler group were facing. The resolution to support only Democrats adopted by the Michigan CIO in 1948 stated, "It is our objective in adopting this policy to remold the Democratic Party into a real liberal and progressive political party which can be subscribed to by members of the CIO and other liberals" (cited in McLaughlin, 1970, p. 262). Thus, the alliance between the two groups was a natural one. The interest of all parties was in bringing to the state level the

kind of party leadership that would form policies parallel to those associated with the party on the national level under the leadership of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman. On May 15, 1948, with the backing of August Scholle, head of the Michigan CIO, Mennen Williams formally announced his candidacy for governor of Michigan.

In the bid for the Democratic nomination for governor, the labor-liberal coalition met significant opposition from two directions, the old-guard Democrats and James R. Hoffa, at that time head of the Michigan Teamsters Union. Early in 1948, Hoffa had been successful in engineering the election of his personal lawyer as Democratic National Committeeman. "It was talked throughout Michigan that Hoffa had spent \$65,000. . . . The figure was never established, nor was it ever proven . . . , although the charge was openly made and not refuted" (McNaughton, 1960, p. 103).

In the primary campaign, a bruising, heated trial, the Old Gang Democrats who constituted the party organization, who hated Williams and his reformist Democratic Clubs, either worked for the most part against Williams or simply sat it out. The Teamsters outfit was the only union with any substantial funds, and its money backed Bucknell, the Kalamazoo lawyer candidate. (McNaughton, 1960, p. 118)

Nonetheless, Williams squeaked through the Democratic primary with a plurality of 8,000 out of 285,133 votes cast in a three-way contest. As is so often the case, the polls showed what everyone "knew"—that Michigan would go Republican with respect to both national and state offices in 1948. Nonetheless, in the November election, although Dewey won over Truman in Michigan by 35,000 votes, Williams defeated Sigler by more than 160,000 votes.

The Williams Years

Williams held onto the governorship by razor-thin margins in the elections of 1950 and 1952. Recounts were demanded in both cases; in 1950, Williams won over former governor Harry Kelly by only 1,154 votes—one-tenth of 1% of the total votes cast. The victory was due only to rapid mobilization of Williams's "Young Turk" Democrats. George Edwards, a Michigan Supreme Court Justice and Williams supporter, spotted voting irregularities in Macomb County and rang the alarms. Reformist Democrats throughout the state joined forces to conduct a recount, and Williams was finally declared the winner. In 1952, when Michigan Democrats were snowed under by the Eisenhower avalanche, Williams was the sole state candidate to win election.

In 1954, however, Williams won election to an unprecedented fourth term with a comfortable margin; the state Democratic party also sprang ahead decisively, gaining several seats on the state administrative board. With Williams as the public, charismatic leader, and the Democratic party Chair, Neil Staebler, a brilliant and tireless organizer, as the less visible "moving hand," the labor-liberal coalition established the Democratic Party as a major political force in Michigan.

During the decade of the 1950s, Democrats captured, in addition to the governorship and other state administrative offices, a majority of the state Supreme Court, both U.S. Senate seats, and an increasing number of seats in

Congress. Indeed, Michigan might once again have become a one-party state, were it not for the method by which the state legislature was apportioned.

The Battle Over Representation

The overt battle in Michigan over "one person, one vote" began in 1959, when August Scholle, now president of the Michigan State American Federation of Labor--Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) filed suit against the Michigan Secretary of State, James M. Hare. The suit alleged that the apportionment of the state senatorial districts violated the fourteenth amendment to the United States Constitution and asked that the Secretary of State be judicially restrained from conducting the 1960 state senatorial elections unless the districts were first reapportioned. Theodore Sachs (1987), Scholle's attorney in the suit, points out that the story of *Scholle v. Hare* had actually begun many years earlier:

In Michigan, like many states, malapportionment resulted less from deficient redistricting standards than from inadequate remedies to compel compliance with existing law. From the days of the Northwest Territory, Michigan's successive constitutions had more or less required population-based redistricting, following each decennial census. Despite some concessions to "area" or to the integrity of political units such as counties, the basic theme of these constitutions was primarily representation based on population, although subject to variances that would be unacceptable today. The greater problem, however, was one of enforcement. Although the Michigan Supreme Court had asserted jurisdiction over legislation apportionment suits brought under the state constitution and had in some instances declared particular districtings to be improper, the court felt disabled from affirmatively ordering the legislature, a co-equal branch, to reapportion itself. Consequently, the only remedy that the court ordered was reversion to the last prior districting--likely exacerbating the malapportionment. (pp. 1606-1607)

The state Senate had not been reapportioned since 1925. In 1951, Scholle and the state labor federation had mounted an initiative campaign to require periodic reapportionment in both legislative chambers on a relatively strict population basis; each district would be allowed to have plus or minus 15% of the average district population.

The Scholle initiative spawned a counter-proposal calling for a "balanced Legislature." Sponsors of this proposal included the Michigan Farm Bureau Federation, the State Chamber of Commerce, and the Michigan Manufacturers Association, among others. The "balanced Legislature" plan called for area-based Senate districts and population-based state House districts. Proponents cited the U.S. Congress as the appropriate analogue. However, the proposal essentially froze the 1952 status quo. It took the existing Senate districts, which had last been apportioned in 1925, and, except for splitting two of them, declaring the resulting 34-seat Senate permanently to be the "area"-based chamber. It also permitted substantial population disparities among the "population-based" House districts by calling for reaffirmation of arcane language from the 1908 constitution that permitted a county or group of counties to have its own representative when attaining a population of 50% (a "moiety") of the "ratio of representation" (the population of the state divided by 100).

Both proposals appeared on the 1952 ballot. Scholle's initiative-amendment strategy backfired, for it was the "balanced Legislature" initiative that was adopted, while the labor proposal went down by a substantial margin. To

some extent, the passage of the "balanced Legislature" plan had the effect of both exacerbating and enshrining the state's legislative malapportionment, particularly with respect to the state Senate. In the reapportionment of the state House adopted pursuant to the plan, the largest House district had a population more than double the size of the smallest district, according to 1950 census figures. The population of senatorial districts ranged from 61,008 to 364,026, a ratio of almost 1:6.

The battle over apportionment continued on two fronts. After lengthy consideration and consultation, *Scholle v. Hare* was filed on December 6, 1959, only to be dismissed by the Michigan Supreme Court seven months later. The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the plaintiffs in the Tennessee case *Baker v. Carr* had already recently lodged an appeal.

On March 26, 1962, the Supreme Court rendered its landmark decision in *Baker v. Carr*. . . . The Court, after agonizing through two oral arguments and a multitude of briefs by the parties and amici curiae, concluded that challenges to legislative apportionment were within the jurisdictional competence of the federal courts and were justiciable. *Baker* was remanded to the Tennessee three-judge federal court for further proceedings.

On April 23, 1962, the Court issued a per curiam opinion in *Scholle v. Hare* vacating the judgment of the Michigan Supreme Court and remanding the case to the Michigan court "for further consideration in the light of *Baker v. Carr*. (Sachs, 1987, p. 1618)

Call for a New Constitution

In the meantime, however, dissatisfaction with the 1952 apportionment plan had contributed to the impetus behind calling for a new state constitution.

Three groups—the Michigan League of Women Voters, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the newly formed Citizens for Better Government, which was headed by American Motors President George Romney—were instrumental in obtaining public support for drafting a new constitution.

Government gridlock was a major contributor to the eventual approval of a constitutional convention. In a 1960 Michigan Citizenship Clearinghouse symposium on parties and politics in Michigan, Norman Thomas proclaimed:

The state's political climate during the past several years has been charged with bitter acrimony. The Democrats, owners of the governorship since 1948 and winners in all major statewide contests since 1954, have been frustrated in their efforts to enact their liberal programs into statute by Republican controlled legislatures. They feel that they have been kept from their hard-won birthright as the majority party of the 1950's by a constitutional Gerrymander. The Republicans have watched while their once omnipotent position as Michigan's only political force was being eroded by an onrushing Democratic flood, seemingly composed of hordes of union members. Like the Federalists of old, who retreated to the stronghold of the judiciary, the Republicans have entrenched themselves in the Legislature. (p. 9)

In the area of taxation policy, for instance, the Legislature as a whole consistently rejected Williams's proposals for a graduated-rate income tax. But in 1959, when the House was evenly divided, there was bipartisan support in that body for three separate tax packages: one to provide for a flat-rate personal and corporate income tax package, another levying a 6% corporate profits tax, and a third that would have raised the use tax, exempted food from the sales tax, and placed a 5% tax increase on corporate profits. All were passed by the House; all were acceptable to Williams; all were killed in the Senate.¹

In the arena of social legislation, the deadlock had been equally severe. For instance, House Democrats and House Republicans sponsored separate civil rights bills in 1959-60, neither of which had ever been moved out of committee. The Legislature also succeeded in preventing Michigan workers from qualifying for approximately \$2.5 million in temporary unemployment compensation benefits available from the federal government by the members' inability to agree on the features of enabling legislation.²

In 1959, Michigan had made national headlines with a "payless payday" for state workers and a continuing deadlock between the Governor and the Legislature over how to solve the state's financial problems. "Michigan on the Rocks" became a popular drink in New York. Public schools, colleges and universities were forced to borrow \$100,000,000, and legislators spoke of closing down the state institutions (McNaughton, 1960).

Even when Williams first became governor, the inadequacy of Michigan's tax system had been evident. The dramatic population increase had contributed to the problem and continued to do so. Between 1948 and 1958, Michigan gained another 24% in population, with a 42% increase in the number of citizens under the age of 20 (McNaughton, 1960). Aged and inadequate schools throughout the state were only one sign of extensive "deferred maintenance" in the state infrastructure, which would in any event have been deficient to meet the needs of the growing population. In the absence of any state personal or corporate income taxes, state revenues came largely from the 3% sales tax.

Michigan's extreme reliance on the automobile industry coupled with the recession of 1958 to bring matters to a head.

Under Williams's leadership, legislative Democrats proposed adoption of a graduated-rate personal income tax. Republicans advocated increasing the sales tax from 3% to 4%. Neither side would budge. Under the revised apportionment scheme, Democrats now held 55 of the 110 seats in the House of Representatives. Although the Republicans held organizational control, Democrats were able to block passage of either a legislative referendum or a veto override. The situation was further exacerbated when the "use tax" that comprised the major feature of the legislative compromise package that was finally adopted in August was declared unconstitutional by the Michigan Supreme Court in October 1959—four months into the fiscal year. The Legislature then enacted a package of nuisance taxes, increased the corporation franchise tax, and finally authorized raiding the Veterans' Trust Fund; still, at the end of Fiscal Year 1959-1960, the accumulated state deficit stood at \$64 million.

This pathetic state of affairs put a damper on Mennen Williams's political career, and in 1960 he announced he would not seek another term as governor. Michigan's fiscal and political woes also fueled the drive for a new state constitution that would remedy the structural problems that had been contributing factors. These included two-year terms for all state officers, independent election of the lieutenant governor and heads of major departments, a multiplicity of state agencies, boards and commissions that were in essence fiefdoms with little

control or accountability, and, of course, the formula for apportioning the Legislature. The rigid fiscal provisions first adopted in the Constitution of 1850 and perpetuated by the Constitution of 1908 constituted another set of constitutional obstacles to putting Michigan on a sound footing.

Recognition of the structural problems that existed under the often-amended Constitution of 1908 did not necessarily equate to support for "con-con," the nickname by which the constitutional convention became known. The League of Women Voters feared the possible weakening of the civil service provisions. Democrats recognized that the continuing problem of malapportionment would weigh the delegation—which was to be elected on the basis of legislative districts—against their urban strongholds. Many incumbent legislators had no desire to see the creation of a public forum that would provide a potential springboard for new legislative candidates. Neither strengthening the power of the governor nor instituting reforms in legislative process was perceived as a desirable goal by many of the old guard legislators. They did everything they could to wreak havoc—from refusing to allow delegate elections to be held on a nonpartisan basis to withholding funding for the operation of the con-con.

The Democrats' fears proved to be well founded. Of the 144 con-con delegates, 99 were Republicans. While the Democrats were highly cohesive, however, the Republicans were factionally divided into conservatives, moderates, and liberals. Still, the compromise along the lines of which many of the major provisions of the new constitution were to be drafted was forged between

conservative and moderate Republicans, rather than between Democrats and liberal Republicans, although the latter had been the alliance political analysts speculated would emerge. This was perhaps because George Romney, one of the two Republican vice-presidents of con-con, formally announced his candidacy for governor only two months into the convention. "[I]mmediately the facade of bi-partisan cooperation in the constitutional undertaking cracked apart" (Stieber, 1970, p. 23).

Significant features of the new constitution included strengthening the power of the governor with respect both to appointment and organization of state government, calling for the consolidation of the executive branch into no more than 20 principal departments, and lengthening the term of office for the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and secretary of state (which continued as elective offices) and state senators to four years. For the first time, the governor and lieutenant governor would run in tandem.

A second major aspect contained a new apportionment provision adding somewhat to urban representation in both houses, but postponing major reapportionment until 1970, at that time following a formula which, for the senate, would consider area plus population, with preponderant weight to the latter, but with the former continuing to be a significant factor. This is the famous 80/20 formula which, as it happened, would never take effect in Michigan. . . .

The third major component of the . . . compromise dealt with the fiscal area, and made little change in the rigidities which characterized the 1908 constitution. In fact some new rigidities were added—a requirement of balanced budgets, fixed percentages for assessments, public approval of borrowing, prohibitions against graduated income tax at any level of government in the state—all of which would cause many who had supported a constitutional convention with some enthusiasm to vote against the final document. (Stieber, 1970, p. 24)

Strong civil service provisions were retained; the proposed constitution also made the civil rights commission one of the 20 principal departments, the first state constitutional grant of authority. The position of auditor general was changed from an elective office to a legislative appointment, paralleling the federal government. Another change in the legislative branch was the requirement for appointment of a bipartisan legislative council to "supervise the work of a full-time staff whose duties are to maintain bill drafting, research and other services for the legislature and periodically to examine and recommend revision of the state's laws" (Constitutional Convention Office, 1962, p. 6). The constitution also called for public notice of all legislative committee hearings, with a statement of all subjects to be considered, and recorded roll call votes of all committee actions.

Conclusion

When Williams decided not to run again in 1960, the Michigan Democratic party began to fragment. In a three-way primary, John Swainson, Williams's Lieutenant Governor, surprisingly defeated Secretary of State James Hare for the Democratic nomination, partially due to active backing from a number of UAW local union presidents. This open support went against the position of formal neutrality that had been espoused by party and labor leaders--notably the Williams-Staebler-Scholle triumvirate--and occurred despite the fact that the UAW was at that point part of the AFL-CIO (see Buffa, 1984).

But the Democrats' continued hold on the executive office was short lived, as Swainson was a one-term governor. In 1964, when George Romney was elected to his second term (and the first four-year gubernatorial term), the seat of "programmatic, participative Democratic politics" (as Williams had called it) shifted to the first Democratic legislature in nearly 30 years.

Here the battle over a state income tax was renewed. But the House continued to deadlock. Romney supported enactment of an income tax, as well as other revisions to create a less regressive state tax structure, and had actually proposed a state income tax during his first year in office. The Republican legislature, however, in a rare display of nonpartisanship, rejected Romney on the income tax issue as soundly as it had Williams.³

One would expect that, with a Governor firmly in support of an income tax, a Democratic Legislature would have hastened to forward what had been one of the principal objectives of the labor-liberal coalition during the Williams era. However, at this critical juncture, Democrats, following the position espoused by AFL-CIO President August Scholle, refused to vote for an income tax before the voters had a chance to repeal the prohibition on a graduated tax. But passage of a resolution to place the question of a graduated tax on the ballot required a two-thirds vote, and not a single House Republican would join the Democrats. Thus, although an ideological consensus was there for the making, it failed to materialize.

In the election of 1962, George Romney ended the 14-year Democratic hold on the governorship, defeating one-term Democratic Governor John Swainson by a relatively narrow margin. In April 1963, the new constitution was ratified by the voters by the very close vote of 910,860 to 803,436 (less than one-half of 1%. It took effect in 1964 (Stieber, 1970). In the same year, the United States Supreme Court handed down another landmark decision in the area of state legislative apportionment. Under the revised apportionment plans adopted pursuant to this decision, Democratic majorities were elected to both chambers of the Michigan Legislature in 1964, while George Romney easily won election to the first four-year gubernatorial term.

In this brief span of time, the forces of change, long gathering momentum, at last swept through Michigan's state government. Ironically, the programmatic approach to state policy making that Mennen Williams had envisioned but had to a large extent been frustrated in implementing would now at last come into being during the administrations of two Republican governors.

Endnotes

1. Neil Staebler, "The Easy Way Out," remarks at the symposium on Parties and Politics in Michigan, December 16-17, 1960, Michigan Citizenship Clearing House, Ann Arbor, p. 16.
2. Staebler, p. 17
3. See Journal of the Michigan House of Representatives, Extra Session of 1963, No. 2 (September 12, 1963), pp. 22-29.

CHAPTER VI

THE MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE COMES OF AGE (1963-1966)

Introduction

The last chapter focused on developments in Michigan during a period of rapid change in the arenas of political party composition, the uses of power by the governor, and the writing of a new state constitution. During this period (1948-1964), the state legislature remained largely unchanged and continued to have essentially the same institutional character it had had since the nineteenth century.

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Baker vs. Carr* combined with other social forces of the early 1960s to bring the change process to the legislative branch of Michigan government. This chapter describes the forces that opened the Michigan House to massive change, the nature of the change process in terms of the institutional character of the House, and some of the results in terms of social policy.

The two-year overlap between this chapter and the last relates both to perspective and data sources. The perspective in the previous chapters has been essentially from outside looking in at the changes in state government from a "macro" standpoint; source materials have been historical and documentary.

This chapter marks a shift to an internal perspective—the rationale for and the results of change from the standpoints of legislative insiders. Correspondingly, the major sources of evidence now shift to oral history provided by the elite interviews conducted as part of this research project, content analysis of the Journal of the Michigan House of Representatives, and other “insider” documentary sources.

Forces of Change

To some extent, ratification of the Constitution of 1963 was viewed as a defeat for both labor and other liberal elements in the Democratic party. The AFL-CIO, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Democratic Party itself campaigned against adoption of the revised constitution. Although state government was streamlined and modernized under the new charter, two aspects of it were viewed as particularly problematic. The first was the continuation of rigid fiscal and taxation provisions, augmented by the new prohibition on a graduated income tax. The second was the “80/20” legislative apportionment plan.

As discussed in the preceding chapter, taxation policy and legislative apportionment had emerged as major issues during the 1950s. Although the Constitution of 1963 included revised policies in both areas, the essential instability of the constitutional revisions, which had been reflected in the small margin by which the constitution was adopted, became further evident within the

next few years. In fact, the "80/20" apportionment plan was never implemented, as in 1964 the U.S Supreme Court issued another landmark decision in the area of state legislative apportionment. And, although the 1963 Constitution set the framework for a state income tax, continuing divisiveness prevented the adoption of such a tax for another five years.

The adoption of a state income tax had been championed by Democrats, then as now, because it tends to be one of the most economically progressive methods of raising public revenues. Ironically, however, while the resolution of the apportionment question helped to give Democrats sweeping majorities in both legislative chambers in 1965-66, it was not until the Legislature had reverted to Republican control in 1967 that a state income tax was finally adopted. A primary reason for the delay was the constitutional prohibition on rate graduation. Although this portion of the story will be discussed in the next chapter, it bears noting here that the negotiation of a state income tax—the central features of which remain unchanged to the present day—was due in no small measure to William Ryan's role as leader of the House Democrats in 1967 and his skill as the key Democratic negotiator.

Reapportionment—The Final Chapter

The Michigan Supreme Court, after *Scholle v Hare* had been remanded back to it, had reversed itself and declared Michigan's 1952 apportionment illegal, citing *Baker v Carr* and ordering immediate Senate redistricting for the

election of 1962. However, three Republican state senators petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court for a stay, which was granted.

In June, 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court issued another landmark decision in the area of legislative apportionment, *Reynolds v Sims*. The primary issue in *Baker v Carr* was the legitimacy of judicial review of legislative apportionment in light of a legislature's continuing failure to redistrict in line with population changes; the decision did not challenge the validity of using geographical considerations as a partial basis for apportionment on one chamber of a state legislature. With *Reynolds v Sims*, the Court declared that both houses of state legislatures had to be based on a standard of population—geography and political subdivisions largely notwithstanding—in order to satisfy the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Constitution of 1963 had established an apportionment commission composed of four Democrats and four Republicans to develop a legislative apportionment plan following each federal census. Unsurprisingly, the commission had deadlocked, and two plans had been submitted to the Michigan Supreme Court. The decision rendered by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Reynolds v Sims* made adoption of the Democrats' plan virtually automatic, as it was the only one in which apportionment of both chambers was population-based, and the plan was accordingly selected by the Michigan Court.

Civil Rights Activism

Until the major reapportionment resulting from the *Baker vs. Carr* decision, minorities and women had been largely unrepresented in the political process. One of the bases for the NAACP's opposition to the 1963 Constitution was the extremely low level of Black representation among constitutional delegates. The process of consciously bringing minority populations into the fold of the Democratic party came substantially later than had the forging of liberal and labor interests. State Senator Jackie Vaughn III, who was first elected to the Michigan House in 1966, recalls:

In '62-'63, I was president of the state Young Democrats, and that was the first time that an Afro-American was elected to that position. The organization was 90% White. And at that point, there was hardly anybody winning elections. I have a letter from Neil Staebler saying, "Before you leave for Europe, please write a short letter," and the people he had on that list to whom he wanted me to write a letter of introduction would be embarrassing. People like Damon Keith, [currently the highest ranking judge on the U.S. circuit court in Cincinnati], Otis Smith [then a lawyer in Flint, later on the Michigan Supreme Court]. People who read like Who's Who of the Michigan Afro-American community, who the Chair of the Michigan Democratic Party didn't know.¹

Following reapportionment, women and minorities began to become significant groups in the legislative delegations for the first time in history. Although the trend was somewhat gradual, the eight Blacks and five females who were members of the 1965-66 House reflected a doubling or near doubling of both population groups from the previous session. All were Democrats.

National Policies

A third major force that acted to cause an institutional restructuring was the enactment of legislation at the federal level under the presidencies of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. William Ryan explained:

I think it would be fair to say that nationally, federally, throughout the country, there was a move toward greater government involvement in citizen business, you might say the development of the social welfare program. During the Depression, people were not working, so they were not attaining their basic needs adequately, so nationally there was an inevitable move toward social concerns, which somebody had to give attention to, and it was government. And of course that was rubbing over into the state level, because the more social programs you had, the greater the need for state implementation.

When finally the Democrats got overwhelming control, the expectation was that we got overwhelming control for one purpose—because the government wasn't doing its job properly, government wasn't doing enough. Now, that wasn't necessarily a partisan thing, although it was overwhelmingly partisan. But in the very year in which LBJ got an overwhelming majority and Democrats got overwhelming control of the Michigan Legislature, in that same year George Romney won the governorship by 200,000 votes. So it wasn't necessarily partisan. It was still an evaluation of the individuals who were campaigning for office.²

The Change Process

Under the revised apportionment plan and with the 1964 ballot topped by the Johnson-Goldwater presidential race, Democrats took control of both houses of the Michigan Legislature for the first time in 28 years. William C. Ballenger, who was then a young Republican whose interest in government would later see him elected to the Michigan Legislature, recalled:

The election of '64 was an incredible watershed election where the Democrats for the first time since, literally, 1938, took control of both chambers of the legislature. And they didn't just take over; they had overwhelming majorities. I remember sitting in the House balcony in December of '65 watching a debate on the House floor on an effort of the Democrats to override a veto of Governor George Romney. The Democrats had a 73-37 majority—they lacked one vote of having two-thirds. So there was all this pressure put on Republicans to sustain the Governor's veto. And everybody was watching Harry DeMaso, ironically, the guy who even back then everybody thought might bolt, 20 years before he really did bolt to join Blanchard—so I remember there was this roll-call vote and the Republicans did hold.

The reason I mention this is because when Kowalski took over as Speaker of the House, he literally created a revolution in terms of the way the Legislature did business. The Legislature of Michigan really came of age—the Democrats pulled the Legislature into the twentieth century. Before it had been run by part time conservative farmers who just basically had no desire to build up the institution at all. Even though they tilted against Soapy Williams all during the 1950s, they didn't try to build up the Legislature with staff or secretaries or anything like that. The Democrats came in and they did that, Kowalski did it, and Kowalski ran this juggernaut where he trampled everybody. . . . He was a controversial guy in his own right, and I think the Democrats were unprepared for the majority that they got in '64.³

The Kowalski Speakership (1965-66)

Speaker Kowalski

Joseph J. Kowalski, a Detroit attorney, was a 15-year veteran of the House who had first been elected in 1948, the same year in which Mennen Williams had first won. Kowalski had been the Democrats' candidate for Speaker in 1959 and was the House minority leader from 1959 through 1964. He epitomized the connections among New Deal politics, the labor movement, and

the new Michigan Democrats of the Williams era. Kowalski himself described his background as follows:

[F]ormerly in the field of labor and workers education on a state level and served as director of the Workers Service Program of Michigan for two years; educational consultant for the Michigan CIO Council, 1942-46; member of the advisory committee to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor on workers education; assistant director of education of the United Automobile Workers of America, 1946-49; member of the advisory committee of the American Labor Education Service and international representative of UAW-CIO. . . .⁴

From the day of his election as Speaker, Kowalski was clear on his agenda for reforming the House. "I have established two overall goals for my administration as Speaker," he stated in his acceptance speech. "My primary goal is for the House of Representatives to be the leading positive and constructive force for progressive government in Michigan." Kowalski's second goal was "that on December 31st, 1966, other states will look to the Michigan House of Representatives as the pacesetter among modern legislative bodies."⁵

William Ryan described Kowalski as a leader who "had the authority and exercised it."

He certainly was a person who had sufficient regard for the Legislature that he didn't feel legislators should be expected to do their work the way they had been functioning in the past, where their office was their desk on the floor of the House and all they had was their file with the Journals of the House and the bills and that was it. And almost no outside communication. There was a battery of four phones outside the House Chamber and a switchboard operator, and you would let the switchboard operator know that you wanted to use the phone and you would be notified when a phone was open for you to make your call. That was the way the Legislature functioned. Joe Kowalski said, "That's not right."⁶

Expansion of House Facilities and Legislative Personnel

Ryan himself was a key figure in the Kowalski administration with respect both to the process of institution-building and that of policy formation. On the administrative side, Ryan served in a new position of "Facilities and Personnel Officer." He explained, "[Under] Joe Kowalski, legislators were given offices for the first time. There were no offices except what Joe Kowalski was able to contrive."⁷ Until the Kowalski regime, the Michigan State Capitol Building had housed facilities for all three branches of government: legislative chambers, the Supreme Court hearing room and chambers, the offices of the Governor and his staff, the Attorney General, and a number of other executive offices. According to Ryan:

He [Kowalski] found language someplace that said the Capitol Building is the place where the Legislature works and enacts its business and therefore the assignment of the facilities located within the Capitol is the prerogative of the Legislature. So the leader in the Senate and the Speaker of the House, by cooperating with each other, they had the right to open up space by evicting the other agencies.

I was involved in this process, but I didn't have to do the dirty work. I wasn't the person to tell these agencies they had to leave. Joe Kowalski was the type of person who was able to do that.

My role was heavily administrative. Kowalski gave me the job to do the best I could with what I had to work with on making office space available, and starting with almost nothing in the way of secretaries, doing what I could from one day to the next. You don't go overnight from nothing to a three-room office and a chief staffer and secretary for each legislator. We started out deciding to go four-to-one in secretaries, trying to get competent secretaries. We had been sending secretarial applicants over to Civil Service for testing. Civil Service had three phases to their exam, typing, shorthand, and vocabulary, and we relied on the Civil Service evaluation. So they'd send us people who did well on typing

and shorthand but had a 50 on vocabulary, and we thought that was good enough. So when I found out we were getting letters composed and written with all kinds of grammatical, spelling and composition errors in them, I devised an exam where we gave an applicant a letter to correct all the mistakes we put into it. So that was one change we made, and then we got some good secretaries.

Then, as far as facilities went, we were constantly in the building design business, trying to figure out where we could put offices. When we ran out of available space and ran out of the space that was being made available by Kowalski's kicking people out of the Capitol Building, then we got space by building offices underneath the steps or wherever we could make space, and then turning air into usable space by building subfloors. We didn't go all that far in the first year or even in the second; we just kept undertaking one project after another.⁸

A New Vision of the State Legislature

It has previously been noted that, through the 1950s, neither political party devoted many resources to the capture of legislative seats. Even the battle over reapportionment, it is fair to say, was focused more on the end of gaining numerical superiority than on that of developing an activist, professionalized Legislature. The necessity for institution-building was driven by another vision, the view of the Legislature as the central institution in government. Ryan expressed it this way:

You have to understand that in the functioning of government, there are only three branches. The Legislature makes the laws. From then on, the other two branches of government are controlled by what the Legislature said when it made the law. The executive branch of government merely administers the law. When disputes occur, they are of two types. One is, did the Legislature enact legislation which is contrary to either the federal or the state constitution? That tests the constitutionality of the legislation. The second type of dispute is the question, did the executive branch exceed its authority or did it implement legislation contrary to the intent of the Legislature? Did the executive introduce an unconstitutional element

through their manner of implementation? Those are the questions that bring the judicial branch of government into play. The Legislature is where it all starts. It's where the decisions are made. The Legislature can do anything it wants, as long as it's not unconstitutional.

So that's the responsibility of the Legislature, and that's a pretty big responsibility. And to say that your opportunity to communicate with the public shall be limited to four phones outside the House Chamber or that you shall have no desk and no staff, when all these businesses that we're supposed to be overseeing all have desks and administrative buildings and freedom to make their own decisions, that's just not right. The overseeing body should be given adequate facilities and personnel to do its job, too. If you don't have a regulatory body with sufficient resources to do its business, then you're really said that you've bought the trickle-down theory. When the legislative body, which is supposed to oversee the functioning of the economy and play a role to the extent that it's necessary and unavoidable to play that role—to say that, yes, we will have a legislative body; but it doesn't need an office or staff because the legislation will be written by the very people that the legislative body is supposed to be overseeing.⁹

Indicators of Change

The session of 1965-66 saw profound changes in the Michigan House of Representatives in terms of both process and products. Some raw indicators of the amount of time and energy being put into the legislative process are the number of bills introduced, the number of pages in the Journal of the House and the number of public and local acts enacted into law.

There is some overlap between these indicators. For instance, the Journals contain notices of the printing of bills and list the short titles of bills upon their introduction. However, the introduction of legislation requires little active participation by legislators themselves, and rather may be seen as an indicator of the extent to which legislators are acting as conduits for generating in bill form

proposed policy changes that may have been suggested by any number of different sources within or outside of the Legislature, including (but not limited to) interest group representatives, individual constituents, state agencies, and (of course) legislators themselves.

On the other hand, the Journals also record House standing committee reports, proposed amendments, all roll-call votes, motions and resolutions, communications between the legislative chambers and between the House and other state officers, conference committee reports, and a variety of other material that cumulatively provides an indication of the amount of activity occurring within the House. Assuming a reasonable degree of cooperation between the two legislative chambers and between the Legislature and the Governor, one would anticipate that the number of public and local acts produced within a given legislative session would vary in direct proportion to the number of pages in the House Journal.

In 1955-56, House members introduced 921 bills, the total number of pages in the House Journals amounted to 3,770, and 520 new laws were enacted. Eight years later, in the session of 1963-64, House members introduced more than three times as many pieces of legislation—1,798 bills—but the number of pages in the House Journals had increased by less than 500, to 4,198, and the number of new acts by only 24, to 544. This is particularly interesting in light of the fact that adoption of a new state constitution might

reasonably have been expected to necessitate the adoption of a number of pieces of corrective legislation.

In 1965-66, House members introduced 3,080 pieces of legislation, the number of pages in the House Journals almost doubled from the previous session—to 7,381—and the number of new laws jumped by more than 40%, to 768. Of these changes, Ryan stated:

I think what was happening then in substance was the initiation of attention to a number of items that the Republicans had not wished to tackle in prior years. With Democrats having the majority and therefore the ability to enact legislation, we could give attention to subjects which had concerned Democrats.¹⁰

The Results of Change and Ryan's Policy Roles

Of course, the real test of legislative effectiveness is qualitative rather than quantitative. New laws initiated during 1965 included the homestead property tax exemption, elections reforms to prevent tampering with voting machines and governing recounts, a prohibition on age-based employment discrimination, complete reorganization of the executive branch pursuant to the 1963 Constitution, a prohibition on employment of teachers without a teaching certificate, family planning legislation, expansion of the powers of the board of pharmacy to include regulation of manufacturing and wholesaling of drugs, creating the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Michigan.

In 1966, the Legislature addressed itself to legislation providing construction standards for the physically handicapped in public buildings, state

funding for community mental health programs, further election reforms, providing voluntary admission to the Lafayette Clinic, establishment of the state arts council, making failure to pay into employee plans a crime and requiring restitution, providing wage assignment for child support payments, establishing the Michigan Consumer Council, establishing the State Housing Authority, and a package completely restructuring social welfare in Michigan. One of the few items vetoed by Governor Romney was establishment of a state department of labor.

Two particular areas in which policy initiatives were forwarded will be examined in more detail below, with attention to the roles Mr. Ryan played in forwarding new state policies.

Social Welfare Legislation

Chair of Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Services

One of the most significant areas in which the 1965-66 Legislature took action was social welfare policies. Here Ryan, in his role as Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee's Subcommittee on Social Services, was a key player. Ryan had asked for this position in preference to the position of majority floor leader, to which Kowalski had wanted to nominate him. Ryan explained:

I think that in my subconscious I was trying to cheat a little—to have both jobs. But Kowalski said it had to be one or the other, either Floor Leader or Chair of the Social Services Subcommittee. The Social Services Subcommittee was dealing with subject matter I believed to be quite important. Yes, I could exert some influence if I became Floor Leader.

But what the Majority Floor Leader does, in terms of scheduling bills for floor consideration and taking on other administrative functions that the Speaker doesn't handle, is only a means to an end. You're right about the Floor Leader having influence—but is that the kind of influence that's important? The person who can persuade the Floor Leader to schedule his bill next wields the same kind of influence as the Floor Leader himself.

There are other ways in which legislators can be leaders. I didn't figure the loss of the majority floor leadership meant I would be sacrificing my position of influence. So I chose the chairmanship of the Social Services Subcommittee.¹¹

The Legislative Agenda

For many years, Ryan had been advocating reforms in welfare policy from positions both outside and inside the Legislature. In 1951, he had become editor of *The Wage Earner*, the newsletter of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, an activist labor group that had backed Walter Reuther in the fight between Reuther and R. J. Thomas for control of the UAW. Under Ryan's editorship, which he held until 1964, *The Wage Earner* became an organ for debating social philosophy, as well as current policy proposals at both the national and the state level. Some of his long-standing concerns, on which he used *The Wage Earner* to promote discourse, were in the arena of social welfare. The administration of social services at the county and local levels, combined with residence requirements and other technical barriers, made qualification for welfare extremely problematic.

As Chair of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Services, Ryan was an enthusiastic proponent of LBJ's War on Poverty and

made Michigan a major battlefield in this endeavor. Social services programs established during 1965 included a \$4 million program in the school aid act to meet the needs of underprivileged children (P.A. 199), family planning services (P.A.s 302 and 303), child welfare agencies (P.A. 283), juvenile delinquency programs (P.A. 182), requiring uniform health services for school children (P.A.s 341 and 343), requiring education for the children of migrant workers ((P.A. 287), burial costs for the indigent dead (P.A. 315), expanding the state's role in providing general welfare relief (P.A. 401), and expanding the provision of and funding for medical services for the aged and people on welfare (numerous acts). In 1966, establishment of a comprehensive network of social services was consolidated through means such as state implementation of Medicare and Medicaid (P.A. 321), transfer of city social service departments to the county level (P.A. 249), enhancing the professional structure of county departments (P.A. 143), providing for 75% state funding of community mental health (P.A. 4), and providing state grants to county health departments (P.A. 172).

Three specific examples illustrate William Ryan's role in the establishment of the social services system. First, although Ryan is himself a devout Catholic, he sponsored the legislation providing for family planning clinics, which respected religious differences. This illustrates the distinction he draws between his own personal religious beliefs and his moral philosophy of governance.

Second, the establishment of a statewide general relief program, which Ryan had long championed both in his role as editor of *The Wage Earner* and as

a legislator, came through passage of a Senate bill (S.B. 216) sponsored by a number of Detroit Democrats, but only after Ryan had used the summer after the bill was received in the House to work on a House substitute for the bill. At the point the legislation providing for this program--which in recent years became the target of widespread criticism and was eliminated through a line-item veto in 1991--was passed by the House, only 17 members (15%) voted against it. Of these, only 5 were Republicans; the remaining 12 active "no" votes came from Democrats. Nonetheless, the argument against the legislation was cast in partisan terms. In a formal "no-vote" explanation, Rep. William Hampton, a Republican of Birmingham, explained:

I voted no on Senate Bill No. 216 because aside from the merits of the bill, it is another appropriation bill costing the state 6.1 million dollars. It is ironical that this fall session of the legislature which was originally designated as a fiscal reform session will now adjourn without having taken up fiscal reform, but which will have made some astronomical appropriations. Had the members of the Democratic Party desired to support fiscal reform in order to raise additional revenues, then I might have seen fit to vote for this 6.1 million dollar appropriation. However, it is not being fiscally responsible, in my opinion, to vote for this measure at this time in the absence of fiscal reform.¹²

Third, Ryan worked tirelessly for implementation of the federal Medicare and Medicaid program signed into law by President Johnson on July 30, 1965. Medicaid was by far the most controversial part of the three-tiered approach to public health care programs implemented during the Johnson administration.¹³ Two major reasons for the absence of strong public support were that Medicaid offered assistance to a stigmatized population, the "medically indigent," and, by contrast with Medicare, left eligibility standards and determination of benefits to

the states. The open-ended nature of the federal Medicaid program as it was initially set up provided a perfect opening for Ryan to exercise his philosophy of the 12 basic human needs. He fought relentlessly for the broadest possible eligibility and benefit standards, with the result that the bill as finally signed into law by Governor Romney proposed to provide a full range of benefits (hospital, outpatient, and home service sites, encompassing medical, pharmaceutical, dental, optometric, prosthetic, and ambulance services) not only to the 200,000 persons receiving assistance under categorical programs, but also to an estimated 400,000 more residents who would qualify as medically indigent.¹⁴

This sweeping establishment of federal-state cooperative social service programs through means of legislative initiatives was highly unusual. Elazer (1966) noted that, in general, the "least effective way for the states to influence the direction of established cooperative programs is through the formal institutions normally considered the bulwarks of state autonomy, particularly the state legislatures" (p. 153). Internal interest group pressures and the "perennial psychological conflict" of wanting to resist involvement with the federal government while receiving as much federal money as possible generally led state legislatures to "pick and choose between smaller programs" and even to fail to appropriate adequate state funds to harvest federal matchers. The result, he concluded, was that for the most part the role of state legislatures was not nearly what it could be as a "source of authority" for the "development of cooperative arrangements" (pp. 153-154).

Michigan Consumers Council

In 1958, when Ryan was first elected to the House, he had asked to be appointed to the House Labor Committee, membership on which had been held by his predecessor. Instead, he was appointed to the Agriculture Committee. "I was intended to be an insignificant, useless minority member of the Agriculture Committee, who would have no place to go and nothing to contribute," he reminisced. "So my job was to try to turn the Agriculture Committee into the Agriculture and Consumers Committee. Because there's a relationship between agriculture and consumption; there's also a relationship between labor and consumption."¹⁵

As an "insignificant, useless minority member," Ryan was largely thwarted in his efforts as long as the Republicans retained control of the House. However, in 1966, he joined with Bob Mahoney, the childhood friend and fellow legislative member who had first persuaded Ryan to run for the House, to back legislation creating and defining the powers and duties of the Michigan Consumers Council.

[T]he Michigan state legislature recognized that there was a need to do something extra for Michigan consumers in the area of consumer protection. This "something extra" resulted in the establishment of the Michigan Consumers Council charged with the responsibility of counseling, educating and providing information to consumers to enable them to help themselves with purchasing decisions and to develop strategies for resolving disputes, as well as advising the Legislature, Governor and Attorney General regarding any matters affecting their interests.¹⁶

Of course, the idea for a consumers council was not just a brainstorm on the part of a few Democratic legislators in Michigan. Kent Wilcox, a former director of the Consumers Council explained:

When they created the Consumers Council, it was right at the opening of the consumer movement, and everybody saw it as a golden opportunity, and so what you had in Michigan was this collective genius that was the state. . . Everybody wanted it, and nobody trusted anybody else to have it. You know, it was such a plum, if you could be the person with the consumer office. . . . So they ended up cutting all these deals, so what you got was this committee, and you got three appointees of the Legislature, three appointees of the Governor, and the Attorney General, the Secretary of State, and the Director of the Department of Commerce. What they did was, they spread the power around in such a way, throughout the two branches, anyway, that it was very hard to put together a conspiracy to really run any day-to-day operation over there.¹⁷

The Michigan Consumers Council became a quasi-autonomous legislative agency with an increasingly well-defined advocacy role. Its creation and history illustrate the new philosophy of government and associated understanding of the powers and duties of the legislative branch that were coming into play in Michigan during this critical time period. But it would be another two years before the concept embodied in the 1966 legislation would be reified as a functioning agency.

Conclusion

This chapter has portrayed the institutional metamorphosis that took place in the Michigan House of Representatives during 1965-66. House Democrats, finally handed a sweeping majority, leapt at the opportunity to push the organization to its limits in terms both of internal structuring and of forwarding

new policy initiatives. Ryan played key roles in both areas. In forgoing the formal leadership position of majority floor leader, he positioned himself strategically to exercise strong policy leadership, particularly in the arena of social welfare legislation. At the same time, he worked dilligently to develop the facilities, staff, and administrative apparatus necessary to flesh out the vision of a strong, active legislative body.

For the next two years, however, House Democrats would be pushed into the role of the "loyal opposition" in a totally Republican government.

Endnotes

1. Personal communication, October 4, 1993.
2. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
3. Personal communication, November 1, 1993.
4. Biographical sketch in the 1965-66 *Michigan Manual*, p. 193.
5. Journal of the Michigan House of Representatives, 1965, No. 1, p. 9.
6. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
7. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
8. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
9. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
10. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
11. Personal communication, January 3, 1992.

12. Journal of the Michigan House of Representatives, October 12, 1965, No. 121, pp. 3251-3252.
13. The other two tiers were Parts A and B of Medicare. See P. Starr, The Social Transformation of American Medicine (1982), pp. 369-71.
14. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report, June 30, 1966, No. 86, v. 5, p. 2.
15. Personal communication, December 17, 1991.
16. Michigan Consumers Council, First 20 Years--The Michigan Consumers Council in Review, 1966-1986, Lansing: Author, p. iii.
17. Personal communication, September 2, 1993.

CHAPTER VII

AN EMBATTLED GOVERNMENT (1967)

Introduction

The Kowalski juggernaut lasted for just two years. In the election of 1966, Republicans again took control of the state Senate and won 55 House seats. For the second time, Kowalski, who had been the Democratic candidate for Speaker in 1959, faced an evenly divided House. In the 1959-60 session, the Democrats' failure to gain at least shared control of the chamber had resulted from the absence due to illness of one of their members. One may also surmise, however, that the Republicans had dominated the House for so long that the Democrats had simply been unprepared to wage an effective battle for control.¹

But by 1967 the dynamics had changed. Members of both parties were acutely sensitive to the precarious balance in which control of the lower chamber hung. Moreover, the policy initiatives forwarded by the previous Legislature had made clear just how powerful the legislative branch could be in the exercise of a programmatic politics. These factors led to an all-out battle for the pivotal position of Speaker of the House.

The stories that legislators tell each other about the contest for control of the House in 1967 focus on two elements, the role of the Democratic legislator

who provided the vote that swung control to the Republicans, and the importance of the House rules governing the election of leadership. A unique but virtually unexplored feature of the contest has been the extremely coherent and divergent philosophies of government embraced by each candidate. Robert E. Waldron, the Republican candidate, is a self-described "Jeffersonian democrat" who subscribes to the concept that government is a *res publica* (thing of the people) and less is more. William A. Ryan is a New Deal Democratic who believes in an activist, interventionist government. In terms of their personal and professional backgrounds, their philosophies of government, and their ideas of what the function of the legislative branch is and what this means in terms of legislative leadership, these two men in many ways embody the individualistic and moralistic strands in Michigan political culture. Through a series of events, only some of which were deliberate and strategic, Waldron and Ryan eventually faced one another as Speaker of the House and minority leader in 1967-68. In 1969-70, they reversed roles.

This chapter describes the battle for control of the House and the subsequent contest for minority-party leadership during 1967. It continues the administrative history of the Michigan House launched in the last chapter, with a focus on three key areas: legislative politics, administrative leadership, and policy initiatives of the 74th Legislature. To the greatest extent possible, I have used materials gathered in interviews with Speakers Emeritus Waldron and Ryan to tell the story of the trends that were evident and the changes that were taking

place during this period. The daily Michigan Report prepared by Gongwer News Service, formal House records, and internal House documents supplement the oral history.

The Battle for Control

The Stakes

A formal legislative leader is a member of the Legislature elected by his or her party caucus to perform specific functions with respect to party and/or legislative administration. In a state House, the principal leader is the Speaker, who is both the chief executive officer for the House as a government body and the party leader for the political party holding the majority of seats within the assembly. Other important positions are the majority floor leader, who is the second-in-command to the Speaker, and the minority leader, who is the head of the minority contingent.²

These are the top "formal" leadership positions from the perspectives of both legislative scholarship and legislative politics. Another distinction in the level of formality is between House and caucus leadership. The 1967 Standing Rules of the Michigan House of Representatives identify only four "House officers" in addition to the Speaker—the Speaker Pro Tempore, the Associate Speaker Pro Tempore, the House Clerk, and the Sergeant at Arms.³ The holders of these positions (with the exception of the Sergeant at Arms, who is

appointed by the Speaker) require election by the full House membership. The dynamics of House elections will be discussed below.

It is no accident that the speakership is the only position that is "formal" both from the standpoint of the Standing Rules of the House and from the standpoints of academic literature and practitioners' understanding of the dynamics of legislative power. The Michigan Constitution is silent on the issue of House officers. Not only are all House members created equal, but the House of Representatives to a very large extent re-creates itself every two years. The Constitution specifies that the opening day of the Legislature shall be at 12:00 noon on the second Wednesday in January and that each House shall choose its own officers and determine the rules of its proceeding.

The internal dynamics of legislative politics center around the election of the Speaker, from whose prerogatives flow essentially all other organizational powers and perquisites, as specified in the House rules. These include structural arrangements such as the designation of other leadership positions, establishment of standing (i.e., permanent for the duration of the session) and special committees, individual members' committee assignments, scheduling and processing of legislation, creation and assignment of offices, and hiring and firing of all House staff.

Practically speaking, these powers are absolute. The major contingency, of course, is that the Speaker must retain the good will of enough of the House members to ensure that he can withstand the possibility of a leadership coup.

One of the ways to do this is through the control the Speaker has over the "goodies." Kowalski significantly enhanced the power of the Speaker through means such as improving facilities and staffing levels, as described in the previous chapter. He also centralized authority by reducing the number of standing committees from 48 to 41 and introducing new leadership positions—a new House leadership position of Speaker Pro Tempore and a variety of new caucus positions, such as Ryan's position of Personnel and Facilities Officer and multiple assistant floor leaders. During Kowalski's tenure, legislative salaries were also increased by 50% (from \$10,000 to \$15,000). Legislative life was becoming much more attractive, and the power of the Speaker was correspondingly enhanced.

Salary levels, office space, leadership positions, and staffing levels are a set of factors that may be seen as reflecting the interface between the administrative powers of the Speaker and internal legislative politics. Committee structure and committee assignments provide a window on the interface between the powers of the Speaker and public policy directions of a given House. In reducing the number of House standing committees, Kowalski eliminated committees such as Educational Institutions (consolidated into Education and Colleges and Universities), Geological Survey, Horticulture, Juvenile Corrections, Michigan Veterans' Facility (consolidated into Military and Veterans Affairs), Local Taxation (consolidated into Taxation), and Tuberculosis Hospitals. At the same time, he created standing committees on Civil Rights and Youth. Although

the major committees (e.g., Ways and Means, Taxation) were heavily stacked in favor of the Democrats, Kowalski was the first Speaker to accept input from the minority leader on committee assignments for minority caucus members. According to Waldron, who was then the minority leader, Kowalski accepted all of Waldron's recommendations.⁴ This was in sharp contrast to the policies of previous speakers, who had deliberately placed Democrats from urban areas and with strong labor constituencies on committees such as Agriculture or Conservation and Soil and those from rural areas on Labor or Metropolitan Affairs as a means of rendering them ineffectual.⁵ Thus, it would be fair to say that Kowalski's enhancement of the power of the speaker went hand-in-hand with enhancing the overall effectiveness of the House as a policy-making body.

Dynamics of Legislative Leadership Politics

Formal leadership of a legislative body is initiated at the level of the partisan caucus, although elections to House (as opposed to caucus) leadership positions are accomplished through a majority vote of the entire House membership. In Michigan, the election of the Speaker of the House has traditionally been along entirely partisan lines. This differs from the pattern in some other states, where leadership is sometimes elected through a bipartisan coalition.⁶

The extremely partisan nature of the Speaker selection process has two major implications. First, it means that, when the House is unevenly divided, the

crucial battle to become Speaker occurs (if it occurs at all) within the majority caucus. The same holds true for the other House officer positions. Once a candidate has been designated by the majority party, election by the full House is only a formality; under the norms of legislative civility, the entire membership usually votes in favor of the Speaker-elect and the candidates for other House officer positions forwarded by the majority party.

Second, at times when the House is evenly divided, as it was in 1959, 1967, and 1993, legislators are expected to vote with the party with which they are affiliated. Any legislator willing to break ranks to vote with the members of the opposing caucus in the leadership election is viewed as a traitor. In legislative folklore, the Democrats' loss of control of the House in 1967 resulted from the defection of a single Democratic legislator, whose name—E. D. O'Brien—has gone down in history (among Democrats, at least) as a kind of Democratic Judas. O'Brien had first been elected to the House in 1956 and, ironically, had represented the same multimember district as Ryan before the establishment of single-member districts through the 1964 reapportionment plan. He was described in the Gongwer Michigan Report as "one of the hardest-working members of the Legislature" and was one of only 29 members of the 1967 House who described their primary occupation as "legislator."⁷ O'Brien's animus toward Kowalski stemmed from an incident during the 1965-66 session in which O'Brien had charged the rostrum when Kowalski failed to recognize him on a

point of order. In retaliation, Kowalski stripped O'Brien of his chairmanship of the Economic Development Committee. O'Brien never forgave him.

Another interpretation of the events leading to the organization of the House in 1967 focuses on the legal-technical aspects. Before adjourning in 1966, House Democrats had changed the rules of the House to provide for dual speakers and speakers pro tempore if and when the House was equally divided. Republicans secured control through means of a change in the Standing Rules of the House specifying that the election of House officers required only a majority vote on the part of those present and voting (a simple majority) rather than an absolute majority (i.e., of those elected and serving). They also succeeded in having the revised rules adopted before the election of officers and, through means of this rather elaborate procedural strategy, were successful in electing Waldron. These factors were the primary center of attention following the election of 1992, when the House was again evenly divided. The "lesson of 1967" led Democrats to devise an elaborate strategy based on revised rules of the House in order to avoid an absolute loss of control. The result was a "shared power" agreement with Democratic and Republican Co-Speakers.

The Candidates

In the battle for the speakership that ensued from the results of the 1966 election, Kowalski stepped aside as the Democratic candidate for Speaker, forwarding in his stead William A. Ryan. The reader has previously been

introduced to Mr. Ryan, and the next chapter will focus on him entirely. At this juncture, it is appropriate to note, however, the biographical sketch he submitted for the 1967-68 Michigan Manual:

Democrat, of Detroit; born May 2, 1919 at Morgantown, West Virginia; high school graduate; former editor *The Wage Earner*, veteran of World War II, Marine Corps; Roman Catholic; former president Local 104, UAW and financial secretary; president of Catholic Interracial Council, 1953-55; former president National Catholic Social Action Conference; elected to fill a vacancy in the House of Representatives January 10, 1958; re-elected in 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964 and 1966. (p. 198)

The Republican candidate was Robert E. Waldron:

Republican, of Grosse Pointe; born January 25, 1920, at Brookline, Massachusetts; graduate of Dartmouth College, 1946, A.B. degree; University of Michigan, 1949, LL.B. degree; married Helen Miller in 1951; children: Peggy, Bill and Mary; enlisted as a private and served four years in the U.S. Army Air Force in the European Theater of Operations; relieved from active duty as a captain in 1946; served as Wayne County Republican chairman two years; Episcopalian; member of Detroit Bar Association; Michigan Bar Association; American Bar Association; American Legion; elected to the House of Representatives in 1954 and to each succeeding session; majority floor leader 1963-64 and minority leader 1965-66; Speaker of the House of Representatives 1967-68. (Michigan Manual, 1967-68, p. 203)

Although he maintained a law practice throughout his years in the Legislature, Waldron began early to prepare himself for a legislative career. He sees this as a point of similarity between himself and Ryan:

Most legislators just somewhere along the line decide, "Well, maybe I'll run for the Legislature." And I don't think that was true with Bill and me. And I don't mean necessarily to compare myself with Bill. But I think we each had a philosophy ahead of time. I took extra courses in law school so I could be a better legislator. That was five or six years before I ever ran.⁸

Dynamics of the 1967 Election

As previously noted, the primary legend concerning the leadership election of 1967 focuses on the role of E. D. O'Brien, a Detroit Democrat whose defection resulted in the loss of Democratic control. To this day, Waldron and Ryan offer very different interpretations of what actually happened, as well as of E. D. O'Brien's role and the rationale he offered for his actions. Waldron recalls:

[Clerk of the House Thomas] Thatcher ruled that it required 56 votes to elect a Speaker, and we challenged the ruling of the chair, so the question before the House was, "Shall the ruling of the chair stand as the ruling of the House?" And E. D. O'Brien abstained—there were 54 yes votes and 55 no votes. You see, it takes 56 votes to pass a bill, but it doesn't take a majority of those elected and serving to adopt a rule, or uphold the ruling of the chair, or to elect a Speaker. As I understood it directly from E.D. O'Brien, he had a problem with the UAW. . . . [He] did this as a matter of principle. He struggled over this stuff, and he used to drive his wife nuts talking about all this sort of thing, practicing his speeches, and so on. I think he did this as a matter of principle.⁹

Following is an excerpt from one of my interviews with Ryan where we discussed this matter:

ADAMS: So then, when the Democrats lost the majority and the House was evenly tied, Kowalski stepped aside as the Democratic candidate?

RYAN: Yes, because of E. D. O'Brien, because E. D. O'Brien said he couldn't support the Democratic candidate for Speaker because it was Kowalski and he was not the kind of person he felt should be Speaker.

ADAMS: Why?

RYAN: Well, he made it very self-centered, and he felt Kowalski had not treated him properly in the past two years.

ADAMS: Where did he say this? In caucus?

RYAN: Quite publicly.

ADAMS: So it was solely E. D. O'Brien? Everybody else would have voted for Kowalski?

RYAN: Yeah.

ADAMS: So Kowalski stepped aside solely because of E. D. O'Brien?

RYAN: Then he asked me to be the candidate for Speaker. So then I went to E. D. O'Brien and I said, "Okay, you say you can't vote for Kowalski. Now I'm the candidate. Tell me—I was personnel and facilities officer the past couple of years—did I treat you properly?" He says, "I've got to admit, you treated me okay." So I said, "Will you vote for me?" Of course, publicly it would be known that Kowalski was endorsing me and that he was still getting what he wanted by getting me elected. So I asked for E. D. O'Brien's vote, and I guess he'd already talked to the Republicans by then and I'm sure had made a commitment to them that he wouldn't contribute to the election of the Democratic Speaker in a 55-55 House. So the only answer that he gave to me was, "I'll think about it." So then on the day the vote was taken on whether you need 56 votes to elect a Speaker or just a majority of those voting, well, then he voted with the Republicans on the interpretative vote. Then anyway, he got up on the Floor of the House on the critical day and said he'd been thinking it over and he'd decided that this was the way he was going to vote.

ADAMS: So you'd describe him as self-centered?

RYAN: Well, he made himself center. He said, "It was the way you treated me. You didn't treat me right."

ADAMS: He didn't state it as that he had a problem with union dominance?

RYAN: No, I don't recall that he ever said that, because he would have said that to me.¹⁰

In fact, E. D. O'Brien actively voted with the Republicans on eight separate procedural votes, although he abstained on the actual vote for the election of the Speaker, on which 55 Republicans voted for Robert E. Waldron and 54 Democrats voted for William A. Ryan. O'Brien explained that "he had backed the Republicans to prevent a drawn-out stalemate between the two equal-strength

parties. 'There was a desperate need for a solution,' he said" (Michigan Report, v. 6, No. 7, p. 1).

What bears noting is that, on several of the procedural votes that eventually led to the election of Waldron, O'Brien was not the sole Democrat to vote with the Republicans. His was the swing vote on only three of the procedural issues, and the Republicans picked up between one and five Democratic votes on several of these issues.¹¹

The Waldron Speakership

Waldron made the following observations concerning Ryan's, his own, and Kowalski's approach to the position of Speaker:

I think Ryan's and my visions for the Legislature were maybe closer, in a sense. Kowalski was just sort of more practical. I can't tell you what motivated Kowalski. I don't think he was motivated in the same way that Bill and I are motivated. . . . Bill and I just came at it from completely different directions. He came at it from the government solving all problems and I came at it from the government solving as few problems as it possibly can. I came at it from a Jeffersonian democratic point of view, and he came at it from more of a social activist point of view. We just plain had different philosophies. . . .

Kowalski was quite different from Bill. He wasn't the social justice advocate from the Thomas theory of social justice that Bill got out of his Catholicism and all that stuff. Kowalski was not a Polish Catholic, he was a Lithuanian Lutheran, but he was out of the UAW, too. He knew my dad quite well, and my dad was quite well respected as part of the management side of the labor-management milieu in Detroit. My dad was the head of industrial relations at Hudson Motor Car Company. So he knew all of these guys, and he was very highly respected in terms of his integrity and that sort of thing. So Joe knew Dad and he got to know me, and we got along just beautifully.¹²

Waldron's philosophy of government can be summed up in two phrases, "less is better" and "preserve freedom."¹³ This philosophy can be seen in his approach to legislative leadership in several ways.

Committee Assignments and Committee Structure

Waldron reduced the number of House standing committees even further than Kowalski had—from 41 to 31. He explained that he would have liked to reduce the number even further, "to about 20," better to enable legislators to concentrate their energies in areas of specialization. He also created a feedback loop with all members of the House to help establish committee appointments by sending out a questionnaire asking them for their committee assignment preferences. He set up what he called a "ouija board" in his office with committee names across the top and members' names along the side and indicated with different colors of push pins the committees to which each member who had served during the previous session had been assigned then, each member's current committee preferences, the committees to which he thought they were best suited, and final assignments. He took the view that legislators themselves comprise the primary resource of the legislative body. To that end, he sought to deploy legislators—particularly the attorney members—to committees in need of their expertise.¹⁴

The above is Waldron's explanation of his actions regarding committee structures and assignments. Some observations concerning the politics of

committee assignments need to be made. First, the interface between administrative leadership and policy preferences is suggested by some of the committees Waldron chose to eliminate, e.g., Aid to Handicapped and Metropolitan Affairs. Second, Waldron cemented Republican control of the evenly divided House by appointing Republican chairs and majorities to all major committees. Power sharing was of a token nature—he appointed 19 Democratic committee vice-chairs. Some Democrats contend that Waldron "returned to the policies of the 1950s" by placing Democrats on committees where they "would have a hard time developing natural constituencies."¹⁵ Records of committee assignments do not bear out this contention. Indeed, there was a remarkable degree of carry-over in committee assignments between the Kowalski and Waldron speakerships, given the change in organizational structure. (E. D. O'Brien was named as a member of the committees on Taxation, House Policy and Economic Development. These were all "plum assignments" and clearly payoffs for O'Brien's role in the leadership battle. Waldron said that no deal was struck between him and O'Brien, but he "wasn't ungrateful.")

Legislative Scheduling

Another part of Waldron's reform program focused on legislative scheduling. Previously, committee meetings had been held before, during, and after session. This practice meant that members were unable to give their full attention either to session or to committee proceedings. The practice of holding

"committee meetings" on the House Floor also had the effect of precluding public observation or participation. Waldron proposed holding House sessions in the mornings and setting afternoons aside for committee meetings.

Waldron was also largely responsible for pushing through a tight legislative schedule under which the deadline for bill requests was set in early February and final adjournment was set for the end of June. Under Democratic leadership, there had been few absolute deadlines and final adjournment had not occurred until the end of December.

The early deadlines set for bill requests and introductions may be seen as a direct response to the rising tide of bill introductions identified earlier. "Do you have any idea how much it costs to print a bill?" Waldron asked me. "It costs thousands of dollars now to print a bill, and a lot of them aren't worth a damn. There ought to be some way to screen them. But I don't like the idea of limiting bills. Some people then wanted to limit them, but I think that's unconstitutional."¹⁶

The early adjournment date that Waldron favored was based on two beliefs. First, he thought that setting early deadlines and sticking to them was one of the best ways to ensure that the Legislature would "get things done." Second, "meeting in a lame-duck session is immoral. A new Legislature has been elected. The only reason you have a couple of months is so you've got time for the transition period. But the lame-duck Legislature doesn't have any business, in my opinion, coming in and passing stuff."¹⁷

Waldron saw his term as Speaker as the real end of the old, non-professional legislature:

That was a philosophical difference, I think, between Bill and me. I thought we ought to have more staff, but he believed that we ought to have way more staff . . . in order to balance the Legislature with the executive, and I didn't think we did. I didn't want to see a full time Legislature, and he did.

Why not?

I thought that they would just be obsessed with re-election, that they'd get paid and do no other job and not go back to their constituents. Now Bill Ryan is an exception, because he's a self-depriving, ascetic, dedicated guy, and I'm not as much that way as he is but I'm a hell of a lot more that way than most people are, and I just knew that the kind of people who were pushing this--the Traxlers (that's a Democrat) and the Roy Spencers (that's a Republican) and the others that wanted a full time Legislature wanted that to be their full time job, and I knew that once that became their full time job, that would affect what came out in legislation. And at the same time that this began to happen, we had the emergence of these multi-client lobbyists and the emergence of PACs and the proliferation and all that kind of thing, and I think that kind of thing was bad government. That's what led to term limitations.

So Bill and I disagreed on that. In spite of our affection for one another, we thoroughly disagreed. I disagreed with most of my caucus, too. I can remember at one time we had the Legislative Council, and this is just an example of the bi-partisanship that led to the demise of the old Legislature, I remember, as Speaker of the House, with Frank Beal, a revered Republican Senator, I tried to get a resolution through the Legislative Council that any mailing after June first in the election year would be considered campaigning, and we wanted to prohibit it by joint rule, and we got beaten ten to two. In my opinion, the stuff that comes out of the Legislature is 90% self-serving, and we wanted to say that they couldn't use that to the incumbency advantage, and we got licked, bi-partisanly booted right in the butt. This is the kind of thing Zolton Ferency and I just really hated, and we worked together against the State Officers Compensation Commission, the SOCC. The SOCC came up at the same time, which helped raise the salary over the years. There were a few of us who knew that it was going to do that.¹⁸

Ryan Becomes Minority Leader

Following Waldron's election as Speaker, the Democrats elected Kowalski as minority leader. Ryan explained:

Kowalski said that since I was the candidate for Speaker, I was the natural person to be the minority leader. And I said, "No, you're the natural person to be the minority leader, because the only reason why I was the candidate for Speaker was because you forwent the candidacy for one purpose alone, and that was to enable the Democratic candidate to be Speaker, to have an unquestionable position for getting E.D. O'Brien's vote, so when that failed, we're back to where we were, so you're the candidate for minority leader." Kowalski then became the minority leader until he died.

Three months later, five or six of us were in his office to discuss taxes, the income tax, and what type of income tax shall we insist on, shall we support. This was a meeting of the House Democratic leadership. Maybe the strain of discussing it was even too much for Kowalski. All of a sudden he just flopped his head down on the desk. . . . The lobbyist for the osteopaths had been a friend of Kowalski's and had been treating him and we got hold of him right away, he may even have been in the building. And he's the one who said, "It doesn't look good," and got him transported to Lansing General Hospital, and then he died there after four or five days without regaining consciousness.¹⁹

Following the death of Joe Kowalski, the Democrats were faced with the need to elect a new minority leader. At this point, factionalism within the caucus broke into the open. Although House Democrats had largely succeeded in presenting a united front save for (and, perhaps, at least partially because of) the duplicity of E. D. O'Brien, Kowalski's death put an end to the appearance of total agreement. Five contenders, whose philosophies and profiles reflected the changing face of the House and the divergent forces at work, vied to replace Kowalski.

Daniel Cooper of Oak Park (Oakland County) had first been elected in the 1964 landslide. Cooper, a liberal Jewish attorney who would go on to be elected to the State Senate and, subsequently, to a career as a lawyer-lobbyist, had turned 37 earlier that month. Albert Horrigan of Flint (Genesee County) had served in the House since 1953 and had been Speaker Pro Tem under Kowalski. Like Ryan, Horrigan came out of a UAW background and was a Roman Catholic; he had two years of college education and was 58 years old at the time of the election. Horrigan was adamantly opposed to some of the progressive social legislation that had been forwarded by the Kowalski House, notably that dealing with open housing. Arthur Law of Pontiac (Oakland County) was another legislative veteran, having first been elected in 1958; in March 1967, he was 61 years old. Law, too, had a union background; in addition, he had served for many years first as city commissioner and then as mayor of the City of Pontiac. J. Robert Traxler of Bay City (Bay County), another attorney, had come to the House in 1963. One of the few college-educated House members elected before 1964, Traxler had become one of the youngest majority floor leaders in the nation under Kowalski, at the age of 34.²⁰ Of the five candidates, Ryan (age 47 at the time) alone had no formal education beyond high school.²¹

"It took four ballots to pick Ryan for the post," the Lansing State Journal reported, "Traxler dropping out on the first, Cooper on the second, Law on the third and the last ballot deciding the race in a runoff between Ryan and Horrigan."²² Gongwer reported that, although the final tally was not officially

announced, a caucus source revealed that Ryan won by a vote of 28-26 over Horrigan.²³ Ryan was unusually laconic in discussing the election. "It showed we had a good number of excellent candidates," the Lansing State Journal quoted him.²⁴

Hammering Home Fiscal Reform

Ryan inherited no bed of roses in his new position. With the death of Kowalski, Democrats were now in the minority in both legislative chambers. Some Democrats feared a drastic rollback of many of the legislative initiatives that had been put in place by the previous Legislature. Republicans, now that they had majorities in both chambers again, hastened to introduce legislation reversing policy directions by, for example, eliminating workers compensation for agricultural workers, exempting some builders from the construction safety act, and eliminating collective bargaining for public employees.²⁵ In January 1967, Romney had created a "Total Research for Improved Management" (TRIM) program designed "to examine Michigan government and prescribe methods for working off its fiscal flab."²⁶

Some policy reversals did occur. On the same day that Ryan was elected minority leader, for instance, Speaker Waldron announced that House Republicans, now that they were in the majority, would vote solidly in support of Governor Romney's legislation to eliminate the medically indigent from Medicaid. The bill had already been passed by the Senate and gone on to receive quick

approval from the House Appropriations Committee, with Ryan casting the sole dissenting vote. Now it sped into law, making the soon-to-be-implemented program unavailable to the estimated 375,000 citizens who would have qualified as medically indigent.

Overshadowing all other priorities, however, was a significant projected financial shortfall for the 1968 budget year brought on by the continued absence of a solid, diversified tax base, the rising spiral of state spending, and a souring economy.²⁷ The situation was made the more critical by the prohibition in the 1963 Constitution against deficit spending. In 1963, his first year in office, Romney had called the Legislature into an extraordinary session to lecture members on the need for "true fiscal reform, with two basic vital goals in mind—jobs and justice."²⁸ At that time he proposed the imposition of income taxes on individuals, corporations, and financial institutions. However, the Republican-dominated legislature, with admirable even-handedness, rejected Romney's proposal as soundly as it had Mennen Williams's.

In February 1967, he again proposed an income tax, citing three major inequities: The regressivity of the sales tax, the hampering of economic growth due to a scheme of business taxation unrelated to profit margins, and excessive property taxes. His proposed personal income tax at the rate of 2.5% included sales tax and property tax credits and a \$600 personal exemption to alleviate existing inequities and introduce progressivity. The proposed 5% corporate income tax was coupled with proposed repeal of the business activities tax.²⁹

The League of Women Voters blasted Romney's tax proposal later that month, in hearings held by a Joint House-Senate Taxation Committee, pointing out that the proposed corporate income tax was only .5% more than industry was currently paying. Individuals would wind up footing the bill for 95% of the additional revenue to be supplied by the income tax. "The League finds no justification for tax relief for businesses coupled with tax increases for the individual," Gongwer reported. Rather, it called for more tax relief for low-income families.³⁰

Only days before his death, Joe Kowalski had sharply rapped Romney's proposal on other grounds. "The Governor's so-called fiscal reform program has a lifetime of only one year," Gongwer quoted Kowalski. "It has a built-in deficit for the second year and probably every year thereafter." Richard A. Young, a Democratic member of the House Taxation Committee, forecast the failure of the tax program and predicted Romney would have to call the Legislature back into special session in order to put the state on a sound fiscal footing.³¹

Prospects for passage of an income tax continued to darken as, the day after Ryan's election as minority leader, the House and Senate taxation committees abandoned their joint hearing approach and endorsed rival fiscal reform programs. The Senate committee basically embraced Romney's \$235 million recommended tax package. The House Taxation committee backed a revised plan that boosted expected revenues by about \$103 million but still failed to redistribute the burden away from the individual tax payer.³²

As the June 29 adjournment date neared, the deadlock continued in both chambers. In May, both the House and the Senate rejected alternate tax plans. Zolton Ferency, Chair of the Michigan Democratic Party, announced plans for a massive petition drive to put the question of a graduated income tax on the ballot in light of the Republican legislature's unwillingness to negotiate with Democrats and inability to muster enough votes for a legislative proposal on their own account. At the end of the month, the Senate finally succeeded in passing a tax package, only to see it amended and then killed in the House in the third week of June, with six Republican members joining the House Democrats to defeat this "true Republican fiscal reform program," as it was called by one of the House Republican leaders.³³

Throughout these maneuverings, Ryan had been holding fast to the Democrats' primary goals: A redistribution of the tax burden and provision of an opportunity for the people to vote on the question of a graduated income tax. Despite internal factionalism, the caucus presented a united front in repeatedly rejecting tax proposals that failed to meet these goals. At last the House Democrats' tight cohesion paid off. The next day, June 22, with only a week remaining until formal adjournment of the Legislature, Romney summoned "warring tax negotiators from the House to his office for a public parley on their differences."³⁴

Romney hoped through this "fishbowl atmosphere" to force Ryan to back down on his demands. The effect was not quite as anticipated. By the third day

of marathon negotiations, the Governor, who was somewhat notorious for his quick temper, lost it. "You got 90 percent of your demands last week and now you want all of what's left," he stormed at Ryan. "It's all been one way, and now it's time for you fellows to give something! That sort of bargaining is politically unrealistic and if you persist we might as well start over."³⁵

In a rare display of temper, Ryan snapped back, "The trouble with you, Governor, is that you want to use every argument conceivable but then you try to tell us what arguments we can use."³⁶

The negotiations dragged on for two more days, with negotiators inching toward an agreement. Romney and House Republicans continued to push a \$600 personal exemption coupled with an income tax credit for individuals that they claimed would add progressivity while not harming small business people. Democrats continued to hold out for a personal exemption of at least \$1,000 and a referendum on the question of a graduated income tax. The denouement came in a dramatic moment when Ryan publicly "ran the numbers" in the alternative proposals and convincingly demonstrated that individuals owning their own businesses would actually fare better under the Democratic plan than under that backed by the Republicans.

"I thought all along that Jerry Miller [Romney's chief taxation and budget advisor] was calculating it wrong," Ryan remembered fondly. "I just didn't figure there was any point in bringing it up until it would do the most good."³⁷ Under

the negotiated proposal, Democrats won a \$1,200 personal exemption and a referendum on the issue of a graduated income tax.

Within days, both the House and Senate ratified the plan with only slight modifications. Although the total revenue anticipated under the program remained at the level Romney had initially proposed, the business share had now been increased to about 25%, and the high level of personal exemption added a degree of progressivity that had been missing from the earlier plans. The House Democrats contributed 20 votes to final passage, more than had ever been forecast and a sufficient number to seal the bipartisan nature of the plan.

"Tax reform is at last a fact," Romney trumpeted on July 1, following an all-night session in both legislative chambers. "I congratulate those responsible Republican and Democratic legislators who enacted this program. They have rendered a great service." Bill Ryan, however, was not among those singled out for the Governor's praise.³⁸

Conclusion

Like Mennen Williams before him, George Romney's aspirations as a presidential nominee were smothered at least partially by the divisiveness within and between the two major political parties and the interest groups associated with each over the direction and size of Michigan state government and the battle to put it on a sound financial footing. Romney had called his national campaign

travels to a halt to deal with the financial crisis at home, and his campaign never fully regained momentum.

At this point, the Democratic Party was experiencing significant problems with maintaining internal cohesion. The sharp lines of philosophical demarkation between Democrats and Republicans had, in some respects, become blurred. The Democrats' opposition to con-con had made them seem like the party of the status quo, while con-con itself had provided the platform for the rise of George Romney's political star. Under Romney's leadership, the Republican party was becoming more moderate; without Williams's leadership, the Democratic party was fragmenting.

In fact, probably neither party was quite as cohesive as it appeared to be during the Williams years. But the presence of an immensely popular and avowedly liberal Democratic governor, coupled with a firmly entrenched socially and fiscally conservative Republican-dominated Legislature, had lent to the appearance of high cohesion on both sides. While Romney was a moderating influence in terms of the Michigan Republican party's policy positions, he became intensely partisan following his late entry into political life. Kowalski's leadership, while dramatic and decisive both in terms of institution-building and public policy outcomes, had deepened the rift between liberal and conservative Democrats. I asked Ryan, "Do you think you went too far too fast during the '65-'66 session?" He replied:

To say that we went too far too fast versus the right thing to do, no. To say that we might have gone too far too fast versus the willingness of the public to move with us. . . .

When the Democrats become the majority, they do so because a sufficient amount of transition in public attitude along the liberal-conservative line occurs for the Democrats to pick up seats that they otherwise would not have won. So when public attitude changes [back the other way], Democrats lose. In the '66 election, some Democrats didn't make it, obviously, and the ones who did make it became more apprehensive because they won their seats by a smaller margin than they had in '64. So there were issues in the 67-68 legislative session that it was harder for them to vote with the Democrats on than it had been in the 65-66 session. The public attitude was different in 67-68 than it had been in 65-66, so our Democratic issues had a smaller margin of support.³⁹

These comments reflect what was undoubtedly one of Ryan's great political assets: an ability to distinguish clearly between his own ideal policy agenda and the constraints imposed by the political climate. In addition, he unquestionably understood his own multiple roles as an individual policy entrepreneur, the leader of the House minority, and the chief negotiator for legislative Democrats. Thus, although he allowed himself to go against popular and legislative opinion in some areas to which he was passionately committed, such as the provision of Medicaid for the medically indigent, he behaved differently when called upon to play the role of party leader.

Although Ryan believed strongly that a progressive income tax would be the ideal solution to Michigan's fiscal woes, he put aside his own liberal, redistributive agenda in favor of using his position as minority leader constructively. House Democrats lacked the votes to effectuate fiscal reform, but they had enough votes to stop it.

Had Ryan been more of an ideologue, he might have used his position to stand as a roadblock to the Republicans' efforts. Had he been less of a politician, members of the House Democratic Caucus might have aligned themselves with the Republicans. As it was, after 18 years of divided government, fiscal reform was at last a reality—with a strong Democratic imprint. A few years later, a Republican participant in the income tax negotiations observed:

Bill Ryan is just—you know. They should have sent him to the Paris Peace Conference. He's a fantastic negotiator. He's patient. He can outwit everyone. Everyone else wants to go home, and Bill will wait, and wait, and wait, and wear you down—a master negotiator. I've seen him negotiate on a tax bill with Governor Romney. He stole everything but the buttons off the Governor's shirt. . . . He used labor negotiator techniques. . . . Just fantastic!⁴⁰

Endnotes

1. A confidential paper to Speaker Gary M. Owen from House Democratic Staff Members Gregory L. Mann and Marie Kingdon and dated 30 January 1985 explained:

The issue of organizing in the 1959-60 House was settled when Democratic Representative Josephine Hunsinger was forced into the hospital by an emergency appendectomy; the resulting surgery and convalescence allowed the GOP representatives to change the rules of the House to provide that only a majority of those voting was needed to elect a Speaker. The GOP then elected the Speaker on a 55-54 vote.

Within the past 20 years, there have been instances when a critically ill member of the Michigan House has been rushed to Lansing by ambulance in order to participate in a crucial vote. The battle that took place in 1957 also

makes clear that the 1959 fiasco was an important learning experience for legislative Democrats.

2. See Rosenthal (1981), Chapter 8, "Leadership."

3. Until Kowalski's administration, there were only four "House Officers" described in the House standing rules: Speaker, Speaker Pro Tem, Clerk of the House, and Sergeant at Arms. House Standing Rule 12 of 1964 defined the powers and duties of the Speaker Pro Tem as follows:

In the absence of the Speaker, the Speaker pro tem shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of the Speaker, and shall preside over the House, unless the Speaker shall have designated a Member to preside for any day.

In actual practice, the Speaker Pro Tem is the usual presiding officer over House session, freeing the Speaker to perform other administrative and/or political functions. Under Kowalski, a new part was added to House Rule 12 establishing the position of Associate Speaker Pro Tem.

Rules 13 through 22 defined the duties of the clerk regarding roll call votes, conduct of religious exercises, publication and correction of the House Journal, keeping track and notifying members of the order of business, printing and enrollment of bills, care of bills, appointment of assistants, responsibilities for care of the House Chambers, and notices in case of extra sessions.

Rule 23 defined the Sergeant at Arms as the "chief police officer of the House."

In reality, the election or appointment of all of the latter officers hinges on the will of the Speaker.

4. Mr. Waldron ingenuously attributed this phenomenon to his own inventiveness in thinking to ask for this privilege from Kowalski. "No one had thought of that before," he told me. Right.

5. Mann and Kingdon, op cit, p. 5.

6. See Alan Rosenthal (1981), Legislative Life, Chapter 8, "Leadership."

7. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 20, 1967), v. 6, No. 14, p. 2; Michigan Legislative Handbook 1967-68, pp. 56-73.
8. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
9. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
10. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
11. Journal of the Michigan House of Representatives (January 11, 1967), No. 1, pp. 8-30.
12. Personal communication, November 3, 1993.
13. See Bryant, Chapter 11, "Leadership," legislative leadership opinion survey.
14. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
15. Mann and Kingdon, (1985), p. 5.
16. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
17. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
18. Personal communication, November 3, 1993.
19. Personal communication, December 6, 1993.
20. Buffa (1984), p. 95.
21. Information in this paragraph (other than that separately cited) is from the 1967-68 Michigan Manual biographical sketches, pp. 182-205.
22. "Rep. Ryan Wins Top House Post," Lansing State Journal (March 30, 1967), pp. 1, 4.
23. Michigan Report (March 29, 1967), p. 2.
24. "Rep. Ryan Wins Top House Post," Lansing State Journal (March 30, 1967), pp. 1, 4.

25. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (March 27, 1967), No. 59, v. 6, p. 2.
26. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 26, 1967), No. 18, v. 6, p. 1.
27. The estimated shortfall on the \$1.153 billion budget Romney was to propose amounted to about \$207 million, or 13%.
28. Journal of the House, Extraordinary Session 1963 (September 12, 1963), No. 2, p. 22.
29. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (February 2, 1967), No. 22, v. 6, p. 1.
30. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (February 28, 1967), No. 40, v. 6, p. 2.
31. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (March 9, 1967), No. 47, v. 6, p. 3.
32. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (March 23, 1967), No. 57, v. 6, p. 1.
33. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (June 21, 1967), No. 119, v. 6, p. 1.
34. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (June 22, 1967), No. 129, v. 6, p. 1.
35. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (June 26, 1967), No. 121, v. 6, p. 1.
36. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (June 26, 1967), No. 121, v. 6, p. 1.
37. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
38. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (July 1, 1967), No. 126, v. 6, p. 1.
39. Personal communication, December 20, 1993.

40. This was one of Stollman's (1979) respondents. Here and elsewhere, although I have often been able to infer the identity of the person speaking, I have preserved Stollman's framework of anonymity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE UNPREPOSSESSING MR. RYAN (1968-1974)

Introduction

In the election of 1968, Democrats regained control of the Michigan House by the slim margin of 57-53 (in a zero-sum game, an actual difference of only two seats). Under the Constitution of 1963, the Governor and state senators had been elected to four-year terms in 1966. Thus, the thin majority in the House gave Democrats only a fragile foothold on what remained a state government primarily dominated by Republicans.

But partisan affiliation was no longer the key indicator of government philosophy that it had been during the Williams-Swainson era. In both legislative chambers, both Democratic and Republican caucuses were severely fractured along philosophical lines that ran the gamut from civil rights to taxation. This chapter describes the battle for the speakership that took place pursuant to the results of the 1968 election and continues the administrative history of the Michigan House with a direct focus now on the role of William A. Ryan as Speaker in the three major areas of legislative politics, administrative leadership, and policy initiatives. It also seeks to paint a picture of the turbulent social climate as it was reflected in the nature of Michigan's political theater.

Source material in this chapter includes all of the human and documentary sources used in the previous two chapters. In addition, material from an extended interview with one of Ryan's chief staff administrators, Joette Marger, provides detailed information about and insight into Ryan's administrative priorities and actions. Another invaluable resource for this chapter has been Gerald Stollman's Michigan: State Legislators and Their Work. Stollman conducted the research for his work (which began as his doctoral dissertation) during 1971-72, at the midpoint of the Ryan speakership.

The Battle for Control (1968)

The Candidates

The 1968 election results were only hours old when jockeying for House leadership positions began. Rumors abounded of a possible coalition candidate for Speaker in the person of Rep. Albert Horrigan of Flint and a battle for control along the lines of political philosophy rather than party affiliation. Rumor became reality when, three days after the general election, Horrigan announced his candidacy for the speakership with backing from both sides of the aisle.

A week later, another Democrat, Rep. George F. Montgomery of Detroit, declared himself a candidate for Speaker. "I feel it is vital that the members of the Democratic caucus have a choice between a continuation of the lackluster and uninspired leadership of the past two years and new leadership attuned to the problems of the 70s," Montgomery said.¹ Montgomery, age 35, was a

former schoolteacher and former member of the Michigan Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers (an AFL-CIO affiliate). He had first been elected to the House in the 1964 landslide. (Montgomery's father was also a House member, having served a single term in 1945-46 and then consecutively since 1959. Both Montgomerys were named George, so the younger Montgomery was always referred to as "George F.")

Before the month of November was out, two more Democrats, Reps. Arthur Law of Pontiac and Stanley Davis of Grand Rapids, announced their candidacy for the speakership. Law had been a contender for the position of minority leader against Ryan. Davis, age 50, a former mayor of Grand Rapids, was a Polish Catholic who had the backing of the caucus's 14-member "Polish Caucus," a traditionally conservative group that had serious problems with the "flat-out liberalism represented by Mr. Ryan."²

The speakership was not the only leadership position up for grabs. Daniel Cooper, who had also run against Ryan for the position of minority leader and had been perceived by many as a possible compromise candidate for the speakership, ran instead for the number two position of Speaker Pro Tempore. The two other contenders for this position were Dominic Jacobetti of Negaunee (Marquette County) and Vincent Petitpren of Westland (Wayne County).

The growing strength of the 10-member Black Caucus was reflected in the candidacy of two of its members, Reps. George Edwards and Matthew McNeely (both of Detroit, as were all the Black legislators) for the position of Associate

Speaker Pro Tempore. Both Edwards's and McNeely's professional backgrounds included a combination of small business experience and past positions in union leadership. Edwards had been a House member since 1955 and McNeely since 1965. Until this time, House leadership had been the exclusive domain of White males, although there had been two breaks in this pattern in the Senate, where Basil Brown had been majority floor leader in 1965-66 and Coleman Young had been elected minority floor leader earlier in 1968.

Dynamics of the 1968 Election

Early in Horrigan's campaign, the Republican Associate Speaker Pro Tempore, Rep. Roy Spencer of Attica, announced that he backed Horrigan for the speakership. Concern grew when "[r]eporters, seeking to question Mr. Horrigan about his plans, found him huddled with Mr. [E. D.] O'Brien."³ Observers foresaw a possible replay of the bitter struggle for control of the House in 1967 as Horrigan announced his intention to take the election to the floor of the House if necessary. Horrigan contended that, in light of their slim majority in the House and continuing Republican domination of the Senate, Democrats would have to "rule by compromise."⁴ "I have put myself on the block and if the full membership wants me they will have their chance to cast their vote. There are a great many Democrats and a great many Republicans who are adamant that I be Speaker and have committed themselves to me."⁵

Ryan asked Waldron for the support of the GOP Caucus in blocking election of a coalition candidate. "Should the Republicans do anything to aid Mr. Horrigan, they will have to assume responsibility for the resulting two years of turmoil and chaos," he declared.⁶ Waldron appeared to agree with this assessment. "The Democrats won the majority in the House. They should have the right to organize the chamber for the 75th Legislature and we voted unanimously not to interfere," he told reporters at a press conference following a Republican caucus the week after the general election.⁷

Ryan had estimated that, with "no Republican candidate, the regular Democrats would probably be able to crush the rebels handily."⁸ The various candidates for leadership positions who came forward subsequent to the Republicans' withdrawal from the fray reflected the geographic, ethnic, and philosophical divergence of the members of the House Democratic Caucus. (There were also six women in the caucus, although it would be some time before women would become an effective power block.) So now the question was clear: Who *were* the "regular Democrats?"

Ryan was acknowledged to have the support of the more liberal wing of the House Democrats. However, Horrigan's more conservative philosophy reflected the views of a substantial group of legislators on both sides of the aisle. The battle over the state income tax had been one arena in which the philosophical differences had emerged. Another was open housing, which had finally become law only months earlier, after a prolonged and bitter battle.

Ryan's "tireless support" for open housing legislation had particularly rankled the more conservative members of the Democratic Caucus.⁹

Although Ryan's election as Speaker-Designate by the House Democratic Caucus in December of 1968 was publicly described as unanimous, caucus sources leaked another story to reporters. It had been another multiballot tussle, with Ryan finally prevailing on the third ballot by a scant margin—Ryan received 30 votes, Davis 20, and Horrigan 5.¹⁰ The leadership slate reflected the party spectrum, with Davis as Speaker Pro Tempore, Montgomery as majority floor leader, and McNeely as Associate Speaker Pro Tem. McNeely, 48, became the first Black to be elected to a major leadership post in the Michigan House.¹¹

Having been described as lackluster and uninspired on the one hand and a flat-out liberal on the other, Ryan had his work cut out for him to unify a caucus that reflected such extremes of philosophical, ethnic, and geographic divergence. While the tussle for the House leadership was going on, however, other events were conspiring to bring about an important change in the executive branch.

A New Governor

After Romney's landslide reelection to the governorship in 1966, for several months national polls had consistently shown him as the Republican most likely to defeat President Johnson in 1968. Beginning with the near-debacle of fiscal reform, however, Romney experienced one problem after another with respect to his political image. Two of the major ones were his

constantly shifting position on the war in Vietnam and his handling of race riots in Detroit and other Michigan cities in the summer of 1967.

Although Romney had formally announced himself as a candidate for president in November 1967, he withdrew from the campaign early in 1968. Within the month after the general election of 1968, President-elect Richard Nixon appointed George Romney as the Director-elect of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Romney's youthful Lieutenant Governor, William G. Milliken, would now assume the Office of Governor.

Milliken was a third-generation state senator who, despite having represented the politically conservative Traverse City area, had distinctly liberal political inclinations. He had emerged as a leader among moderate Republicans in 1961, when moderates at odds with the conservative Republicans who had dominated the Legislature during Mennen Williams's governorship coalesced around a liberal agenda for state policy initiatives. Milliken became the Senate majority floor leader and in 1964 won the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor. In this process, he defeated Romney's preferred candidate, House Speaker Allison Green, who was a member of the Republican Old Guard.¹²

Milliken was 46 when he became Michigan's chief executive in 1969. Quiet and soft-spoken, Milliken's "Mr. Nice Guy" image presented a sharp contrast with Romney's fiery temperament. Initially, many observers doubted that he could survive as governor. The differences between the two men were not just on the surface.

Although Romney was a strong supporter of a number of civil rights initiatives—as, for instance, the open housing legislation—his actions with respect to race relations suggest that he was more than a little conflicted. The race riots during July 1967 in Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint, Saginaw, Muskegon, Benton Harbor, Kalamazoo, Albion, and Pontiac had resulted in more than 40 dead, 300 injured, and more than 4,000 arrested. There were an estimated 1,600 fires and \$500 million of property damage in Detroit alone. Yet, later in the same month, Romney continued to cite Detroit as a leader in race relations, stating that Detroit's "tragic holocaust" had occurred in spite of this.¹³ One of his responses to the riots was to call for a crackdown on "Negro revolutionaries." Although open housing was a strong thrust of his administration in 1968, he also sought enactment of a series of anti-crime bills, stating that "Only a balanced program of greater justice and better law enforcement can help those who want to prevent additional civil guerilla warfare in Michigan."¹⁴

Milliken had been governor for only about six weeks before he became branded as the "ghetto governor" in response to his aggressive urban agenda and his urging that "a third of the state's recreation bonding money be devoted to urban areas."¹⁵ In the course of his record 14 years as governor, Milliken would go on to build a track record of being more liberal than many Democrats with respect to civil rights, urban renewal, environmental protection, and many other types of public policies. This growing reputation was reflected in his electoral margins. In 1970, he defeated Democrat Sander Levin by a narrow

44,409-vote margin. In 1978, when he ran for the third time, he beat Wayne County Democrat William Fitzgerald, by a plurality of 391,229 votes, becoming the first Republican gubernatorial candidate since 1946 to carry Wayne County.¹⁶

Another important difference between Romney and Milliken was that Milliken held no political aspirations beyond the governorship and, in fact, "shunned suggestions that he run for national office or the U.S. Senate."¹⁷ Both Milliken's personal style and his political agenda are key to understanding the success of the Ryan speakership. The personal and political compatibility that was to develop between the two men gave Ryan a fighting edge without which he would have been unable to devote the amount of energy he did to overcoming dissension within his own caucus, institution-building within the House, and policy development for the State of Michigan. This close working relationship evolved only after 1970, however, and the forging thereof is part of the Ryan success story, as will be seen later in this chapter.

The Michigan Political Climate (1969)

Ryan's election by the House Democratic caucus as Speaker-designate did not totally quash conservative agitators. On the opening day of session in 1969, Democrats fought off a Republican-sponsored rule change that would have reversed the rule adopted in 1967 that had allowed Waldron to be elected by a simple majority of House members. The change, which would have required

Ryan to receive support from a constitutional majority of House members to be elected, "would have set the stage for a dissident Democratic candidate to challenge Mr. Ryan for the caucus' votes." Ryan, suspecting "chicanery" in the proposed rule change, observed that the Republican Party was "trying . . . to impose on us government by party caucus defectors."¹⁸

Ryan's first weeks as Speaker saw a variety of other legislative scuffles as members of both parties in both chambers sought to position themselves, not only in light of the new power alignment in the Legislature, but also of growing social unrest in the state and the nation. In the Senate, liberal Democrats overthrew their conservative leader, elevating Sander Levin to the position of Senate minority leader; Coleman Young retained his position as minority floor leader. The bitter conflict within the House Democratic caucus broke into the open early in Ryan's tenure as Speaker when two Black female members took turns physically assaulting E. D. O'Brien.

The Slapping Incident

O'Brien's most recent display of his proclivity for becoming the focal point for dissension had been the introduction of a resolution commending the president of Ferris State College for his actions in putting down a campus civil rights demonstration and, in the process, causing more than a third of the school's Negro students to be arrested. Even as a symbolic gesture, the laudatory tone of the resolution offended the Black legislators. But O'Brien was

not content with symbolism; he tried three times to have the resolution discharged from the House Policy Committee. The minority members of the caucus became so inflamed that one female member hit him with an ashtray on one occasion and another slapped him when he continued his discharge attempts.

Following the "slapping incident," O'Brien announced that he was now a "white militant" and demanded that Ryan censure both of his female assailants. "Mr. Ryan, pained by the incidents, said he was still sifting the conflicting reports" and taking "Mr. O'Brien's requests under advisement."¹⁹ The next week, he told reporters that he was still sifting the evidence and taking written statements. "I have a pretty good picture of what happened but there are some facts I'm still not clear on."²⁰

The Speaker took so long to figure out exactly what had happened and what he should do about it that eventually everyone moved on to something else. O'Brien desisted in his discharge efforts, and the resolution died in committee. But this incident, far from being an isolated occurrence, was representative of the society.

In looking back at this period of social unrest and growing demands for government intervention, it is easy to assume the inevitability of the progressive changes that were to follow. But the form the changes took, far from being inevitable, was crafted out of the conflicting forces that were blowing through both society and government—forces that, less skillfully managed, might have

brought about an on-going state of contentiousness and stalemate, as they have in recent years. The matter of government facilities literally leaps out of the documentary sources as an acute manifestation of the political culture at the time of Ryan's ascension to top leadership and thus illustrates this point dramatically.

Government Facilities as an Expression of Political Climate

Since his nomination by the Democratic Caucus, Ryan had openly discussed plans for building an annex to the Capitol Building to provide additional offices and committee rooms. On opening day, the Senate flexed its muscles by passing a resolution designed to "prohibit the House from spending any of its annual operational appropriation to finance the annex."²¹ Undaunted, Ryan hammered away at the need for additional legislative facilities. The next week, he announced development of a plan for an even larger annex than previously contemplated, blandly stating that he didn't "anticipate any difficulty with the Senate on providing the needed facilities for the House."²²

The problem of limited legislative office space gained added momentum as the Senate majority leadership sought to evict three Democratic senators from their office in the Capitol Building, ordering them to find space somewhere else. This action was in sharp contrast to the way Ryan was approaching the problem of office space, which was to expand facilities for members of both caucuses. The three—one of whom was Coleman Young, who, in addition to his role as Senate minority floor leader, had recently become the first Black named to the

Democratic National Committee--refused to go. Senate Majority Leader Emil Lockwood eventually backed down, stating that "We don't intend to call out the Federal troops or the National Guard. We are not going to take any forcible action such as with unruly students who sit in at college administration buildings."²³

In response, Coleman Young "wryly suggested that the Republican decision was the wisest, under the circumstances. 'If they would have employed the force necessary to remove me from the room they might have gotten accused of police brutality.'" The day after Lockwood backed down, Democrats promptly drafted a letter to the Republicans demanding more space in the Capitol.²⁴

This exchange of barbs reflects some self-consciousness on the part of at least some members of the Legislature of how the internal political theater was reflecting the external political climate. But the whole matter of acquisition and construction of facilities to house the growing state government reflected in a variety of ways both the problems and the trends in the society to be governed.

During 1968, a wealthy Lansing family had offered to donate a spacious home in a prestigious Lansing neighborhood to be used as the formal residence for the Governor of Michigan. This appeared to be a serendipitous solution to the rather long-standing question of obtaining or building a governor's mansion, and legislation was passed to effectuate the change to public ownership and specification of utilization. Hardly had Governor Milliken signed the bill,

however, before it was discovered that there were two deed restrictions on the property. One gave a neighborhood association veto power over who could own property in the area; the other was a racial covenant that would have barred any non-White governor from using the home.²⁵ The Attorney General quickly asserted that the Whites-only covenant was unquestionably invalid, and both egregious provisions were later stricken. Nonetheless, the incident brought the issue of open housing, which the Legislature had acted upon with such reluctance only the year before, home to roost (so to speak).

Nineteen-sixty-nine was also the year in which long-discussed plans for a new state capitol building finally bore fruit when "the Capital Outlay Subcommittee unveiled drawings of Capitol II." The architects' renderings and models, produced pursuant to a two-year planning process, presented "a sprawling, granite-sheathed structure" composed of three separate buildings--one for each branch of government. In the center of the edifice was "a huge, slab-sided beacon that would jut up 250 feet from the midst of the complex." This was described by the architects, who also unabashedly pointed out that "classical domes are out and contemporary expressions are in," as "the light of democracy." Gongwer reported that "some observers, less kind, called it 'neo Standard Oil' and 'early Cleveland Air Races.'" ²⁶

A majority of legislators, as well as Governor Milliken, were enthusiastic about Capitol II. Ryan was publicly silent on the topic. He had one big problem with the idea: It would take at least five years to build the new capitol, and in the

meantime the House needed more space to function properly. The impasse over the construction of Capitol II, which continued for several years, led to an extension of the approach to facility management described in Chapter VI. By the end of Ryan's tenure as Speaker, the Capitol Building had become a rabbit warren, with subfloors built wherever possible and offices tucked into every nook and cranny.

Ryan himself stayed in the same office space he had had as minority leader, allowing Waldron to retain the more spacious "Speaker's office." Even the most efficient and equitable use of the space available in the Capitol Building was inadequate, however, for the growing legislative staff and the apparatus growing up around the new Legislature, such as an expanded Capitol press corps and a growing cadre of lobbyists. Consequently, during Ryan's tenure, both houses began a policy of renting office space in nearby buildings. In 1973, the House purchased the Roosevelt Hotel, which was located a half-block from the Capitol, after it had been extensively damaged in a fire, and converted it into a legislative office building.²⁷

The range of activities regarding government facilities reflects and encapsules much of this dynamic moment in the history of Michigan state government. First was the surfacing of widespread recognition of the need for physical expansion to accommodate the growing needs of a growing government. Second were the inclinations toward grandiosity brought on by this new self-image. Third were the vestiges of the repressive past that insistently

surfaced, often with humiliating impact. Fourth was the inclination on the part of some of the more liberal elements in the Legislature to seize the day and use the new political mood to tease and exasperate the conservatives who had been so long dominant. Fifth, there was Ryan, who steered a careful course among these conflicting and often seductive forces. This pragmatic, often phlegmatic, response to matters that aroused passion and eloquence in others was characteristic of much, though not all, of Ryan's behavior as a legislative administrator.

The Full-Time Legislature

Two days after his election as Speaker, Ryan led the House Democrats into a head-on confrontation with Senate leaders over the issue of legislative scheduling. Under the Michigan Constitution, neither legislative chamber can recess for more than two days without permission from the other. Ryan had requested a two-week recess following opening day in order to undertake re-organization of the House; the Senate refused--unless the House would accept July 16 as the official date for adjourning the 1969 Legislature.

"We," said Mr. Ryan, "are not willing at this time to state that our business will be totally completed by July 16. To give in to that date, or any one short of December 31, would enable the Governor to call a special session and dictate the agenda. Democrats hold that legislators are better able to determine when they should work and what they should consider."²⁸

The next day, Ryan announced he had "figured out a way to get around [the] Constitutional requirement. . . . He said the House would meet as usual on

Monday nights, convene another session at midnight Tuesday and then vanish until 10 a.m. Friday" until the House was organized.²⁹ Three days later, the Senate caved in, agreeing to both the two-week recess and an open-ended adjournment schedule.

Why did Ryan, who took a conciliatory stance on so many of the matters that came under his purview as House Speaker, suddenly turn into a virtual pit bull on the issue of legislative scheduling? This is hardly the type of concern that one would expect to arouse the passionate advocacy that Ryan displayed. He explained:

More time per annum to be in session made it more tolerable to allow a longer time period for the introduction of bills, for committee consideration, and for first-house passage. All of these activities had to occur suitably prior to the final adjournment date. The "last three weeks" of legislative session, no matter when this period occurs in the calendar year, calls for the same procedural plan. I call this, and whatever part of the calendar year follows the last three weeks, the "non-contributory period." Until you are into the last three weeks, legislators have the opportunity to initiate consideration of general subject matter. But once you are into this wrap-up period, the only way legislators can contribute is through amendments to legislation that has already proceeded through much of the legislative process. New subject matter can no longer be put on the table. Once the Legislature adjourns for the year, any contributions to the policy agenda are essentially given over to the Governor through his power to call the Legislature into special session to consider *his* agenda. So, the earlier the "last three weeks" occurs, the less opportunity exists for the legislators to do their jobs by actively contributing to the policy process.³⁰

From this point on, open-ended adjournment became the norm rather than the exception for the Michigan Legislature, with the result that the Legislature has never been called into special session by the Governor since. In 1971, the House and Senate adopted rule revisions that permitted either chamber to

recess without the consent of the other for up to seven days, and the allowed recess period was later extended to 14 days. *Sine die* adjournment on the last day of December each year became essentially a procedural formality.

The year-round legislative schedule led to incremental relaxation of other deadlines, such as bill introductions, committee reports, and first-house passage. Clearly, this approach is not without either its detractors or its downside. Former Speaker Waldron pointed out that Ryan "did not believe in legislative scheduling the way I do."

In my opinion, meeting in a lame-duck session is immoral. A new Legislature has been elected. The only reason you have a couple of months is so you've got time for the transition period. But the lame-duck Legislature doesn't have any business, in my opinion, coming in and passing stuff. If you go back and look in the journals, you'll see that a lame-duck session has only occurred a few times since 1835 or '37. Hardly ever. It happened usually—in the 1930s—when the Legislature went from Republican to Democratic or the other way.³¹

Ryan also made the lame-duck session a fact of legislative life in Michigan.

Committee Structure and Committee Assignments

Committee Structure

Ryan made only minimal changes in the structure of the House standing committees, but the changes he did make were clearly reflective of some of his policy priorities. The Conservation Committee became "Conservation and Recreation" and the Agriculture Committee at last actually did become "Consumers and Agriculture." Ryan created only one new standing committee,

Urban Affairs, pointing out that in the past legislation dealing with urban problems had been assigned "and sometimes misassigned" to a variety of different committees. The new committee was to "concern itself with landlord-tenant relations, low-cost housing, social services, recreation, employment, crime and other problems of urban life."³² (In 1971, he created one additional standing committee, Youth and Student Participation.)

Ryan also expanded the Appropriations Committee from 13 to 15 members and stacked it heavily in favor of Democrats (11-4). Four other committees—Education, Judiciary, State Affairs, and Labor—were also assigned lopsided Democratic majorities. In the remaining 27, Democrats had a one-member edge. The House Republican leadership complained bitterly about the committee assignments, particularly the Democrats' 11-to-4 margin on Appropriations. Republican Floor Leader Hampton cited the Appropriations' structure as "grossly unfair," pointing out that "When Republicans were outnumbered 73 to 37 during my first term in office in 1965, we had four members on the committee. Now, despite the fact that we have 53 members, we have not been given an increase over the 1965 figure."³³ Interestingly, Hampton did not draw attention to the Republicans' 8-to-5 edge on Appropriations in the previous evenly divided House.

Committee Assignments

Minority Party Assignments

Another Republican grievance focused on their members' committee assignments. Shortly after Ryan was designated as Speaker-elect in 1968, Waldron was instructed by his caucus "to try to get the Democratic leadership to agree to the committee assignment precedent established under Kowalski" and "abandoned in 1966" of "allowing the minority party to make its own committee assignments." Ryan's response was that "Any party would want it," and, while a "good majority" of the committee assignments sought by Republicans" would probably be granted, he would retain the traditional prerogative of the Speaker.³⁴

In making the assignments in January 1969, Ryan rejected Waldron's recommendation to place Rep. Weldon Yeager on the Labor Committee. Yeager, one of the last Republicans elected from Detroit, was a former director of the Workmen's Compensation Department. Both Republican ex-legislators whom I interviewed remembered this incident as an exercise on Ryan's part of raw power. William Ballenger recalled:

There was a big stink about it. The Republicans made a big issue of it on the Floor and issued press releases, and said "this is an example of undemocratic majority power trying to dictate not just the number of people but the actual members, and it's unconscionable." Ryan never really did try to justify it. So he could be very hard-nosed and very tough. So then, you ask, do you trust somebody like that? Well, yeah, as far as we know what Bill Ryan stands for, we trust him. Do we trust him to put our members on the committee if we give him a slate? No.³⁵

Ryan himself was appalled at his own behavior when I reminded him of the incident and had difficulty believing he could have been "so petty" and "vindictive" (his words, not mine). In 1969, however, he responded to the criticism sharply, pointing out that "when he came to the Legislature in 1958, the GOP dominated the House and, in spite of his wide labor background and former presidency of a UAW local, he tried for three terms to get on the Labor Committee, without success."³⁶ What makes this point so engrossing is that, of the House Republicans' some 120 announced committee choices, which were issued as a press release by Waldron the same day they were submitted to the Speaker, Ryan made only four changes.

Appointment of Committee Chairs

Another feature of Ryan's committee appointments was the lack of animus he showed toward his former rivals. E. D. O'Brien was returned to the position he had held under Kowalski of Chair of Economic Development, Albert Horrigan regained the Chair of House Policy, and George F. Montgomery was given a seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee.

Still another facet of Ryan's appointments was the extent to which he empowered Blacks and women by endowing them with committee chairs. Nine of the 32 standing committees were chaired by a person who was either Black, female, or both.³⁷ The relatively short length of tenure of the average House member in the 1969 House bears noting. The freshman class of 1969 was much

smaller than that of either 1965 or 1967—16 new members as compared to 54 in 1965 and 32 in 1967. But the net effect of the high turnovers, a total of 102 seats between 1964 and 1968, was that by 1969 less than a third (32) of the House members had served before 1965.

Of the 110 House members, 6 (5%) were women and 10 (9%) were Black. Of these, only three women and four Blacks had served before 1965. The elevation of so many Blacks and females to committee chairmanships gave the Ryan House a character of social representation considerably in advance of what either reapportionment or the voters had delivered. He continued this pattern throughout his tenure as Speaker: In 1971-72, with 13 Black and 7 female House members, 13 of 33 House standing committee chairs (39%) were either Black, female, or both, as was the case in 1973-74, when there were 12 Black and 6 female members.

Slipping on the Velvet Glove

In his second term as Speaker, Ryan introduced another important change in the structure of House standing committees. One of the legislators interviewed by Stollman explained:

This year [1971] because we had a fifty-eight to fifty-two margin in the House, but a very uneasy margin because at any given time there are at least four Democrats ready to bolt. . . . Ryan did something new. . . . He appointed a committee chairman that would be a Democrat and . . . a vice-chairman who's a Democrat, and then he would appoint another vice-chairman, a Republican. . . . Virtually all of them [House standing committees] have a Republican vice-chairman. . . . Ryan felt he had to do it in order to maintain the alliance . . . [with] the Republicans. (pp. 65-66)

In 1973, Ryan allowed the House minority leader to designate the minority vice-chair and minority members of each standing committee. The Speaker retained the power to determine the number of seats each caucus would hold; despite the Democrats' growing majority, however, Ryan continued the pattern of giving Democrats only a single-seat margin on most standing committees.

Legislative Staffing and Information and Management Systems

Another significant aspect of the Ryan administration was the expansion of legislative staffing and development of both internal and external information systems. As noted in Chapter VI, Kowalski had started the expansion of legislative staffing; the primary emphasis was on obtaining more adequate secretarial staff for the members of the House. For the several years before the Kowalski speakership, the House had had a total of approximately 65 employees, and the Legislative Service Bureau (LSB), which performed legal research, bill and resolution drafting, and printing for both chambers, of about 15.³⁸

The growth of legislative staff is one of the most prominent features of the new, professionalized state legislature. During Kowalski's tenure, the level of House staffing rose to about 100 and LSB staffing to about 25. Under Waldron, House staffing rose to 150 positions and LSB staffing to 50. The Legislative Fiscal Agency, which had been created by P.A. 413 of 1965, was the only other

"legislative agency," and it was essentially simply an arm of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, with a staff level of four.³⁹

Ryan is widely credited with—or blamed for, depending upon one's perspective—seriously forwarding the expansion of legislative staff in a systematic way. Actually, the growth of staff during his tenure was not nearly as great as what came later, but it is certainly fair to say that he pushed the system to the limits of its capacity and set the stage for later growth spurts. Under Ryan, House staffing alone topped 200 during his first three months in office, rose to 250 by April of 1971, and increased to about 350 during 1973. During the same period, personnel in the state Senate also increased significantly, although the staffing pattern was very different from that in the House.

This section is divided into four subparts. The first presents the primary criticisms of Ryan's employment philosophy and practices. The second describes the various ways that legislative staffs can be expanded and the route that Ryan selected; the pattern in the Senate is used as a point of comparison. The third presents some of the results of Ryan's approach to legislative staffing and management of the House in terms of the development of information and control systems. The fourth presents, in Ryan's own words, his philosophy of legislative staffing in connection with his overall philosophy of government.

Critique of Staff Increases

With most positions in the executive branch of state government under the auspices of the Civil Service Commission, the legislative and judicial branches of government offered, during the time period under study, the bulk of the remaining opportunities for political patronage appointments. (The rise of privatization and "contracting out" of government services has created a very different set of opportunities today, but that is another story.) In his assigned role as devil's advocate, former Speaker Waldron was highly critical of the extent and types of staff increases under Ryan, attributing these largely to patronage motives:

That was a philosophical difference, I think, between Bill and me. I thought we ought to have more staff, but he believed that we ought to have way more staff and that we needed a whole lot of staff in order to balance the Legislature with the executive, and I didn't think we did.

Kowalski had about four or five or six staff people, something like that. Then when we went 55-55, I agreed that his staff would stay the same, and that whoever got to be Speaker would have one or two more staff members because of the ministerial job that the Speaker had. So we had about six, something like that, and the ratio of secretaries to legislators was maybe one to two. And that was maybe not quite adequate, but getting close.

I think one of the things you see is that the House Clerk's job was much bigger. They didn't have as much staff as they do now, but their responsibilities were much greater. Ryan took quite a bit of power away from the Clerk and put it under the Speaker. This is right out of the UAW book of patronage. You want to control patronage, that's the way you get things done.⁴⁰

Another criticism of Ryan's personnel policies focused on the unevenness of his hiring practices. Although he instituted the personnel test for potential

clerical employees that continued to be used for many years, and also invented other tests for other types of employees, not all of those he hired were subjected to any testing procedure. Joette Marger, an early member of the "Speaker's staff," observed:

Ryan was noted for keeping people. He was a great believer that government was the employer of last resort. There were a lot of people who didn't carry their load, but he didn't feel you could turn them out on the street, because nobody else would hire them. He felt people had the right to work. The salaries when Ryan was Speaker weren't nearly as high as they became later, because he split the money up more ways so he could put more people on.

I can tell stories of people he put on who I was supervising, It's pretty funny. A lot of them were ex-legislators. That's still being done, but he did that. They were desperate, so he would put them on for a while and assign them to me. There was somebody who had been my boss whom I now had to supervise. So it was strange. But he really, sincerely, believed that government was the employer of last resort.⁴¹

Types of Staff Increases

A direct consequence of the extremely political character of the legislative institution is that all legislative staffing is ultimately political in nature. The standing rules of the Michigan House of Representatives specify that the Speaker "shall appoint employees of the House, except as otherwise provided" and that "all employees appointed by the Speaker shall be subject to his orders and to summary removal by him on failure to properly perform the duties assigned them." This phraseology in the House rules stayed intact from at least a decade before Ryan's speakership to the recent past. (The language of this rule has been changed somewhat in the current [1993-94] legislative session due

to the "shared power agreement" currently in effect in the House.) Although the staff of the Clerk of the House is theoretically separated, the rule governing the Clerk's appointments also specifies the Speaker's approval and provides for summary removal.

A revealing contrast is with the Senate rules governing employees of the Senate. By comparison with the enduring language of the House rule, the Senate rules concerning employment changed extensively and repeatedly during the comparable time period. However, despite a number of changes in both language and scope, the Senate rules essentially continued to reflect the oligarchical character of the Senate through the direct power of appointment and dismissal of employees of each individual senator. The number of Senate employees roughly doubled between 1969 and 1971, but the bulk of the staff increases came through giving each senator at least one additional staff person, rather than building up "central staffs."

In the House, secretarial support had gone from one secretary per four House members under Kowalski to one secretary per two legislators under Waldron. Under Ryan, for the first time each House member acquired his or her own secretary. Although members were strongly encouraged to make sure the secretary they selected could pass the personnel test, this was not required.

To a large extent, however, the positions that Ryan created were attached to the function of the House as an institution rather than to individual legislators. Stollman observed:

The most important member of the Michigan legislature itself is the Speaker of the House. Commensurate with his importance, the Speaker has the largest staff of any individual or committee in the House or Senate. He has some twenty-five people working under him. This staff includes secretaries and messengers. Some of the functions performed by the Speaker's staff include providing administrative services to all the members of the House, regardless of their party affiliation. (p. 74)

Information and Management Systems

Joette Marger had recently moved to Lansing in 1970 when a neighbor told her that "they were hiring at the House." She walked in off the street, took the personnel test that Ryan had designed, and, after a brief period as secretary to one of the Democratic representatives, was tapped by Ryan for administrative work. Her first job was helping Ryan with implementing one of his "brain children," the daily status. Marger explained:

The status was a record of every bill and where it stood. It was changed on a daily basis so at any point you could look in your status book and find out where a bill was.

Had there been any kind of a record before?

Never. To my knowledge, there never was in the United States, because after that many states got ahold of us to find out how it was set up and how we did that.

Before that, how were records set up and how was track kept of legislation that was introduced?

Just in the clerk's office. If you needed to know something about a bill, you'd have to go to the sponsor and find out where it was or the clerk's office—depending where it was in the process—or the committee clerks. It was just haphazard.

And then it was published at the end of the legislative session?

They put it in a permanent book at the end of the legislative session. After we set up this system, there were two women who literally, at that time, sat in the session every day, listened to what was going on, got reports from the clerk's office and committee clerks, and put that all together, so that overnight the daily status would be prepared, printed, and distributed to the offices—plus outside lobbyists ended up subscribing to it. This was probably about 1970. And it really never changed much from how he began it.⁴²

Marger was also involved in Ryan's establishment of a purchasing section:

Mr. Ryan was starting the purchasing department at that time, and he asked me if I would help organize it. My responsibilities were getting bills ready to pay by the financial office, keeping records of postage, keeping records of what they spent on various things—as the department grew, more and more things happened.

There wasn't ever anything like a purchasing department, either. The Clerk of the House was responsible for the purchases and whatever, and he basically did whatever he wanted, on a favoritism basis, or whatever. . . . Ryan started the purchasing department when the Clerk approved the purchase of a stop watch, and the press found out about it. Nobody could find this stop watch or why it was purchased or who had it, so at that time it was a scandal.

So Ryan's idea was to start something that provided adequate records. And he started a very complex system that basically is still used today. They changed some things—while I was still working there, they changed some things even though I warned them that he did this for a reason. They changed the process so it was easier—and the process that Ryan set up was cumbersome, but it covered everything and it would be a complete record . . . and most recently they eliminated some of the steps of the process and there was a tragedy, because the assistant director of purchasing embezzled a great deal of money. Had they followed Ryan's system, it had so many checks and balances in it that that could never have happened. So it not only brought us into the current times businesswise, but it was a very responsible system.⁴³

A third area in which Marger was involved was the development of a bill analysis section.

That was an analysis. . . . A very brief analysis was done of every bill that was introduced both in the House and the Senate and put in another

notebook that was updated daily. Even though people would laugh at him and say he was making more trouble than it was worth, Mr. Ryan had this idea that for every bill there should be an explanation of why it was introduced—what the problem was that was to be corrected by the enactment of the bill, and how this legislation would correct it. They did change that over the years; they kept the basic format but changed the language into something that sounded a little fancier than Ryan's simple explanation.

So had there been analyses of legislation available before? From other agencies?

Yes, but they never fit the bill, they were very one-sided. Part of the process Ryan set up was to contact anyone who would be affected and provide the pros and cons on legislation. . . . I hadn't been working for more than a year when one of the analyses was used in a law suit, and so there was a big write-up in the University of Michigan law journal about the bill analysis section. The department got into trouble later for a few of those because they tried to use them to show legislative intent.

Ryan also started the blue book. Blue book because it had a blue cover. That was every bill that was on the calendar, and any amendments that happened during that day, Mary Ellen Burns in the Clerk's Office would type them up, and Ann would run them off, and they'd be ready for the next day's session on the Floor, so legislators would know what had happened to the bill before. Before there was no systematic record of how the bill had changed from one day to the next. And that's another thing still going the same way that Ryan set it up.

Where did he get these ideas? Were these things being done in other states?

No, they were just his ideas.⁴⁴

Marger explained that:

After I got out of purchasing and into bill analysis, purchasing just totally fell apart, and there were a lot of irregularities and things, so Ryan called me back in there, and it was nearing the end of the fiscal year and a lot of things had to be straightened out. That was when I discovered how many parades there were in the city of Lansing, because Ryan and I worked every holiday, and there was always a parade going by the building. It was pretty hard working for a hands-on Speaker like that to say, "No, I don't want to work this Saturday and Sunday," because you knew he'd be

there. That's common knowledge, and people talk about the fact that you could call his office at 1:00 in the morning and he would answer the phone.

Was the House Fiscal Agency set up under Ryan?

The House had its own "Fiscal Agency," but it had no independence. It was just a group of fiscal staff that served the House Appropriations Committee. They had no budget; they had no individual power. It was later, under Bobby [Crim], that they got a separate budget and some autonomy, but Bobby still kept it within limits. It became so independent down the line, under Gary [Owen].

I can remember working with Bobby and saying, "Something's wrong." Under him, they had their own money, but it wasn't a separate line item. But they did have their own funds that they were allowed to spend, and they always ran out of them. I was never allowed to run out of money. As House Business Manager, for me to need to get a supplemental appropriation would have been death. I felt I would have been gone, given the axe. It was so important that the Legislature never ask for a supplemental. One of the first times that we loaned money to the Fiscal Agency was when Bobby was speaker, and I kept arguing that we should take a closer look at what they were doing, that there was no reason that they should run out of money.

But when Ryan was Speaker, the "Fiscal Agency" was really just committee staff.⁴⁵

These were only some of the areas in which the build-up of staff occurred during Ryan's tenure. Another of his early ventures was the establishment of a House print shop (and, in short order, separate printshops for the two caucuses) in addition to the printshop located in the Legislative Service Bureau. Ryan has been widely criticized for the extent to which he expanded House members' mailing allowances and enabled more and better legislative newsletters through the establishment of an in-House print shop directed by a technologically sophisticated supervisor. Although the establishment of the daily status and the

daily "blue book" necessitated additional copying facilities, the House print shop is seen by critics as having been primarily an instrument created to support the development of legislative newsletters, which over the years have been used more and more for openly political purposes. Marger explained:

E. D. O'Brien's secretary was Ann Washburn, and Ryan kinda stole her from O'Brien to start the Print Shop. And they did mostly mimeographing and they put out sorta-kinda newsletters, because Ryan felt very strongly that citizens had the right to know what was going on, and that's how the newsletters started. I can honestly say, no matter how it's turned out, that Ryan's intent was never for that to be used for political gain in elections. It grew and it grew. Eventually the Democratic print shop got fairly large and technologically sophisticated. The Republicans wanted one and they got a smaller version, but their people were never quite as sharp as Ann, they never had the ability to do the things she could do.⁴⁶

Ryan also expanded committee staffing throughout his tenure, although not nearly to the extent that members wanted or to the extent that would come later. One of Stollman's respondents lamented, "The [House] Appropriations Committee is well staffed, but no other committee in the House has more than a single staff person—usually a young guy or girl, usually a student going for a masters or a doctorate degree. They're rarely around more than a year or two, and then they're gone" (pp. 61-62). Stollman himself concluded:

Rosenthal has stated that "of all the resources standing committees draw on for their task of formulating and controlling state policies and programs, staff is probably the most important one." It has been pointed out in the legislative interviews that adequate staffing is regarded as a problem by most committee members. The legislators view the Appropriations Committees as having sufficient staff assistance. However, rarely does any other legislative committee have more than a single staff member. This condition reduces the competency of the standing committees. . . .

An important function of standing committees is an ability to evaluate the programs of the executive branch, in terms of compliance

with the law, program efficiency, and fiscal responsibility. . . . Yet by the legislators' own admissions, the function is not properly carried out by the Michigan legislature's standing committees. In fact, many legislators did not fully understand what the oversight function involved. . . . To a large extent, {they} rely upon executive agencies to provide them with reports on the efficiency and propriety of the executive branch of Michigan's government. (pp. 70-71)

Ryan Speaks

I questioned Ryan on his philosophy of legislative staffing. His responses clearly reveal the close connection in his own mind between legislative staffing and his overall philosophy of government, as well as his awareness of the importance of the critical function of legislative oversight.

During the decade between 1965, when Kowalski began his term as Speaker, and 1974, when you ended your speakership, the staff in the House of Representatives quadrupled. A couple of different theories have been offered about what that growth rate was about. It's been suggested that you saw increasing House staff as an opportunity to increase the power of the Democratic party through patronage. It's also been suggested that you subscribed to Keynesian economic theory and believed in the government as the employer of last resort. What was your rationale?

Well, you can quadruple an extremely small figure with very little addition.

Well, the increase was from 65 or so to somewhere between 250 and 300.

Well, if you had 65 people, then you didn't have even one staff person per legislator. Each one of the 110 legislators represented something like 80,000 persons, so if you have one person for each of the 110, do you want me to get my calculator out and figure out what that ratio is?

So the objective was to provide greater constituent services?

Well, let's put it this way—to try to get to what objectively was thought to be a norm, or normal.

A norm according to whom?

A norm according to my own line of reasoning. When you say, "to provide greater constituent services," the answer is "yes, but I wouldn't express it that way." The point is to bring it to a point which is conceived to be an appropriate relationship between the number of constituents who have to be served.

What about the central institutional structure of the House, such as bill analysis, the status, increased committee support, the print shop?

I think I was just thinking about the appropriate relationship, in terms of the legislator being able to do the job for which the person was elected. I think the things you mention illustrate what I was after. The bill analysis was [to help communicate] what we were there for. I think the relationship could be even greater than four to one in terms of what hadn't been done before and what we were doing, which still wasn't adequate.

Again, my 12 human needs. Take food. How many people in Michigan have a natural requisite of an adequacy of food? The job of the Legislature is to see that nature's requirements are met. Hopefully not by government, but by observing that it is being met. So that brings under the purview of food a substantial portion of the retail industry, the agriculture industry, the freight and transportation industry, and hopefully the judgements being made by all those industries have as their objective meeting the requisite of food. And look at all the people involved in meeting that function. And you have this little bitty Legislature trying to oversee the whole thing. And that's just in the area of food.

Why is that the Legislature's job? Isn't the Legislature just supposed to make the laws?

What constitutes the laws? It's the government's job to see those needs are met. It would be great to say that each of those industries that I mentioned will set up a council to make sure that their own particular industry will do the job of meeting that human necessity of food. And wouldn't it be so nice if each of those industries saw that they were doing their part to meet the human need of food, and that then jointly they would all select representatives for an omnibus food industry council to see that all of them cooperatively are making sure that the basic need of food is being met. And they will send a letter to the government saying, "The Michigan Legislature will not have to meet next year, because we are meeting the needs of the citizens of Michigan and of citizens of other states who rely on Michigan to meet the need of food."

But if they don't send that letter, the Legislature has to see that the bottom line is met. Somebody has to see that it is attained. When I was just out of high school, I studied a couple of papal encyclicals that talked about the idea of the industry council. In that case, they talked about representatives, not only from the management side, but representatives of labor, and consumers, all sitting in on these councils. And there were very few people in industry at that time who hadn't heard of the industry council, which was supposed to do planning and see that the human needs were met, but it was never set up to exist. So whose job is it? And don't forget, I said food, but there are 12 needs, and each one of those is a collection of industries.

So why is it up to the Legislature? Why not the executive branch?

Because the executive branch, as I explained last time, does not originate legislation. You could say all the Legislature has to do is authorize the executive branch to do it. But the Legislature would be derelict in its duties if it gave the executive branch the power to do any damn thing it wanted. We could have something pretty close to anarchy then. . . . The Legislature has to put the right clauses and paragraphs and conditions into the authorizations that it gives to both the executive branch and the judicial branch. How can the Legislature do its job if it passes on to others that which is clearly its responsibility? To decide if the executive branch has too many agencies in it, that it's using money like crazy? And not only that, the Legislature better know how much money the executive branch wants and needs to do its job and gives it that amount of money and no more than that, because the more money the executive branch of government uses, the more taxes somebody has to pay.

So when you say that the need for building up the staff, the legislative institution, when you relate that to constituent services, you're really talking about services for the entire citizenry. You're saying, in order to write good laws, we need to know what's going on, we need to have objective knowledge about what we need in the way of legislation and appropriations, is that correct?

Yes, but I *am* talking about individuals. Each individual in Michigan and in the other states and the world who bears some economic relationship to what is done in Michigan, each of those individuals are human beings, created by nature and given what I say are 12 basic human needs. Once I've identified the needs, I can say a couple more things. Every industry exists to meet one or more of those human needs to some degree. And I can say another thing. I can't be satisfied with looking at people only collectively; I have to say that each individual needs to be looked at, and

if we've met the 12 basic needs for every individual except one in the society, then our job isn't done. We have to look at that one individual and say, "What's wrong?" Are we failing in our duty?

Well, isn't the purpose of democracy, of a democratic government, to provide the greatest good for the greatest number? So maybe some people are going to fall through the cracks.

Well, it depends on why they fall through the cracks. If they fall through the cracks because they're not given an opportunity to do anything other than falling through the cracks, then it's a social problem. However, if they are given a reasonable opportunity to obtain an adequacy of those 12 basic human needs and they still fall through the cracks, then it's their own fault, if they don't avail themselves of that reasonable opportunity. Although I'd like to have a communications industry which considers it kind of important to let each person know what the reasonable opportunities happen to be.⁴⁷

Forwarding the Policy Agenda

Making a Difference in Public Policy

The very nature of the law-giving process dictates that no single individual can ever be said to be ultimately responsible for a given new public policy. Indeed, it is only on rare occasions that the actions of a single government actor can be clearly seen as the *sine qua non*, the critical factor without which a given initiative would probably not have been achieved, at least at the particular point in time and in the particular form in which it occurred.

At the same time, the premise of this work is that individuals can and do make a difference, not only in the institutional environment, but in the public policies that result, as well. In the two preceding chapters, I have attempted to show some of the qualities that Ryan demonstrated that made him highly

effective in forwarding a progressive and coherent public policy agenda, no matter what his particular role in the Legislature happened to be.

Whether an "insignificant, useless minority member," Chair of the Social Services Subcommittee, or House minority leader, Ryan brought certain consistent personal qualities to bear on the legislative process. The profile is one of hard work, deep knowledge, and passionate advocacy on certain key issues, coupled with a seemingly inexhaustible reservoir of patience, tenacity and ability to negotiate settlement in issues where there had been long-standing impasses. In his relations with others, Ryan's general tendencies toward deference, forbearance, and civility, coupled with a kind of flatfooted pragmatism and tendency toward self-effacement, were balanced by rare displays of temper and bull-headedness when a key issue was at stake.

Thus, to a large extent Ryan had already earned his stripes as an outstanding legislator prior to becoming Speaker of the House. With this role, however, he achieved a new prominence as "Lansing's number two power broker," as he was often called. Davies (1986) pointed out that those who hold formal leadership positions in legislative bodies and who are known as legislative virtuosos usually represent an ideological middle ground.

The aggressive, self-confident legislator and the charmer with a wide friendship circle are the personality types most likely to be elevated to leadership positions. Their power, however, rather than being personal, derives from their roles as brokers for powerful interest groups. Their formal leadership positions

"give them access to the channels of communication so they can learn where compromise is likely to occur" (Davies, 1986, p. 98). Davies contrasted this type of consensus-finding leader with the pathfinding leader:

There are other legislators who change the character or direction of decisions in a legislature. Measured by historical perspectives, their impact may be enormous though they have fewer victories day by day than the consensus-finding leaders. These legislators may be ahead of the consensus, clearing the way for others to follow. They lead with intellect and courage. There is a significant incompatibility between playing the out-front role and being the consensus-finding leader. The latter uses a reputation for winning as a basic tool. Occasionally, the roles are combined by an exceptional personality who can communicate to colleagues which of these conflicting roles—captain or pathfinder—is being played at different times. (pp. 98-99)

In this section, I will attempt to demonstrate that William Ryan was such an exceptional personality, combining the roles of pathfinder and consensus-builder, and clearly communicating the distinction between these. In addition, he continued his role as advocate for unpopular causes, even when he stood alone. This section will focus on specific examples of Ryan's behavior as policy advocate, consensus-builder, and pathfinder while he was Speaker of the House.

Personal Advocacy in Welfare Policies

The press of his new duties did not keep Ryan from continuing to act as a legislative advocate on matters that he considered vitally important, especially when no one else was willing to take on the job. For instance, when ADC mothers requested an increase in the clothing allowance for school children to \$75 a year and were rebuffed by the administration, with Department of Social

Services Director Bernard Houston alleging that welfare mothers already received a \$135 annual clothing allowance, it was Ryan who took on this unpopular cause.

The next week, he provided the press with a detailed analysis of the estimated annual expenses per person covered by the "personal needs" allowance cited by Mr. Houston, demonstrating that, according to his calculations, what recipients actually had available for clothing was approximately \$21.50 per child per year. The mothers got their increase. This was a pattern from which he never deviated throughout his years in the Legislature, regardless of his formal leadership position. He was always informally recognized as the champion of the underdog and consistently lent his skills at analysis and advocacy to those who had few other resources available.

Pathfinding and Consensus-Building in Education Reform

Setting the Stage

The most prominent policy issue during Ryan's first session as Speaker was school finance and educational reform, or "ed ref," as it was called. Nowhere are Ryan's dual roles as pathfinder and consensus builder, as well as his ability to communicate clearly the distinction between those roles, more evident than in the evolution of public policy in "ed ref" during his first session as Speaker. In one of the first of the weekly press conferences that he established

as part of his modus operandum as Speaker, Ryan told reporters that House Democrats, with an "ambitious but flexible" legislative agenda, were "attempting to catalog the problems of society and seek the best possible solution for each of them."⁴⁸ A key element in the House Democrats' legislative program was to increase state educational financing as much as possible.

The Speaker added that he doesn't expect aid to nonpublic schools (parochial aid) to be part of the Democratic program. "There are too many differences within both parties on this issue," said Mr. Ryan, who leads the Parochial aid brigade in the House. "Personally, I think there are fiscal possibilities for increased aid to the nonpublic schools. It's not a new problem—it's with us now and has been, constantly."⁴⁹

In February, Governor Milliken, while presenting a budget that hiked state aid for public elementary schools by close to \$100 million, indicated he would remain neutral on the issue of Parochial aid. The next day, the independently elected State Board of Education began public consideration of a voucher system of state school aid that would provide a guaranteed rate of support for children in both public and private schools. A week later, the Democratic State Central Committee adopted a formal position in opposition to Parochial aid.

In his press conference the next week, Ryan responded to the position taken by the state Democratic Party:

This is a matter of individual conscience, not party politics. I have talked to a number of legislators, but I haven't found one change of attitude on Parochial aid because of State Central's stand. We're here to legislate. The issue involves the guarantee of individual rights and liberties and it's ridiculous to try to take those away by a majority vote of one party or the other.⁵⁰

Thus, he again clearly signaled his insistence on distinguishing between his "power politics" and policy preferences.

Milliken's "Ed Ref" Plan

In this fractious political climate, with new leaders feeling their ways and the parties sharply divided within themselves, comprehensive proposals for education reform were slow to take shape. Governor Milliken appointed an independent Education Reform Commission, which, in October, forwarded a comprehensive agenda that the Governor then embraced. Some of the elements of the plan included elimination of the State Board of Education, centralization of the state education system under the Office of the Governor, establishment of regional education centers in place of intermediate school districts—and public support for private schools.

Although Milliken's proposal was less comprehensive on the financing side than on the restructuring side, he proposed an increase in the cigarette tax, replacement of local property taxes with a reduced statewide property tax, and elimination of income tax ("circuit breaker") credits. Reaction from legislators was mixed. Gongwer reported:

"The miracle man from the north country has promised us everything and given us virtually nothing," [House Majority Leader George F.] Montgomery said.

"He appears to have promised high quality schools, now and forever, coupled to a property tax reduction in the immediate future—an appealing bargain to say the least," he added. "Unfortunately, the internal financial intricacies of the Governor's program defy analysis."⁵¹

Ryan told reporters, "I think the Governor's unilateral development of the program was a mistake. I was hoping for negotiations and offered to sit down with [him]. But the phone calls accepting the offer didn't come. We could be a lot farther ahead if this had been developed on a nonpartisan basis." ⁵²

Lacunae in the Governor's "comprehensive reform proposal" continued to emerge. The week after the proposal was unveiled, Gongwer reported that Ryan had appointed a special House committee to develop legislation aimed at "hitching community colleges onto the train of educational reform." Despite the growing importance of community colleges, and despite community colleges' reliance on local property taxes and State appropriations, Milliken's educational reform program had completely failed to address them. ⁵³

As the weeks passed, a variety of new funding proposals also emerged, including one to increase the state sales tax to 4% and others to increase the income tax.

Negotiations Begin

On Friday, November 14, with the year fast drawing to a close, Gongwer reported, "Governor, Speaker Planning Ed-Ref Parley." Under ground rules set by Milliken and Ryan, five members from each caucus in each legislative chamber were appointed as negotiators to attempt to come up with an "ed ref" package acceptable to the Legislature as well as the Governor. Gongwer reported:

According to Mr. Ryan, who has reason to be familiar with the term, "negotiations" implies that those doing the talking are empowered to make concessions or agreements on behalf of some third parties, in this case the silent majority of the Legislature. By contrast, discussion is, as Webster points out, more an oral investigation employing reasoning and argument.

The hope is, Mr. Ryan said, that the "discussants," as he is calling them, will be able to identify the differences on the various reform bills and transmit the recommended accommodation, if any, to their respective caucuses.⁵⁴

Although Ryan himself was, of course, one of the "discussants," the majority of the House Democrats he appointed as active participants in the parlay were opposed to Parochiaid. Thus, he again signaled, not only the separation between his own roles as a policy advocate and a consensus builder, but his unwillingness to use his position as Speaker to attempt to "stack the deck" in favor of his position on Parochiaid.

Ryan as Pathfinder

Ryan's sensitivity to drawing clear lines of demarkation between his roles as consensus builder and issue advocate, in the realm of Parochiaid as on many other issues, in no way meant that his issue advocacy was not tremendously influential. State Senator Jackie Vaughn III, who in 1969-70 was a second-term House member, expounded on this point:

I did not connect to him [Ryan] until I came to the Legislature. But he is a person who impacts your life. For example, my vote for Parochiaid. I was an early leader, and the pressure that I was placed under not to vote to support Catholic schools or private schools was incredible. My rationale was that I lived in an area where there were important private schools. But I put my trust and faith in Bill Ryan.

So he influenced your thinking on that issue?

Completely.

You think you might have gone the other way if it weren't for him?

I'm almost sure. Because certain people impact your life. I had no reason, you know, my constituents are not Catholic. Baptists, we're all Baptists. But he is such a person of moral conviction, leadership, honesty, you never question him. His life spoke for him.

He enlightened me, because I never questioned him. And I'm so happy today, because I think there should be the choice. But, at the time, I got many angry letters about, "Why're you supporting appropriations for Catholic schools?" And I'd say, "No, I'm voting for money for private schools." But in the early days, I stood out because I voted for aid to private schools. "How many of your constituents go to private schools?" But I was looking at the rightness or wrongness, philosophy. And I would say it was because of Bill Ryan. You could never question him. He voted for all civil rights. He was a pillar of strength.⁵⁵

1970: Negotiations Continue

The Governor's decision to confer with legislators had come too late for passage of education reform in 1969, however. The Legislature adjourned abruptly on December 18, following defeat in the House of a proposal to fund a large part of "ed ref" through increases in the income tax rates. Ryan's hopes for "Parochiaid for Christmas" had turned to ashes; it was the first major defeat for both him and Milliken.

Negotiations resumed in 1970 and ultimately resulted in an education reform package that included both the income tax increases as a major funding mechanism and aid for non-public schools at all educational levels—elementary, secondary, and colleges and universities. New attention was also placed on

areas of unmet need, such as community colleges, bilingual education, education for populations such as the handicapped and children of migrant workers, and vocational education. Community college and higher education facility authorities were created to enable bonding for capital improvements, and a mechanism was set up to provide operational funding for all colleges and universities on a per-student basis.

Taking It to the People

Adoption of "ed ref" was quickly followed, however, by an initiative drive, spearheaded by the Michigan Education Association, to adopt a constitutional amendment banning public funding for non-public schools. In the general election of 1970, the gubernatorial candidates were Milliken and Sander Levin. Milliken's initial "ed ref" proposal had, it will be recalled, included provisions for state aid to nonpublic schools. Both he and Levin, who had been one of the anti-Parochial aid leaders in the Legislature, opposed the proposed constitutional amendment because it "went too far." Nonetheless, in the general election of 1970, Michigan voters strongly endorsed the MEA-sponsored proposal, which placed a constitutional prohibition on state aid for nonpublic schools at the levels of elementary and secondary education. The amendment did not affect institutions of higher education; nongovernmental colleges and universities continued to receive operational funds from the state based on enrollments.

No Conclusion: Ed Ref Continues

As this section was being written, Michigan voters approved a ballot proposal to provide funding for public education by increasing the state sales tax as the major means of replacing the property taxes that were dramatically eliminated during the summer of 1993. The Governor and Legislature "locked voters in" to increasing the sales tax—although a ballot proposal to achieve this end was defeated less than a year ago— with a legislative proposal that would have increased the income tax if the new sales-tax-increase proposal failed. Schools of choice remains a largely unresolved issue, as Mr. Ryan is the first to point out.

Ironically (in light of the enmity between the MEA and the executive office), Governor Engler, who had initially been a proponent of schools of choice, justified his failure to push this part of the education reform agenda by citing the constitutional prohibition on public funding for nonpublic schools. Equally ironically, as Senator Jackie Vaughn pointed out, "there is no longer any question about giving money to private colleges and universities. In Ryan's time, there was always a debate. And now it's history."⁵⁶

Other Election Returns, 1970

In the election of 1970, voters also defeated two other constitutional amendments strongly backed by both Milliken and legislative leaders—one to lower the voting age to 18, the other to create a state bonding authority to

provide low- and moderate-income housing.⁵⁷ But the voters appeared to draw a sharp distinction between their elected leaders and some of those leaders' ideas.

In the same election, Milliken won his first four-year term as governor, all 18 of Michigan's congressional incumbents were reelected, and every one of the 90 state representatives seeking reelection was returned to office. In the state Senate, only one incumbent—ironically, the only female state Senator as well as the only female Republican legislator—was defeated, creating a 19-19 split in the chamber. (The vote of Lieutenant Governor James Brickley, the presiding officer of the Senate, would keep that chamber in Republican control for another four years, however.)

In the Michigan House, Democrats picked up one seat, bringing the margin of control to 58-52. For the first time, a Black delegate from outside of Detroit—Earl Nelson of Lansing—became a member of the assembly. Another member of the freshman class of 1971 was a recent college graduate, John Engler of Mt. Pleasant. And still another was Richard Friske of Charlevoix, who proudly advertised himself as a World War II fighter pilot but rarely mentioned that his service branch had been the Luftwaffe (the German air force).

Summing Up the Ryan Speakership

New Policy Initiatives

The legislative session of 1969-70 saw adoption of many important initiatives. Among them were creation of a state administrative procedures act, prohibition of automobile insurance redlining, creation of a state bureau of youth services, a growing emphasis on drug abuse treatment, creation of a state construction safety commission and local building authorities, adoption of a shoreline protection act, creation of a state historical commission, establishment of civil service for county employees, regulations on interest rates and the terms and conditions of installment sales, and an increase in the minimum wage.

In 1971-72, legislation would be adopted to provide funding for mass transit, require equal pay for equal work, mandate special education in public schools, reorganize the district court system, establish a presidential primary, create a no-fault automobile insurance system and no-fault divorce, expand bonding for low-income housing and urban renewal, increase aid for environmental protection, provide for landlord/tenant security deposits, regulate roadside billboard advertising, and create a new formula for tax and revenue-sharing.

In 1973-74, public employees gained the right to collective bargaining, the state offices on substance abuse and services to the aging were created, a revised corporation code was adopted, as was a code of ethics for public officers

and employees. Substance abuse treatment was made a basic benefit under the insurance regulatory acts, no-fault insurance was further strengthened, and the state established its authority over occupational safety and health. Among a number of new licensing acts adopted during this session were one regulating a new type of health care entity, the Health Maintenance Organization, and one regulating automobile mechanics and repair facilities. The latter was one of the few acts in the history of occupational licensing to be adopted at the behest of and on behalf of consumers and in opposition to the proposed licensees.

Ryan's Key Contributions: Culture and Purpose

Ryan's greatest contributions as Speaker were above all to the cultural transformation and embodiment of purposeful action in the legislative branch of state government. Van Riper (1987) observed that "the two central factors of culture and purpose . . . are less indicators of the existence than governors of the direction and eventual quality of an administrative state" (p. 7). The same may be said for the administrative institution. Under Ryan, the Michigan House of Representatives for the first time became a boundaried institution with a recognizable internal culture. Ryan's activities in the three realms of legislative politics, administrative organization, and policy development were continuously guided by his philosophy of government, his view of the Legislature as the trustee of the public good.

You're saying the purpose of government is not to provide the greatest good for the greatest number? Rather, it's to ensure an absolute adequacy of each of the 12 human needs for every individual in society?

Well, both of those statements are right. I say the purpose is to have all the individuals in society have an adequacy of their needs met, of living wage jobs, so everyone can get what nature says they must have. Show me somebody who says, "I don't have those needs." Show me the person to whom nature said, "You're different. You don't have those needs," and then we'll talk about that.

Well, I can't show you that, but I can easily show you people who would say, "It's not my job to provide you with your 12 basic needs." President Reagan said in his second inaugural address, "I am not my brother's keeper, I am my brother's brother." In other words, I provide for me, you provide for you, and that's the proper relationship.

Well, you show me the person who is saying that, and I'll show you a person for whom has been provided by his brother. There is nobody in existence who has not been provided for, including the wealthy. The wealthy have to have somebody to provide them with food, or they're going to starve. Nobody is independent in society, and every one of these human needs are interdependent. The person who works during the week and goes to the baseball game on the weekend as an item of personal interest, that person is being taken care of by his brother, because the baseball industry is supported in all kinds of ways by all members of society. Anybody who buys a product that is advertised on radio or TV during a broadcast, that person is subsidizing the personal interest of the person who goes to the baseball game on Sunday. Most of the human needs are required in order to maintain a baseball industry. So if that person wants to claim independence and non-support, that person better not go to a baseball game, because that person is receiving support from his or her brothers and sisters. You can't have any of the human necessities handled independently. Even if you get government out of the picture, you're going to have people who tell other people what to do.

Don't forget, the way I state it is, everyone has ultimate liberty—versus justice, an adequacy of the 12 basic human needs. To what extent do you regulate? Most wars are fought because either you're trying to take away my justice or trying to take away my liberty. Now, if you're the proper one to take away my liberty but you're doing it needlessly—and my freedom is absolute except I should be required to relinquish it to the extent necessary and only to the extent necessary to

make possible the reasonable opportunity for each individual to obtain an adequacy of the 12 basic human needs.

Who says what the extent necessary is?

Society has to make that determination, and society has made that determination and they say it's the legislative body. Otherwise we have anarchy.

Now you keep saying that the purpose of government is the greatest good for the greatest number. That's true—but you have to add to that, you just do the best job possible of legislating. I've never voted for a perfect piece of legislation in my life. Every piece of legislation I've voted for, if I carry it back to its cause and effect, has been an imperfect piece. Why? Because every piece has as its object a particular need for a particular number of humans. But I have never voted for a piece of legislation in which I can say, "Here is whichever one of the 12 human needs is involved and this piece of legislation takes care of the opportunity to obtain an adequacy of that need for every individual in society." I've never been able to vote for a perfect piece of legislation, which got it the way I wanted it. But, as you say, it's the greatest good for the greatest number. You do the best job possible. We're imperfect human beings, but we have to have our goal out there, so we know what it is that we're working for. Now, somebody says, "You voted for that piece of legislation and it doesn't do it to that degree." I say, "I'm afraid you're right." But my job in the legislature was to do the best job possible. But I can't say, since I can't do a perfect job, therefore break up the Legislature and let's not have a government body, imperfect as it is. Everything's imperfect; there's all kinds of imperfections involved in the election system, the legislative process, and the results—but there's no substitution.

So you're saying the greatest good for the greatest number is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Do you think there's maybe some confusion about that between means and ends, that people take the greatest good for the greatest number to be an end in itself?

Yes, exactly. The gist of that is that, since humans are imperfect, the system is imperfect. You have to do the best job possible while continuing to talk about ways that we can improve that democratic system, as difficult as that is.⁵⁸

Conclusion

In the leadership elections in 1971, the Michigan House reverted to the voting pattern that had prevailed before 1959, with the members on both sides of the aisle casting unanimous ballots in support of Ryan and other Democratic leaders. At the very beginning of his first four-year term as Governor, Milliken told Gongwer reporters:

One of the things that I intend to do more than I ever have done in the past is to work with the Legislature on a more personal basis than I have. To confer more frequently with members of the Legislature as well as the legislative leaders. I think this can be productive. I did not do enough of it last year.⁵⁹

Shortly thereafter, Milliken set up the "quadrant" conference system, meeting regularly with the majority and minority leaders of the Senate and House to confer on problems facing the state and work out how to address them. Civility and compromise became the hallmarks of Michigan state government.

Endnotes

1. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report, (November 14, 1968), No. 222, v. 7, p. 1.
2. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (December 19, 1968), No. 245, v. 7, p. 2.
3. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 8, 1968), No. 219, v. 7, p. 1.
4. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 8, 1968), No. 219, v. 7, p. 1.
5. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 7, 1968), No. 218, v. 7, p. 3.

6. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 8, 1968), No. 219, v. 7, p. 1.
7. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 13, 1968), No. 221, v. 7, p. 1.
8. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 8, 1968), No. 219, v. 7, p. 1.
9. Romney signed open housing legislation into law in June 1968. His first bill, introduced in the House by Speaker Waldron in 1967, had fallen nine votes short of passage in that chamber. Romney made open housing the major focus of his state of the state message in 1968. Nonetheless, the bill languished in the Senate (where it had been introduced) and was finally adopted only after protracted internecine warfare among the Republican Caucus on April 4, 1968. Later that day, Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated. In April, the legislation passed the House by a resounding 76 to 31, but only after several weakening amendments had been adopted.
10. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (December 18, 1968), No. 244, v. 7, p. 3.
11. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (December 19, 1968), No. 245, v. 7, p. 2.
12. Weeks (1987), p. 127.
13. Mollenhoff (1968), p. 283.
14. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 11, 1968), No. 8, v. 7, p. 1.
15. Weeks (1987), p. 128.
16. Weeks (1987), p. 128.
17. Weeks (1987), p. 126.
18. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 8, 1969), No. 1, v. 8, p. 1.
19. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 8, 1969), No. 1, v. 8, p. 2.

20. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (April 3, 1969), No. 61, v. 8, p. 2.
21. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 8, 1969), No. 1, v. 8, p. 3.
22. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 14, 1969), No. 5, v. 8, p. 1.
23. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 14, 1969), No. 5, v. 8, p. 2.
24. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 14, 1969), No. 5, v. 8, p. 2.
25. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (March 12, 1969), No. 46, v. 8, p. 1.
26. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 29, 1969), No. 16, v. 8, p. 1.
27. Ryan himself had essentially lived in a room in the Roosevelt Hotel during his first years in the Legislature. The Roosevelt Building continues to house a majority of the members of the House Democratic caucus, as well as most Democratic caucus staff. Thus, many assume it was named for FDR; it was actually named for one of the great Republican presidents, Theodore Roosevelt.
28. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 10, 1969), No. 3, v. 8, p. 2.
29. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 10, 1969), No. 3, v. 8, p. 1.
30. Personal communication, April 30, 1994.
31. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
32. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 27, 1969), No. 14, v. 8, p. 1.
33. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 21, 1969), No. 10, v. 8, p. 1.
34. Curt Hanes, "Ryan Holds Fast to Prerogative," Lansing State Journal, December 26, 1968, p. C-2.

35. Personal communication, November 1, 1993.
36. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 2, 1969), No. 16, v. 8, p. 2.
37. Under Kowalski, 10 of 41 committee chairs (24%) were Black, female, or both. As the House Republicans during this period had no minority or female members, there were no committee chairs representing these groups during Waldron's tenure.
38. Michigan Legislative Handbooks, 1958 through 1964.
39. Michigan Legislative Handbooks, 1965-66, 1967, and 1968.
40. Personal communication, November 8, 1993.
41. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
42. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
43. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
44. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
45. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
46. Personal communication, November 7, 1993.
47. Personal communication, December 20, 1993.
48. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 14, 1969), No. 5, v. 8, p. 1.
49. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 14, 1969), No. 5, v. 8, p. 1.
50. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (February 25, 1969), No. 35, v. 8, p. 2.
51. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (October 14, 1969), No. 195, v. 8, p. 2.
52. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (October 9, 1969), No. 192, v. 8, p. 5.

53. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (October 14, 1969), No. 195, v. 8, p. 2.
54. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 19, 1969), No. 221, v. 8, p. 1.
55. Personal communication, October 4, 1993.
56. Personal communication, October 4, 1993.
57. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (November 4, 1970), No. 218, v. 9, p. 1.
58. Personal communication, December 20, 1993.
59. Gongwer News Service, Michigan Report (January 12, 1971), No. 8, v. 10, p. 2.

CHAPTER IX

SPEAKER EMERITUS—THE RYAN LEGACY

Introduction

In 1974, William Ryan announced that he would not run again for the speakership. However, he continued to serve in the Michigan House for another eight years. In this chapter, I will round out the Ryan story with reference to his roles and relationships with others in the legislature in his last years of service, as well as to the "Ryanesque" approach to legislative processing cultivated by many policymakers in response to Ryan's modeling and teaching.

The Ryan story needs rounding out in another way as well, and this is with respect to the "real self" behind the legislative persona. The story so far reveals an individual who was far more than simply a shrewd politician or a passionate ideologue. One of the keys to Ryan's success was clearly a high degree of self-consciousness, not only in terms of the mechanics of consensus-building, policy-making, and institution-building, but also in terms of how these activities related to the development of a better society. A "better society" meant one in which more opportunities would be available and more needs would be met for more individuals in the community; his philosophy of the twelve cooperative human necessities provided Ryan with a constant guidepost for legislative action.

But it is also clear that this is only part of the story. In this process, Ryan was also evoking his own soul. The degree of congruence that Ryan displayed and that was such an important element of his leadership, evoking in turn a spirit-laden response from others, clearly came out of the deepest wellsprings of his existence.

The relationship of the finding of identity that Ryan personally went through and that he took the Michigan House through was what evoked the same kind of search in the souls of others. This is what real leadership is all about. Take an analogy from physics. On a pool table, when the cue ball hits the three-ball, the naive observer tends to interpret this as the cue ball sending energy to the three-ball. That is not what happens. The cue ball frees and liberates the energy that is already in the three-ball, and this is what the real leader does also.¹

The disclaimer was made at the outset that this work is not truly a psychohistory in the Eriksonian sense in that it does not delve into Ryan's ontogenesis. Nonetheless, it is certainly appropriate to share with the reader, as I will in this chapter, the findings I have made concerning Ryan's early years and the clues to his character suggested by my informants.

Speaker Emeritus

Ryan and Crim

The Ryan story cannot be completed without reference to Ryan's relationship to Bobby Crim, who served as Speaker of the Michigan House from 1975 through 1982. Ryan said:

It was a close relationship between Ryan and Crim, but who created whom in that duo, it's hard to say. Crim was first elected as a member of the House in the Democratic landslide of 64, but then he lost his bid for reelection in the 1966 election, when the House Democrats dropped from 73 to 55 members. Crim was a loser in the election, one of many losers. Of course, after Kowalski died in March of '67, I became the minority leader for the 67-68 session, so I lived out those two years, with Crim back home working on some facet of local government. But then after I became Speaker for the '69-'70 session, I asked Crim to come be my executive secretary.

Why Crim?

For one thing, I liked his knowledge of government. He was a competent, effective person, able to get things done, and he was a good organizer, which was very important. He understood principles of government and enjoyed doing his best to apply those principles. So he agreed to come. He held the executive secretary job until, at the end of my second term as Speaker, '71-'72, he and I both agreed that it might be well for him to run again for reelection as a state representative.

That was following reapportionment?

Yes. He got elected in November '72, so he then was back as a legislator in '73-'74. But because of his exposure to the Legislature as my executive secretary and his commandeering of the office, knowing what it was all about and doing a good job, I strongly recommended him for the position of Majority Floor Leader in my last term as Speaker. So he was Majority Floor Leader in '73-'74.

And the heir apparent for the speakership.

Exactly. So at the conclusion of 1974, he and I were both in superb positions. I was in a superb position because it wouldn't be too hard to persuade me that I didn't have to be Speaker as long as I had a good replacement. And he was in an excellent position because he was certain to be elected Speaker.

!Why didn't you want to be Speaker any longer?

Six years as Speaker is quite an ordeal. But yet, he then took on the job as Speaker for the next eight years.

What made it an ordeal?

Oh, just the number of hours you have to put in. Even though I enjoyed dealing with personalities, employee personalities, legislative personalities, business procedures, financial procedures, monitoring House purchasing and the flow of the House budget, and all those administrative functions--you have to realize that when you're doing those things you're not working on legislative subject matter and you have less time to devote to the attainment of solutions to human basic problems. So when you have a person as excellent as Crim in a position to become the Speaker, what a wonderful position for me to be in as an ex-Speaker, having a Speaker with whom I was so closely related to work with on legislative subject matter and with him having to worry about all those other things, most of which he was somewhat involved with anyway, as Executive Secretary to the Speaker. So he was perfectly willing, and I would say was more capable than I, he could handle different administrative subject matter and continue handling the overseeing of facilities plans and legislators who would handle personnel or facilities and the expansion of staff. He was a very capable person in all those respects. In fact, he talked about turning the House into a political organization and had recognition of the fact that it was a political entity and therefore the legislators had to get reelected. That's why I started the newsletters and a few other things along the lines of the recognition of the political nature of the legislative body. But Crim was a whole lot worse than I was in that respect, because he's the one who started the public relations staff of the House Democrats, and that was very strongly an effort to find ways to inform the general public as to what was going on in the Legislature. That was the purpose.

What was the purpose? Simply to get people reelected?

No, I think it's both. You can't say one without the other. If you're going to say, "get people elected" in a positive sense--and it is positive because

it's a political system—then to say that without also saying, "Now, how are we going to let the people know what's going on," you have to say both at the same time, because information to the public, where the circumstances are such that the public does the voting and the public has to get its information from different sources, they fit together, so it isn't incompatible or inconsistent to be talking about both at the same time. Looking back, whether it's good or bad, who's to say, but it would have happened anyway, I think. The expansion of the political process. . . . The growth to our present position of excessive campaign financing was the outgrowth of the reaction to the reformers.

The reformers thought that we should not continue to have a closed democratic system. I described a closed democratic system when I came into the Legislature as a member of the minority party.²

Passing the Torch on Welfare Advocacy

Fred Fry joined the House Democratic Research Staff in 1975, just after Ryan had stepped down from the speakership. Although he was a "Crim man" who would later leave House staff to become a lobbyist in the lobbying firm Bobby Crim started following his retirement from the legislature, Fred attributes his understanding of legislative process above all to Bill Ryan.

The relationship between Ryan and Fry that is described below, and the results of that relationship, were replicated in many instances, as indicated by Fred's thoughtful and analytical insights.

How did you first get to know Ryan?

I hadn't been on staff long before people started coming up with the idea that we needed to look at reforming the welfare system. We were getting attacked from the right wing—Ronald Reagan was just trying to reform the welfare laws of California when he was governor there, and there was a lot of noise being made by conservatives in the Michigan legislature about the need to do the same thing in Michigan. But other people wanted to have a more balanced approach to reforming the welfare system, so I

started seeking out the advice of Mr. Ryan early on in those discussions, and he always seemed to have the time to help me think through this whole thing. I went to him with the problem of the fact that some people were calling for a reform of the welfare laws.

How did you happen to go to him?

I honestly don't know, at this point. I think I talked with other people on the staff, and they're the ones who suggested that I should talk with Mr. Ryan. I was pretty green and pretty new at the time to legislative process, let alone the welfare laws, so I think it was Mike Madden, my supervisor, who said that Mr. Ryan was one of the persons who I should contact.

Mr. Ryan suggested that what we really needed was a task force outside the legislature, to get the best minds together on various sides of the issue, the key people who had the most knowledge on the issue in one room, and we did that over a series of probably at least 15 meetings.

Was Ryan actually involved in the task force?

Yeah, he was, in many ways. He was involved initially behind the scenes when he had the idea of setting this up, and then he delegated some of the responsibility to Eileen Ellis, who was with the House Fiscal Agency, to kind of coordinate the input on this. But whenever there was a public meeting, Mr. Ryan was there, and he was involved in the details of what we were coming up with. One of the concerns he had was, even though there was a lot of noise about wanting to cut back on welfare, Ryan had the idea that if there was to be any reform, it should be done in a very responsible way, and according to the laws of the state. For instance, there was a case called the King case, which prohibited a state from discriminating against people who moved into the state, even though they were on welfare. Some of the conservatives wanted to ignore that case, and say that basically Michigan should enact barriers, so anybody moving from other states could not receive welfare. Well, Mr. Ryan wanted to make sure that that didn't happen. And he also wanted to make sure that the people of the state—not just in his district, but also statewide—were well represented in a thoughtful approach to changing welfare laws.

Was there any discussion at that time about General Assistance, because Ryan had been involved in setting up the state General Assistance program?

There were some people who wanted to cut back drastically in the General Assistance program. Basically, the whole General Assistance

program was one that was set up to keep people from falling through the cracks of the traditional eligibility standards. Again, General Assistance was attacked pretty heavily by the conservatives, but with nowhere near the amount of knowledge that Mr. Ryan brought to the table. He knew the welfare system backwards and forward, and whenever the conservative legislators tried to raise the issue that we should not have the General Assistance program, he basically took a whole lot more information to the table, and they didn't really challenge him very much.

Why? Why do you think?

I think one thing Mr. Ryan had going for him was a very good alliance with Governor Milliken, and Governor Milliken was supportive of continuing General Assistance for the poor and was in favor of having a responsible welfare system, so the conservatives were basically shut out with that alliance between Mr. Ryan and Speaker of the House Bobby Crim, and they were still working together extremely closely, as they had in the past. Then the moderate to liberal wing of the Republican Party was fairly strong, especially with Governor Milliken saying that we should not go in the direction that these conservative legislators wanted to go.

So would you describe Ryan's role as one of continued legislative leadership in spite of the fact that he had no formal leadership role?

Oh, yeah. In the legislature, a lot of times things get delegated. He was designated as chairing this task force, but it really amounted to the fact that the power he had came right back down to the skill that he had in putting opposing view points in the same room, but making sure that the view he had got well represented. So the skill of the mechanics of setting up a task force that he had, but also just that he knew the facts so well.

So, making sure that everybody was at the table, but are you saying that he engineered the degree of representation?

No, at that point there was no power that anybody had to actually vote on anything that we were coming up with. The members of this task force did not have votes as such; they just had persuasive influence. There just was no organized conservative-wing interest group that was identifiable that could have been included. So there was certainly no intent on Mr. Ryan's part to exclude a legitimate spokesperson; he certainly would have included them if they'd existed, but they didn't on the right wing. They just had more noise, and pointing to the California system was one thing they did, but without any organized input.

There were a couple of legislators—Ed Fredericks was one—who tried to present the conservative viewpoint about reducing welfare drastically, but without any real knowledge of the issue, and without any in-depth background in welfare law, he was no match for the people who knew a whole lot more about it, like Ryan.

One thing that I noticed really early on in this process, though, was Mr. Ryan's willingness to spend some time with somebody like myself. At that point, I had been assigned to welfare issues, but I didn't know that much about them. He would spend hour after hour with me thinking through how to put together this task force and how not to hurt the poor. In the long run, this welfare reform coalition, this process, never went anywhere, which from the liberal standpoint was fine, because the whole thrust of the attack came from the right wing. But it took about a year and a half for it to go no where, and at that point the steam was out of the sails of the more conservative legislators like Welborn and Fredericks, who wanted to reform the system.

Why? Do you think the steam went out of their sails as a result of the process?

I think they basically gave up. Welfare reform would have been a real difficult thing to enact anyway, because the thing the task force was basically coming up with was ways to streamline the system and make it easier to gain eligibility, and make it simpler, and that didn't cut in the direction of the conservatives who wanted to eliminate General Assistance and to really drastically cut back. So, from the liberal standpoint, it wasn't viewed as an unsuccessful process, because it was more a defensive situation that they felt they were in, anyway. However, the time and thought that went into this process—there was no conscious effort to set up a system that didn't go anywhere. It's just that there wasn't the driving force to have this thing enacted into law from the moderate to liberal side of the spectrum. There just wasn't the imperative that something be done.

What amazed me, though, was that Mr. Ryan took the time to sit down with me and other people who wanted to take a responsible approach to this welfare situation and that he had a real brilliant way, I thought, of getting people with differing viewpoints, getting the best minds together, apart from the regular workings of the legislature. There were only one or two legislators who went to more than half the meetings, and he was one of them.³

The Eternal Teacher

Ryan's passion for welfare issues has been well documented, and it might be thought that the time and effort he gave to helping Fred Fry with the welfare reform task force was simply an extension of his advocacy in this issue area. But this was not the case. Fred recounted:

Subsequently, I went to Mr. Ryan with lots of issues that came before the legislature that I worked on as well. He was mainly working on taxation legislation and transportation legislation. But it didn't matter what kind of concern I had; he would always help me to think it through. For instance, for a long time I worked on the PBB legislation, and I initially talked with him about how to get some reduction in the fire retardant chemical PBB, how to get that out of the food chain. Of course, his district wasn't really affected by that at all, or directly affected. And yet, he helped me think about how to put together the right combination of people.⁴

Path-Finding and Consensus-Building as a Senior Statesman

Fred discussed Ryan's role as an opinion-influencer, both with respect to his relationship with Speaker Bobby Crim and the House assembly in general:

One of the things that strikes me as real significant about Mr. Ryan is that he is one of the rare people that can go from consensus-builder to pathfinder almost at will. In the legislative process there are certain people that can build the consensus and get votes, count votes and be very aware of the mechanics of how to get legislation through, and yet maybe they don't care that much about the details of the legislation itself. A good example of somebody that I would characterize in that category would be Lyndon Johnson at the federal level and Bobby Crim at the state level. Both of them were great at knowing what the hot buttons of the legislators were. They could push those buttons and get the votes lined up to get legislation through.

Then there are other people in the legislative process who are extremely effective at advocating a point of view and yet maybe are not

too good at getting votes together. Lynn Jondahl would be one of those at the state level, and Phil Hart would be one of those at the federal level that really could articulate a viewpoint extremely persuasively and have a lot of great arguments, and maybe bring a few people along just because of the strength of their arguments, but overall fairly ineffective at building consensus and getting votes together.

Mr. Ryan could bridge the gap between those two, depending on the issue. Later on in my legislative experience with the Michigan House of Representatives I moved away from welfare legislation, but Mr. Ryan was still extremely active in that whole area. And, later on, the conservatives started to gain a little more influence, and they attempted to cut General Assistance off more than once. But Mr. Ryan could advocate a point of view, and his voice would actually change timbre. When he got angry, people started listening, just dropped everything else, because he didn't get angry very often. But when he did, people just listened to him. He was extremely articulate when he got on a point that was very important to him, and the whole House chambers just quieted, and he was the only one that was being heard at that point, because people had so much respect for his integrity, and when he spoke on something that was important, the place just quieted down.⁵

Ryan and Crim--Another Perspective

Fred's close relationships with both Ryan and Crim give him excellent insight into the differences in their leadership styles and the relationship between them, in turn. He observed:

A lot of times Bobby would prepare himself to go in front of the television cameras or off the record at a news conference, maybe, as Speaker, and he'd have 12 or so of us in his room, preparing him on issues. And he'd only want each one of us for three minutes or less, and then he'd pick up key points. He's an extremely quick study and had a great breadth of knowledge on many different issues, so he came across as extremely articulate and knowledgeable on a broad range of issues. Also, Bobby was great at counting votes and putting the votes together to get things through the Legislature.

Ryan's typical way of approaching something would be to go into the depth, in great detail, and spend hours and hours learning all the

different facets and all the different sides of the arguments on one issue. Of course, he knew about a whole lot of different issues, but he focused on certain issues and spent a great deal of time on them, and was effective then. But then again, he knew his limitations, too, so he would delegate some responsibility to other people. But his depth of knowledge on the issues he cared about the most was extremely important. His ability to work well with people in the City of Detroit and the Governor—the integrity he had was clear to the mayor of Detroit and the Governor, and, in that regard, when he cared deeply about something, those people didn't normally challenge him. He was extremely persuasive. And the coalitions that he built helped him tremendously.

Do you think Ryan was in some ways the conscience of Bobby Crim, a kind of a moral mentor?

Yeah, I do. One issue I personally disagree with Mr. Ryan on is the whole abortion issue; I'm more a freedom of choice person. And Bobby Crim started out that way, too, more freedom of choice in terms of his orientation on abortion. But he actually changed his position in midstream, which was a major, major change for the Speaker of the House. My personal feeling is that the reason was because of the influence of Mr. Ryan. But, yeah, when Bobby wanted to know where people were coming from on issues, he would definitely want to know where Mr. Ryan was coming from, and seldom did he challenge that moral authority.

Ryan knew his limitations, too. When he was Speaker, he had Bobby Crim help him count votes and get votes as his executive secretary. Together, they made a terrific team, because of the articulate spokesperson in Ryan, and the person that could count votes and get a majority in Bobby Crim. Actually, that team did not really break up when Bobby became Speaker. They just reversed roles, and Mr. Ryan was still kind of the conscience of the House and Bobby was the person that could count the votes and put the coalitions together, so I think they complemented each other extremely well, and they both respected each other's abilities in those areas.⁶

The Conscience of the House

You just called Ryan "the conscience of the House"?

Yeah, no question about it. Not everyone agreed with him on every point, of course, but people never ever questioned his integrity and the depth of his feeling when he spoke on issues. I think it came to him pretty naturally because he came up through the labor movement and wrote a magazine or a publication for the labor movement, and he talked about welfare issues and labor issues in those articles that he wrote. Plus his wife Virginia worked for Phil Hart in her past, and I think that his integrity was never ever questioned.⁷ Everyone knew that, like Hart, Ryan had very strong beliefs, and it wasn't just a political point of view that he would take to the table.

Do you think there were other qualities besides his integrity that were important in terms of giving him the high profile that he had in the Legislature?

Absolutely. A key one would be just his ability to think issues through in a very organized manner. He was always using the example, "Now if A did this, and then B did this, then C will have to do this," and he'd always talk in a kind of a different voice. His mind was very analytical, so that's how he would lay out, two or three steps down the road, what would happen by a certain position being taken. What strikes me as kind of funny about that, though, was that, before he was elected to the Legislature, his wife said, "Ryan, you're too dumb to be a legislator." When I first heard that she had said that, I just laughed, because I have never met anybody more brilliant. Of course, he came to the Legislature with a high school education, and yet he's the kind of person that I admire the most in terms of integrity and knowledge of the system, but also willingness to work to learn the issues.

Hard work was something that was kind of legendary. Everyone would joke about him being in the office on New Year's Day and just about every weekend. That was something that distinguished him from every other legislator, because there was nobody who spent more time working and learning and organizing for issues than Ryan.

Do you think that gained him admiration?

Absolutely. It was almost like an awe. An aura surrounded him because people realized how much preparation he put into his job. It was not something that he looked for; he was extremely modest, and it was not something that he used to try to impress people at all. It's just that his work and the quality of his work came through, and it was very apparent how thoughtfully he had considered issues that other legislators were maybe just looking at for the first time. He'd have a whole stream of

arguments at his disposal that was just superior to anybody else, largely because of the depth of his caring, but also because of the time that he spent on the issues.

There's another characteristic that he had and has. Hugh McDiarmid described him in a column once as probably "the most unprepossessing politician in Michigan's history." I wonder about what your opinion is of that. That is, unlike many people in political life, he was and is extremely modest and uninterested in the various attributes associated with the high life.

He just doesn't display much ego at all, ever. He's just very modest and almost apologetic when he makes a point. I'm working with him right now on the purchase of a house that he's buying for somebody who's a relative of a close associate. Ryan is buying the house, but immediately transferring it over to the person of less means, and wants to make sure it will be that way. In other words, even in that, he doesn't want to take credit for something he's doing out of his pocket, that's probably a substantial amount of money. And yet, it's important for him to make sure this works for her. And that's just kind of the attitude he takes--it's very apparent that he doesn't want the credit for the solution or the resolution to the problem; he just wants the problem to get solved.⁸

A Learning Institution

The Crim Speakership

Under Crim, staffing in the House expanded rapidly, topping 500 early in 1974 and rising from there. The staffing pattern changed significantly from what it had been under Ryan. Bobby Crim divided the single "Speaker's Staff" into separate policy and public relations staff groups for the House Democrats. A number of additional staff groups continued to provide support services for both caucuses. Crim also allowed individual legislators to expand their staffs,

allocating each majority-party legislator either serving on the Appropriations Committee or chairing a standing committee an administrative assistant.

This period also marked the rise of the semi-autonomous legislative agency. Staff in the House Fiscal Agency grew to about 35, in the Legislative Service Bureau to about 100, and in the Consumers Council to about 12.

The staff increases were fueled only partly by the growing Democratic majority in the House. The period was also marked by intense, long-lasting efforts at policy formation. One prominent example was a public health statute revision project (nicknamed "PHSREP") that brought together experts from academia, state agencies, health care professions, and consumer groups to review and revise the many statutes governing the organization, delivery, and surveillance of health care. The product of a process that lasted several years was the Michigan Public Health Code of 1978, which became a national model act.

With the ascent of politically and institutionally progressive "young Turks" in both major political parties, no policy area was without significant recasting. Strong state initiatives were also probably fostered by a more liberal political climate, as well as distrust of Washington following Watergate. Although it would be possible to provide many examples, I will focus here on only a few that illustrate the on-going influence of Ryan's approach to legislative processing.

Ryanesque Legislative Processing

Fred provided two examples of legislative processing in which Ryan was not personally involved but where the extent of his influence as a model was clearly evident.

Construction Lien Law

Fred recounted the following story about the enactment of a new construction lien act that was passed in 1980:

Most of what I feel I've learned about the legislative process came from Mr. Ryan. The principles he believed in, and the way he got legislation through, bringing coalitions together, bringing in all the viewpoints, and letting the process sift through.

One example of that was the Michigan Construction Lien Act that passed in 1980, which was a reform of a 1897 law, the Michigan Mechanics Lien law. The first sentence of that law was over 1000 words in length. The way the law was written meant that on some rare occasions a homeowner would have to pay twice for the same work. Everyone agreed that that law was not right, and out of date. The only problem was, everyone agreed it had to be changed, but everyone had a different idea on how to change it, including the lawyers, the bankers, the subcontractors, consumer groups; everyone had a different slant on it.

Using the principles I learned from Mr. Ryan, I went to another state representative, a young guy by the name of Jeff Padden, and Jeff put together, at my suggestion, a task force. We met 27 times, Wednesday mornings at 7:30 in the House Chambers, and had all these different interest groups present, including the viewpoint of the consumers. Representative Jelt Sietsema of Grand Rapids didn't understand the issues very well, but he kept saying, "It's not right for the homeowner to pay twice for the same work. Change that."

And that was the driving force, the moral persuasion, and Jeff was skilled enough to learn from the Ryan method of including all these

bankers and everybody else. Because there were certain ways you couldn't get a bill through—there were certain stumbling blocks. If you really angered one of those groups—any of those groups—they would probably be strong enough to stop the whole thing. So this is basically a totally Ryanesque way of getting the bill through.

After those 27 meetings at the subcommittee level, the bill flew through the House and then flew through the Senate without any problem, and it is law today, and it does mean the homeowner doesn't have to pay twice for the same work. Now, again, if we hadn't included all of those interest groups, any of them would have been powerful enough to stop it. In fact, I went up in the elevator once with a reporter from the Booth newspapers, and he asked, "Fred, what are you working on lately," and I said, "The construction lien law," and he just laughed, and said, "When I came to the Legislature over 10 years ago, the first story I ever covered was on the construction lien law, and you guys didn't have any way of getting it through then. What makes you think you can get it through now?" So I didn't respond to him other than to say, "Well, you know, we're just working on it."

But it's the methodical work to include all these viewpoints, and, basically, wearing people down, and that's another thing I learned from Mr. Ryan. Ryan would work on something so long and just hear the people out so well, and make some modifications in things, but basically he was just willing to put the energy into it to get the other side to the point where they'd say, "Okay, we're worn out now." It is a lot easier to stop a bill than it is to get one through. To get one through, you really need a broad coalition of people from differing viewpoints, so you really have to do what Mr. Ryan suggested, and that's to make that tent big enough. At the same time, you can't lose sight of the original purpose, the driving force for getting something through.⁹

Making Ophthalmologists and Optometrists See Eye-to-Eye

Another example Fred recounted was of the development of legislation allowing optometrists to use diagnostic pharmaceutical agents. In today's competitive health care market, issues affecting the scope of practice of health care professionals are some of the most fiercely fought and well-monied turf wars

that legislators mediate. This case illustrates the use of "Ryanesque" legislative processing and the relatively secondary nature of financial influence.

There are those who say that listening doesn't count today, because money is so dominant an influence, that it more or less decides how issues are going to be determined.

I don't believe that totally, because I believe the Legislature is a real complex institution, where you're still getting right back down to the basics of dealing one-on-one, legislator to legislator, even though special interests have a tremendous amount of influence on the process. Legislators still have caucuses, they still talk to each other, they still meet in committees, and in each of those cases where legislators get together and influence one another, that's where the skillful politician will rise to the top. Just the money itself is one thing, yes, but even the interest groups understand that they are dealing with the margins on these issues, and when a legislator takes a strong position on one side of an issue and they do that publicly, the chances are almost zero that that position's going to be changed 180 degrees.

A major factor is, what ability do legislators have to persuade one another? One example of that that I remember very clearly is where I was a lobbyist representing the Michigan Optometric Association. I talked to all the members of the House Public Health Committee, and the last person I talked to was Vern Ehlers of Grand Rapids. He was a PhD from Berkeley, a physicist, so clearly a brilliant person, and he understood our point of view, wanting to allow optometrists to use diagnostic pharmaceutical agents. This was fought very strongly by the MDs, the ophthalmologists. Vern understood the dynamics of the issue.

Representative David Evans, the Chair of the Public Health Committee, made a very unusual move. He appointed Vern Ehlers, a Republican, to chair a subcommittee. The first thing that Vern Ehlers said was that he wanted to hear both sides out, but the most unreasonable position would lose. So that made both the ophthalmologists and the optometrists say, "All right, we're not going to take the extreme position that we had." So, in terms of one-on-one human persuasive ability, that example is something that you can look at and say, "All right, all these interest groups do have tremendous power, but when it gets right down to it, sometimes legislators themselves are the ones that set the rules, and the interest groups understand that." In that case, the legislation did go through and become law. The floor action was relatively unimportant.

There were tremendous financial contributions to the legislators' campaigns on both sides of that issue. And yet, I don't really believe that David Evans or Vern Ehlers or anybody else, for that matter, voted on that issue solely because of the money. The essential ingredient was the delegation by David Evans to a Republican, and then Vern saying—uncoached—"the most unreasonable side loses." Now, first Vern had to agree that something needed to be done, and what he was trying to do was to force a compromise, to force the parties together, to be reasonable with each other, and to come up with some kind of compromise solution. Which was done. The key thing was not the vote on the House floor, or even in committee.

The key ingredient was the human element of forcing the sides to get together, and not how much each side contributed. I think legislators want to pay attention to political contributions, and they want to get elected, and they want their war chests to be large when it comes to election time. But deep down, most of them, I really still believe, want to do the right thing. And when that happens, you know, the right thing, you can always argue about that, but they want to listen to each other, to attend to the most important, influential arguments that can be made. They invite all the lobbyists to participate in these hearings, and they invite all the interest groups without money to sit down with them and help them think through. They don't always make the right decisions, but they know that legislation that gets enacted has to be a compromise. What this means, then, bottom line, is there are certain people who are very influential in that legislative process, and most of the time those are legislators rather than interest groups.¹⁰

Attending to Individual Human Needs

One of the most telling features of transformational leadership is the assimilation by other members of the organization of attitudes and beliefs about the purpose of the institution and how to go about accomplishing it. The extent to which Ryan's concern for the individual human being became an institutional norm is reflected in the following comments by Kent Wilcox, the former director of the Michigan Consumers Council who was previously cited in Chapter VI.

Because it was a legislative agency, the role of the Consumers Council was significantly different than that of an executive agency, where you are essentially a lieutenant of the chief executive. Here, during most of my tenure the legislature was divided in one fashion or another. So your job is to maintain that sense of non-partisanship on an operating basis, day to day. Keeping the agency running, keeping it viable, and also insuring that you've got a mission that is appropriate and understood by the agency so you don't lose sight of what you're there for.

I felt it was appropriate and important to be as non-government appearing as possible in the way we dealt with the public—only because of the reputation that government has with the public. It was known within the agency the best and easiest way to lose your job with the Consumers Council was to have me hear you treating the public on the phone—or in person, if they came through the door—the way the public tends to think that government relates to the public. If I heard that, you were subject to losing your job.

The operating principle that people were given when they hired in was, "Every call you get, pretend it's your mother. You're not here to say, 'Can't do it, Mom.' You're there to try to find out, 'How can I help?'" Even if there is a barrier, is there a legitimate way to get around that barrier to help this person as long as their need is legitimate and it's not somehow illegitimate.¹¹

The Ryan Legacy

There are no monuments to Bill Ryan. That is because he wants it that way. Jackie Vaughn told me:

When Bill Ryan was about to retire, I had the bright idea, since he had impacted on the Legislature more than any single person I know of, that we should rename the Roosevelt Building after him. Who could argue with that? So I went to Bobby [Crim, who was speaker] with the idea. And he said, "You're on your own on that one. You know Bill Ryan. Everything for the world." But I went ahead anyway.

So Ryan came to see me and he said in the Ryan fashion, I never will forget the conversation, "I understand that you have a bill in to name the Roosevelt Building after me." And [he gave me] as serious a look as I've ever had in all my life.

And I said, "Bill, you are just one member of the House of Representatives, you have one vote. We go by majority rule."

And he came back and said, "Well, I would plead with you not to do that to me," and then he said something like, "How would you feel going into a building every day with your name on it?"

"Me?" I said. "I'd love it! What do you think I came here for?" But I got a look that I've never forgotten, and he begged me, "Please don't do that." That's Bill Ryan's life. That's real humility.

But Bobby was supportive of it?

Of course. But he said, "But you've got to get it by him." And I couldn't.¹²

A Living Legend

Still, the Ryan legacy lives on. As Fred Fry pointed out:

There are a lot of people in the House of Representatives who never worked with Bill Ryan, so those people don't understand the kind of integrity that he brought to the table and his method of operating. But there are a lot of people who did work with him. I use myself as a small example; even in my role of lobbyist, I tried to think like Bill Ryan. I'd always ask myself, "How would Bill Ryan handle this particular problem?" Certainly he's one of my heros, as you can tell, and one of my mentors, if not the mentor that I learned from as I studied how the legislative process works. Of course, I was a political science major as an undergraduate, and I took legislation and a lot of legislation-related courses in law school. However, I didn't really learn legislative process until I started talking with Bill Ryan. The real nitty-gritty, how to do it, that I learned from Bill Ryan, that was from watching him.

And do you think that's true for a lot of people?

I absolutely do. I used those other examples of Vern Ehlers and Debbie Stabenow—those same principles, many of those were learned from Bill Ryan. And they were learned by other people, too, like Bobby Crim. A lot of people—including Governor John Engler—watched Bill Ryan and understood that there is a way to go. And that still involves going to the supposed enemies of your package and trying to find out at least where

their concerns are coming from, so it doesn't really matter which set of leaders we're talking about, they're still going to have to use principles similar to the ones that Bill Ryan used. Just the fact that you can get something done and still be civil to your opponent, that's something that I think he's left as a legacy.¹³

But probably the most outstanding feature of the "Ryan legend" is the extent to which Bill Ryan lived what he believed and preached. Stieber (1970) observed that one of the problems many liberals had in the 1960s was in the divergence between their policy agendas and their personal lifestyles. Ryan ran counter to this trend. Jackie Vaughn observed:

The Ryans were from the east side of Detroit, all their lives. That's another story about him and his convictions. He'd lived all his life on the east side, surrounded by a population in transition. Everybody had gone, except Bill Ryan. Bill Ryan would never move. And then Chrysler came in and bought the house. They had no choice. But he would never leave, you know that, that's the kind of person he is. Until Chrysler bought his house. And by that time all the whites had moved out, gone to Warren and other suburban communities, but Bill Ryan stayed.

That neighborhood he came from, it was getting darker and darker, but Bill Ryan was still there. I can remember vividly Coleman Young telling Bill Ryan, "We need you to stay in the House," and Bill Ryan, in his fashion, saying, "Well, you know, that district is becoming all black. Maybe it's not right for me to represent it anymore."

And I was fearful for him, still living in that area, somebody not knowing that he was Bill Ryan, that he could get ripped off. Coleman Young felt the same way. But when Bill announced that he was retiring, we went to him and said, "You can't." Coleman made it plain that, "If you run, we will support you." Because he was an exception. You never questioned Ryan, even though he was white.¹⁴

A Genuine Humanitarian

McSwain and White (1988) made the point that one of the manifestations of "human relations technology" is the emphasis on the cosmetic presentation of identity (p. 32). Another aspect of the "Ryan legend" is an ability at interpersonal relations that sprang from a deep empathy for the human condition. Jackie Vaughn explained:

Many people did not understand Coleman Young, what he was all about. But to my knowledge, Bill Ryan never wavered, because he understood what had made Coleman Young the way he was in terms of the system, the bitterness, and that's why. That's a fact.

I think once in a lifetime you meet a person of good faith who is willing to practice what he preaches, willing to stay. When every other white person in the City of Detroit had moved out, Bill Ryan was still there—and would be there today, if Chrysler hadn't bought him out. And he's now a resident of Lansing. I was happy, because I wanted him out of there. We were worried about him. When you have a stricken community that is poverty-laden, it's dangerous to you, me, or anybody. When I go home to Detroit, I check out the neighborhood. I don't want anybody standing up to ask me, where is this number, where do the Joneses live? You become paranoid. I think we [Black politicians] all are like that. But we need more Bill Ryans, and this will make our struggle a lot easier. It restores faith in humankind. Religion lies above tradition and ethnicity and any divisions—we need more people who will take courageous positions, who will help us to get closer, to tear down the things that divide us, like Bill Ryan.¹⁵

Fred Fry made a similar point:

Bottom line, I think, you've got a human institution with real live people who have feelings. So somebody like Mr. Ryan who is not just out for his personal glory, but who can listen and pay attention to the personal needs and desires of other legislators, somebody who's very sensitive to other people's needs, I think you see somebody like that being very effective in the legislative process. That's partly what I think gave him great ability, as well. Not just taking a point of view, but understanding the person he was dealing with, and relating with them on a real human level.

These are real live people, not just thoughts flashing through the mind. With their own frailties, as the press is quick to point out, but any group of humans is going to have those frailties. So if you're coming from the viewpoint of trying to understand the other person, and not just trying to take, take, take from your point of view, or drive something past somebody else, if you treat people in a very decent way, that's going to be reflected in a favorable response to your positions, as well.¹⁶

The Man Behind the Myth

At the time I interviewed Joette Marger, a mayoral race was being conducted in Lansing. In a televised debate, the candidates were asked to name the people who had had the greatest influence on their approach to public office. The contender who later became elected, State Representative David Hollister, talked about Bill Ryan's influence. Joette recounted this anecdote:

Certainly I could not compare his ego with anyone else I ever knew.

Anyone in political office?

Anyone anywhere. He never looked at anything as his own personal victory. If he got something accomplished, he didn't "deserve the credit—a lot of people were involved in this." That's what he'd always say. It embarrassed him to be given the credit; it embarrassed him every time there was a newspaper article about this wonderful man; it really embarrassed him.

Like Hollister talking in the debate the other night about his mentors being Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, and William Ryan, and then going on to talk much, much longer about Ryan. When I told Ryan he said, "Oh, I wish he wouldn't have done that. Now somebody probably heard that."

So I said, "Well, I thought it was very nice of him," and he said, "Well, I don't know what to say. Thanks a lot for calling me" [intonation sarcastic], like he was so embarrassed. So he didn't go for the praise and all of that, and that's what I called his priest mentality. You sacrifice and you do things for the sake of doing them, not for any other reason.¹⁷

William Ballenger's recollection of his early (and lasting) impression of Ryan adds yet another facet to this image of a deeply compassionate, genuinely humble legislative leader:

My view of Ryan was—he has to be one of the most fascinating individuals. He was almost like a liberal visionary from the coal fields of West Virginia and he was a true believer who somehow had wound up in Michigan as Speaker of a Democratic Caucus peopled by a lot of individuals with whom he had very little in common. He was an anomaly. I mean, how did this man ever get elected Speaker? That's what amazes me more than anything else. Not that he wasn't a good Speaker or didn't turn out to be a great Speaker, a man of great integrity, intelligence, decency, and so on, I think you can make all those arguments.

But that these colleagues would have recognized those qualities in him; that's what was amazing. Maybe this says something about the bias involved—I think to a lot of Republicans, it was hard to imagine that the Democratic Caucus would elect him. If you're talking about someone who is a leader of your party in a legislative caucus, some of the things that were his greatest strengths were weaknesses in a public sense, in terms of projecting an image and having a kind of a presence, being able to command people by word and action and charisma. I mean, this man had zero charisma, no question about it.

He really never aspired to do anything more than he was doing right there and then. He had reached the pinnacle of his career. I mean, given his background and his professional aspirations, to become leader of the majority party caucus in a chamber of the Michigan Legislature, to this man must have seemed like dying and going to heaven compared to where he came from. And I think he was proud of what he'd achieved and where he was; he knew it was exactly where he wanted to be. He was fighting for the things he wanted to fight for in a place that he knew was giving him a better chance than he would ever find anywhere else.¹⁸

The Making of a Legend

Family Background

Ballenger's account of Ryan's ontogenesis owes a certain amount to an enterprising imagination rather than a knowledge of Ryan's early years. Although Ryan was born in West Virginia, he and his family had little to do with the coal fields. In fact, his family moved to Pennsylvania when Ryan was only three years old. Bill's father, Joseph Ryan, was the district manager for a large bakery during Ryan's early childhood. When Bill was only five, however, his father became incapacitated by an inoperable brain tumor. The survival of the entire family depended on the efforts of Stella Ames Ryan, although some assistance was offered by the extended Ryan family network.

In October 1928, when Bill was only nine years old, Joseph died after a long, lingering illness. Early the next year, the family moved to Detroit. There were two reasons for this. First, this was where some members of Stella's family were located. Second, the booming automobile industry made Detroit a haven for families such as the Ryans, whose home states offered few prospects for employment. The influx of automobile workers from all over the country led to booming secondary industries. Stella bought a large house on the east side of Detroit which she had converted into a rooming house for factory workers.

The stock market crash on October 29, 1929, brought disaster. Many laid-off automobile workers drifted back to their home states, and those who

remained in Detroit had no money for renting rooms. The rooming-house venture faltered, and only the prohibition on home loan foreclosures enacted early in the Roosevelt administration kept the Ryans from losing their home until 1936, when it was foreclosed. "We were told we could buy the house for \$2,000," says Ryan, "But we just didn't have that kind of money."

Union Activism

Bill began his working life at the age of 14, as a newspaper carrier for the Detroit Free Press. He attributes his early interest in political and social issues to reading the newspaper while making his deliveries. "The deliveries had to be made early in the morning. It took me about two hours, because my route covered a tremendous area of east-side Detroit," he recalls. "At that time, Edgar Allen Guest published a poem in each day's Free Press. So lots of times I'd try to memorize the day's poem while I was making my deliveries. That was important, too, because I thought Edgar Guest's human-based orientation was so worthy of admiration."

Ryan went through a series of other jobs and finally gained a long-term employment opportunity when he became a tool crib attendant at Zenith Carburetor. There he made a good name for himself and was soon promoted to a tool and die maker apprenticeship. His math skills led to another promotion to the position of tool and die inspector.

In 1942, at the age of 23, Ryan ran for the position of president of his UAW local union and succeeded in defeating the incumbent president. In 1943, he joined the Marine Corps and served for the next four years in the Japanese theater. He was among the American troops that landed in Japan following the nuclear bombing and among those who viewed the destruction at Nagasaki.

In 1947, Ryan returned to his job at Zenith Carburetor, where he again ran for the UAW local presidency and again defeated the incumbent, the same man he had previously ousted, who had resumed the presidency after Ryan went into the armed services.

Ryan's eyes sparkle when he tells this story and he can never resist a chuckle; it is one of the few occasions that one sees that this man does have some ego after all. But he is also quick to recount that, having succeeded in this double defeat, he later decided to step aside from the union presidency in favor of seeking the office of delegate to company-wide labor negotiations. He then supported the past president in his bid for re-election and they "became great buddies." At this point, Zenith Carburetor had been acquired by the Bendix Corporation, and Ryan now became a delegate to the Bendix Corporation Council, where he participated in labor negotiations governing pension plans, health insurance, and other worker benefits.

In addition, Ryan served as financial secretary of his union local, where he was involved in grievance resolution and bargaining on the local level. The plant he worked in had large populations of female and Black workers. In Ryan's

recollection, they all worked side by side, with little racial or sexual tension. One of the relatively unusual policies that the union implemented at the local level was that, when there were reductions in the workforce, women were permitted to bump men if they had the seniority and were able to do the given job. Another was that, every time there was a company-wide wage increase, the local would take a penny or two of the general allocation and give it to particular classifications that the union officers thought were underpaid, in order to achieve greater equity.

Catholic Social Action

Another important force in Ryan's life was the Catholic Church. During the late 1940s, he attended classes held by Catholic priests who taught the principles of the Catholic social action movement. But he was dissatisfied with the explanations they offered for social action, such as "the public good." It was all too vague. This is when he began to develop his philosophy of the 12 basic human needs, to provide a more coherent and concrete framework for social action. The connection with Catholic social action philosophy that he retained was between the requisites of the individual human being and the group activities of organizations and governments, which consist of structuring human activity, reducing freedom in order to meet these requisites. But to this framework he added the concept that government must never reduce freedom—either through

taxation or through regulation—except to the extent absolutely necessary to provide for the "cooperative necessities" for members of the society.

Virginia Calamia Ryan

Still another important influence in Ryan's life was and continues to be his wife, Virginia, whom he married in 1951. Although she is as much of a social activist as Ryan himself, Virginia rarely appeared in Lansing during Ryan's years in the Legislature, remaining involved in her own political, church, and social activities in Detroit. Her responsibilities included the care of three foster children for whom the Ryans assumed the role of parents after their own parents were divorced.

The extent to which Virginia was an "invisible presence" is suggested by Stollman's (1979) attribution of much of Ryan's success to the fact that "Ryan is a bachelor and therefore, does not have family responsibilities to encumber him" (p. 75). In fact, although the Ryans are without biological children, they have acted as caregivers to a constant coterie of friends, relatives, employees, and just about anybody who crosses their path and appears to be in need of a helping hand.

But Virginia's "invisibility" was by her own choice. She likes to tell about a friend who, when Ryan was Speaker, would always insist on introducing Virginia to others as "the wife of the Speaker of the House, Bill Ryan." Virginia would deadpan, "Oh, don't listen to her. She's always doing that, just because

my last name is Ryan. It's a really common name, you know. What a joker."

More often than not, Virginia was the one who would be believed.

It is safe to say that, if Bill Ryan had ever had any inclinations toward grandiosity and self-importance, Virginia would have been quick to crush them flat. But it is also safe to say that, if Bill Ryan had had such inclinations, he would never have married such a strong and independent woman.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes the direct portion of the "Ryan story." One of the privileges of conducting this research has been the opportunity provided to me to develop a biographical and psychological sketch of Bill Ryan (and, although to a lesser extent, Virginia). For all of their intense social and political activism, both Ryans are also in some ways profoundly private people. But what comes through powerfully, from time spent with them, from their own stories, and from those of others, is their absolute commitment to the human project.

"Every day there's a new problem!" says Virginia, throwing her arms up. "Today it was David [one of their foster children]--at 7:00 a.m. 'Uncle Bill, what should I do?' And it's only noon. Who knows what else will come up?" They're both grinning, ready to take it on.

Endnotes

1. Thanks to Dr. William Grimshaw for this metaphor.

2. Interview 17 December 1991
3. Interview 27 September 1993
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Michigan Senator Philip A. Hart was known as "the Conscience of the Senate" during his tenure in the United States Senate.
8. Ibid
9. Interview 27 September 1993
10. Ibid
11. Interview 2 September 1993
12. Interview 4 October 1993.
13. Interview, 27 September 1993.
14. Interview 4 October 1993
15. Interview 4 October 1993.
16. Interview 27 September 1993
17. Interview 7 November 1993
18. Interview 1 November 1993

CHAPTER X

INTERNAL GOODS, REWARD SYSTEMS, AND THE ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE VIRTUE

Introduction

The purpose of this final chapter is to link the "story-telling" material with the theoretical frameworks presented earlier. Particular emphasis will be placed on applying Hart's (1992) taxonomy of the moral exemplar in an organizational society and his theory of moral action to this case study. In addition, MacIntyre's (1984) theoretical framework will be used to consider what the findings of this study suggest about the practice of representation and the internal goods of legislative organizations.

The purpose of this research was to examine the career of an exemplary legislative leader with an eye to the connections between his own philosophical orientation and perceptual framework, his relationships with other government actors, the institutional transformation for which he provided leadership, and the developmental process of the State of Michigan as a political entity. This chapter will address the three levels of focus—individual, institutional, and societal—that were framed in the opening chapters. In Chapter I, Hart's (1992) taxonomy of the moral exemplar in an organizational society was presented as part of the framework for analysis. The distinguishing characteristics of the moral exemplar

identified by Hart are: (a) good moral character as a constant (rather than intermittent) aspect of the personality; (b) free and intentional action; (c) relative "faultlessness," i.e., striving for virtue in most things; (d) actions that bring about real good; and (e) exercise of the "expressive obligation." The section of this chapter entitled "The Matrix of Administrative Virtue in the Role of Legislative Leader" will review the research hypotheses and then focus on Ryan's personal attributes with an eye to Hart's framework, particularly with respect to Ryan's good moral character, his free and intentional action, and his relative faultlessness.

The next section, "The Moral Exemplar in the Legislative Organization," will apply Hart's framework of moral action to consideration of some of the ways in which Ryan helped to bring about high functioning of the legislative organization and how this served to bring about real good. The section entitled "The Expressive Obligation as an Aspect of Representation" will attempt to unite Hart's framework with MacIntyre's (1984) theory of the relationship between the virtues and the furtherance of a practice and apply the findings of this study to a theory of representation in a culturally diverse liberal democratic community.

The Matrix of Administrative Virtue in the Role of Legislative Leader

The research hypotheses for this study were framed at the level of the individual legislative leader. The major hypothesis was that administrative virtue in legislative leadership, as exemplified by the career of William A. Ryan, would

be best described in terms of utilitarian ethics and reflect the ability to control and manage factionalism in the interest of incremental change, thereby ensuring that "interest will play the role of virtue." The rival hypothesis theorized that the virtues of utilitarianism would be insufficient to explain why Ryan has been iconized as an ideal legislative leader and instead would require consideration of the framework of character ethics, personal qualities to which others are drawn (although possibly out of awareness) that form an essential part of the leader's moral authority.

The material in the preceding chapters strongly suggests that an instrumental approach to leadership is inadequate to explain Ryan's rise to power and the changes in the legislative culture and policy initiatives he was successful in achieving. Even the "utilitarian" virtues of managing factionalism and building coalitions were flavored by an acute sensitivity to cultural subgroups within both the state legislature and the state itself and an ability to generate legislative activity on the basis of something other than "rational" cost-benefit analysis. This section will recapitulate the traits Ryan demonstrated that seem to hold explanatory power for his iconization as an ideal legislative leader.

Skills

Clearly, the first prerequisite for a legislative leader is mastery of the craft of advocacy, which Davies (1986) assigned to either path-finding or the consensus-building abilities. In focusing on Ryan's extraordinary skill base, Fred

Fry explained, "Mr. Ryan could go back and forth between the path-finding and the consensus-building roles better than any legislator I have seen. When he was advocating a point of view, he would be compelling in those arguments on the House floor, but he also understood the mechanics of consensus-building."¹ In addition to his skill at practicing both the path-finding and the consensus-building roles, Ryan was also able to communicate clearly when he was playing which role. Several people mentioned, for instance, the change in voice tone that was a physical manifestation of the shift in roles.

Ryan's legislative skills were underwritten by the extraordinary amount of time he devoted to his legislative work, as well as by a lack of self-aggrandizement and a personal authenticity that was unquestionable. His "unprepossessing" physical appearance and his empathy for the positions and actions even of those with whom he disagreed contributed to this appearance of "selflessness" that appears to have been a key ingredient of Ryan's moral authority. The ability to practice both the path-finding and the consensus-building roles, as well as to shift easily between the two, suggests that Ryan himself may have been shifting between different states of being, a rational-analytic mode and a mythic-symbolic mode.

Primacy of Policy Goals

In addition to distinguishing between the consensus-building and path-finding roles as a legislative opinion leader, Ryan also clearly distinguished

among the multiple aspects of the position of Speaker of the House: caucus leader, chief administrator for the House, and chief spokesperson for the legislative branch of government. One of the ways in which this distinction was reflected was in the role that he assigned to fund-raising. Fry observed:

You need consensus building, and you need advocacy. But the role of the interest groups, as you mentioned, is something I'm very aware of because of my role as a lobbyist for three years with a large multi-client lobbying firm. Among our clients were Chrysler, Kellogg, Mobil, 3-M, doctors, nurses, thoroughbred horse breeders, airport operators, and a laundry list of about 40 of them when I left. But the reason I left was precisely that, because I really kept getting depressed about the influence of money in the political process. The people I worked with, Bobby Crim and Bob VanderLaan, were extremely ethical and they played by the rules that were set forth. It's just that the rules in the game are that, the more money you can raise, the more influence you can have. And I found that that was true when I went to the legislative leaders in the House and Senate, that they seemed to say, they weren't so concerned with the merits of the political issue as how much money these groups could bring to the table.

Ryan, I don't think, would ever have been impressed by just pure political muscle and amount of money. For him, that was absolutely not the bottom line.²

Identification With Institution

Another way Ryan demonstrated his position that the role of caucus leader was subsidiary to the role of the Speaker as chief House officer was in his treatment of members under the House rules. Although he fought hard for rule changes that would enable the Legislature better to meet its responsibilities, he always played by the rules and treated all legislators equally. Bill Ballenger drew

attention to the extent to which Ryan identified with the House as an institution and with his own role as Speaker:

Ryan was not somebody who always had his eye cocked for an opening in the State Senate or the Congress or Governor, and I think he realized that to be distracted from what he could accomplish as a speaker, to be seduced by the glimmering of ambition for some other office would have been to succumb to temptation that he had to resist and that I don't think he had any trouble resisting because I think he realized he would never be able to accomplish as much anywhere else as he could accomplish where he was. Because, when you get right down to it, if you are a strong Speaker and you've got your caucus behind you, there's no end to what you can accomplish. You can make a governor and/or a senate bend to your will a great preponderance of the time, and I think that's what he decided to do.³

Ballenger's characterization of Ryan's relationship with his role as Speaker was echoed by some of Fred Fry's comments. I asked Fry, "Do you think it's possible that the influence of monetary considerations and egoistic concerns have tended to make legislators more individualistic, so they actually have a vested interest in having weak leaders? He responded:

It's hard to know what goes on in a legislator's mind. One thing that I think would help to prevent a strong leader from being elected would be jealousy. If the other legislators feel that this is simply a stepping stone to higher office, they may not want that. . . . I also believe that legislators want to have a good institution, and that when they elect somebody like a Lew Dodak almost by mistake, in my opinion, they realize that the institution is not functioning as it should. And when that happens, I don't think they're very happy. . . . Legislators know when the leaders aren't functioning as they should and don't have a good grasp of the issues. You know, talking about the time that Ryan took to learn the issues and the amount of knowledge that he brought to the table and also the amount of knowledge that he brought about the legislative process itself. Those are all things that legislators themselves understand, so when they elected Bill Ryan, they were proud that he was able to function so effectively. Contrasting, I've heard a lot of back-biting and a lot of griping about the weaker leaders whom they've elected since Ryan.⁴

Morally Compelling Leadership

Kent Wilcox characterized Ryan as a "morally compelling leader." I asked whether, by that, he meant someone who has "moral fibre." His reply provides an eloquent description of morally compelling leadership:

Well, I think, not only has it, but has the intellectual ability to understand it, to understand where it's appropriate, where it's not appropriate, how to use it, how to balance it, how to rationalize what they're doing in a legitimate way, and how to seek compromise even when you're morally indignant about something. There are practical considerations. It's someone who is able to take the difficult position and go to the people who elected you and say to them, even when you think that many of them, if not most, will disagree, "My conscience wouldn't allow me to do what politically would have been more correct in this particular district, and I have to live with the consequences. I think I've done this and this and this and this that serve you well. In this particular case, we may have had some differences of opinion, and I can live with that." I think Lynn Jondahl is one of the people that can do that, and people can hear it and say, "Well, he's right, I don't agree with that, but I have to admit overall he's done a hell of a job, so I'll stick with him." Not too many people can do that.

It takes the ability, not only to have the strong value to begin with, but to understand why you have it, to be able to explain it, and to apply it to the circumstances at hand. There aren't a lot of those folks around. Now Bill Ryan always had the moral issues at hand. He always kind of had 'em in his hand, but I was never real clear as to how he used them and exercised them, because he was like the passive-aggressive individual, you don't know where the hell they're at, 'cause he was frequently very quiet on many of the issues. He didn't come out and tell you where he was at, because he was facilitating, basically, and taking that kind of a role, looking for ways to bring people together, you know, and forge the deal, which is certainly one of the tests of leadership. You have to be able to do that.

But I think there may have been more moral fibre there than we even recognized, because he didn't choose to wear it for public consumption. Sometimes that stuff just comes through, you just sense this is a person of character. For one thing, he didn't tell you one thing and then do another. He may not tell you anything, which can be very

frustrating, but at least he didn't tell you one thing and then do another. That was a good sign right there.⁵

The Moral Exemplar in the Legislative Organization

In Chapter I, Burns's (1978) statement that American state "legislatures do not seem to generate their own *parliamentary* leadership capable of aggregating support behind legislation, setting the lines of conflict . . . and enacting measures into law" was cited (p. 367). This portrait of William Ryan portrays a parliamentary leader who was able to achieve all of these tasks. In terms of the research hypotheses, it seems fairly clear that Mr. Ryan's ability to control and manage factionalism derived only partially from his mastery of the technical skills of legislative advocacy. To a large extent, it was his exemplary character, his close identification with the legislative institution, and his strong sense of the role of the legislature in society that enabled him to lead.

At the level of institutional analysis, the question that was raised in the first chapter was the linkage between exemplary legislative leadership and high functioning of the legislative institution. This section will consider some of the ways in which Ryan's leadership helped to bring about real good in the legislative organization.

Morality Versus Moralizing

Hart (1992) separated the general types of moral action in which "the moral hero" and "the moral worker" may engage into the two broad categories

of "moral episodes" and "moral processes." Moral episodes may take the form of crises or confrontations, and moral processes of projects or work. Hart saw these four categories of moral action—crises, confrontations, projects, and work—as being essentially hierarchical. Although moral crises and confrontations are the most dramatic types of moral action, moral processes are more important in the long run, as they involve "the intentional introduction of morality into the ordinary actions of everyday life, in recognition that true morality belongs to our every action and thought, not just to the heightened moments" (p. 23). Moral work is the most important of all, for "it refers to the intentional decision of an individual always to think and act in virtuous ways during the routine conduct of his or her personal and organizational life" (p. 24).

Cooper (1992) made the point that the "commonly shared forms of virtuous administrative activity" among the 11 subjects treated as Exemplary Public Administrators are moral processes (p. 329). However, although all 11 were involved to some extent in moral episodes, only six "engaged in serious and highly visible struggles over what they believed to be right" (p. 333). Cooper suggested that this distinction related to a difference in circumstances. "Resorting to highly visible and dramatic moral episodes seems to have been a logical extension of commitment to moral processes when the internal goods of the practice of public administration were at stake" (p. 336). "The legitimacy of moral episodes," Cooper conjectured:

appears to depend on a prior commitment to moral projects and moral work. Perhaps the crucial difference between whistle blowers and

crusaders who contribute to the effectiveness, integrity, and openness of public administration and those who simply draw attention to themselves is the extent to which conscious commitment to virtuous conduct had characterized previous less visible work. . . . [T]he abiding image that was projected . . . was not one that smacked of personality conflicts, "ego trips," or personal axe-grinding. Their crises and confrontations seem not to have been tainted with suspicions of bureaucratic infighting or personal ambition. (p. 336)

This study of William Ryan perhaps adds another facet to Cooper's analysis--the intentional avoidance of moral crises and confrontations wherever possible. In "The Slapping Incident" cited in Chapter VIII, for instance, both E. D. O'Brien's behavior and the responses it evoked from two Black female representatives had something of the flavor of burlesque "moral confrontations." Given Ryan's strong reputation as a champion of minority rights and his own large Black electoral constituency, Ryan could easily have used his position as House Speaker to play to the widespread indignation over the repressive use of public resources and the antediluvian sentiments of individuals such as E. D. O'Brien.

Had Ryan chosen a confrontational strategy, he could easily have made himself look good, while also deepening the cultural rift within the House membership. Such tactics was used, in fact, by other legislators during the same time period, as was also portrayed in Chapter VIII, and the result in the state Senate was open warfare. Ryan, however, used his leadership role to defuse the incident, allowing the House to return to normal functioning without the further entrenchment of divisive factions that would doubtless have ensued had he chosen to take a strong "moral stand."

The Goals of Legislators and Legislative Staffing

The Michigan legislators interviewed by Stollman (1979) mentioned a variety of criteria for judging their own effectiveness as legislators:

The passage of sound legislation and the prevention of poor legislation were most frequently mentioned. One legislator defined an effective legislator as "one who is able to inspire confidence in government." Other members . . . emphasized constituent relations as vital to their effectiveness. They felt it was an essential aspect of their position to maintain contact with their constituents, search out the voters' views on the various issues, educate their constituency, and assist their constituents with any problems they might have with the government. A few of the legislators indicated that responding to the needs of the state, rather than limiting themselves to their own local constituents, was of great importance; however, that view was rare. (p. 47)

Material presented in the previous chapters has exposed the connection that Ryan saw between building legislative staff and other resources and the ability of state government to meet the needs of the citizens. In this process, he also provided the means for the legislators themselves to meet their own goals as delineated above. By providing each legislator with his or her own secretary, he fostered the legislators' ability to set their own priorities and respond to the needs of their constituencies as they saw fit.

At the same time, Ryan designed testing procedures for staff that were particularly applicable to the legislative organization, created a central personnel office, and put as many staff resources as possible into "central staffs" rather than under the control of individual legislators. All of these actions speak to his

intent of institutionalizing legislative hiring practices and staff support services to the greatest extent possible.

There has been considerable discussion at the national level recently about bringing congressional staff under the control and protection of the federal civil service. Nowhere in the debate over congressional staffing has concern focused on the implications for the separation of powers if a clear demarkation between executive and legislative powers fails to be maintained at the level of staffing. Ryan's actions with respect to staffing took the need for maintaining a separation of powers into account by creating a "legislative service" that paralleled the state civil service in some ways while maintaining a clear separation and also giving consideration to the particular needs of the legislative branch.

Fostering the Legislative Culture

Ehrenhalt (1991) described "faith in the possibilities of government to do good" as one of the "underlying values of the professionals who have come to dominate the [political] system in the past two decades" (p. 274). As he saw it, however, the ability of officeholders to achieve real good has been undercut by the erosion of important traditional values that used to characterize legislative cultures. In Ehrenhalt's view, the values of leadership, discipline, and institutionalism have been undercut by a new value set of equality, individualism, and openness. Rosenthal (1984), too, expressed concern for the loss of

boundaries and norms that have always formed an essential part of the institutional character of legislative bodies.

Ryan fostered traditional legislative values in both his words and his deeds. The deference he exhibited toward Joseph Kowalski, his refusal ever to say anything negative about other legislators, his consistent elevation of the legislature as an institution, all spoke to his understanding of the essential characteristics of the legislative culture and helped to pass that understanding on to other legislators and staff members.

The Expressive Obligation as an Aspect of Representation

At the societal level, the three dimensions of the problem to which this research was addressed were specified in Chapter II as:

1. The inherent disjunction between the pluralist legacy and the civic virtue traditions in American politics. The triumph of logical positivism and utilitarianism has led to a mechanistic view of politics in which the individual citizen is defined in terms of his or her aggregate characteristics (Gawthrop, 1987). Similarly, the legislator's role of "representing" is defined in terms of the aggregate demographic characteristics of his or her electoral constituencies and the "interests" of those constituencies as extrapolated from the results of public opinion polling.
2. The contemporary crisis of confidence and culture of cynicism regarding government institutions and actors and political processes themselves.

The lack of confidence cuts both ways: "the public's" contempt for politicians is fully matched by many politicians' contempt for the voters. Political actions such as voting are as likely to be expressions of vengeance against leaders who have "let us down" as they are to be expressions of socially cooperative behavior, and meaningful political debate has been replaced with a "soundbite democracy" that trivializes and atomizes public policy issues. These phenomena not only undermine the legitimacy of American government institutions; they also tend further to erode the connective tissue needed to restore legitimacy.

3. The underlying beliefs about the nature of political community and why and how change occurs, which lead to repeated iterations of legal-technicist "solutions" to problems that are rooted in issues having to do primarily with human development at the levels of the individual, the group, and the society.

The discussion will now focus on what Hart (1992) called the "expressive obligation," which I defined in Chapter I as having both internal and external aspects. The internal (or psychological) aspect, which may be seen as following from Aristotle's conception of virtue, relates to the quality of being emotionally engaged—doing the right thing for the right reasons, and acting from the heart as well as the head. The external (or social) aspect of expressive obligation is what raises moral actions to the level of exemplary acts through the process of capturing the attention and imagination of the observing public. Hart saw "the process of persuasion, fundamental to a democracy," as emanating not from reason alone, but also from the quality of charisma. In addition, however, "[t]he

expressive obligation must *never* be false or self-aggrandizing, but must flow honestly from one's unique moral character" (p 19). This section will consider some of the aspects of Ryan's unique moral character, how he expressed his character as a legislative leader, how his exercise of the expressive obligation helped to create a legislative body that served the Madisonian objective of refining and enlarging the public view, and what these connections may suggest about the practice of representation.

Focus on the Individual Human Being

In lamenting the deterioration of the profession of public administration since the 1950s, Gawthrop (1987) noted:

From a political perspective the problem is that government and society are paralyzed by a trained incapacity to discern the difference between means and ends, facts and values, and programmatic process and the purpose of policy. The polity cannot tell the difference between authentic being and the inauthentic processes of having and doing. (p. 206)

An important aspect of Ryan's leadership was his own clear sense of the ends of the legislative process--the greater extension the "12 cooperative necessities" to members of the society. In terms of the philosophical framework laid out in Chapter II, this was Ryan's *telos*, his end-in-view. Thus, he transformed the utilitarian goal of "the greatest good for the greatest number" into a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. One of the ways he did this was by always focusing on the individual *qua* human being. His concern for the mechanics of having and doing was always secondary to his concern for being.

Furtherance of Liberal Democratic Dialogue

The advantage of a representative democracy, the framers of the U.S. Constitution argued, lay in its ability to "refine and enlarge the public view" by moving beyond the immediate interests particular constituencies to considerations of the long-term "public interest." Hanson (1985) argued that Madison was not a "pluralist," at least as we understand the term today.

He did not equate the public good with the outcome, whatever that might be, of factious struggle, or with the resultant of the parallelogram of social forces. Rather, . . . Madison hoped that factions would neutralize one another, providing a "space" in which public-spirited men might not only perceive the public good, but pursue it. (p. 69)

This "space," it might be argued, using the language of modern organizational theory, is the legislative *tao*. Heider (1985) offered the following definition of *tao*:

Tao means how: how things happen, how things work. Tao is the single principle underlying all creation. . . .

Tao cannot be defined, but Tao can be known. The method is meditation, or being aware of what is happening. By being aware of what is happening, I begin to sense how it is happening. I begin to sense Tao. (p. 1)

Tao is the unification of the extremes. But, paradoxically, the only way the extremes can be united is through their full expression. And, in a representative democracy, the way this occurs is through liberal democratic dialogue.

As Hanson (1985) pointed out, "Liberal democrats who assume that progress is possible, and that it can be achieved through argumentative exchanges oriented toward collective problem-solving, do not do so because

they know what the future holds" (p. 430). Rather, they recognize that liberal democratic dialogue is the tao—the way, the how—to bring the past and the future together so that the present crisis becomes a window of opportunity.

This can only be done within a framework that explodes the contradictions that are present in the thematic universe of our experience. A thematic universe is a complex of "generative themes" according to which the members of a given culture understand the world and their relation to it. These themes are a defining feature of reality, since it is in and through them that the members of society apprehend reality. Of course, in defining or constituting reality these generative themes also define the possibilities for change that are present in "reality." That is why Freire (1970) calls them generative themes—they generate possibilities for action, once it is understood that reality is a social construction, and not something that is objectively given to human beings. (Hansen, 1985, pp. 416-17)

Hickok (1992) called attention to the legitimacy of the legislative *institution* as a key element of the function of legislative representation. If the institution itself is perceived as illegitimate, representation becomes a fractured concept that serves to exacerbate the differences between various subcultures rather than to find paths of reconciliation. In addition, Hickok pointed out that:

The importance of deliberation cannot be over emphasized. Simply put, a responsible legislature engages in genuine deliberation of issues. Decision making is more than the product of logrolling and bargaining. It is the product of negotiation, give and take, and compromise. It is the product of debate over the substance of issues and not merely the political costs and benefits associated with issues. (p. 137)

It is important to note that Ryan, although he loved to win, loved even more to deliberate. Many of his administrative acts—the creation of the daily status and of legislative bill analyses, the use of special committees, the narrow difference between Democratic and Republican members on most standing

committees, the development of legislative publications, to name only a few—were designed to foster the ability of both legislators and the public to have as much information as possible about issues pending in the legislature and to develop alternatives to proposals under consideration. The end-in-view was not a given policy outcome but rather the attainment of as much knowledge as possible about problematic conditions in society and full consideration of the range of possible methods of ameliorating them.

Hickok (1992) suggested that the desirable goals of legislative reform today are the interconnected functions of "representation, responsibility, accountability, and policy entrepreneurship" (p. 139). Ryan's administrative acts served to foster all of these goals. In terms of MacIntyre's (1985) framework, *informed deliberation and decision-making* might be seen as the primary internal good of the practice of representation, and it was this good that Ryan sought to nurture, both as an individual legislator and as a legislative leader.

The Expressive Obligation and Symbolic Creation

How does this fit with Hart's (1992) theory of the expressive obligation? Hart defined the "expressive obligation" in terms of "charisma." I would argue that "charisma" is only one potential aspect of the element that combines with reason to contribute to the process of persuasion, or, in a broader sense, to the generation of alternate futures. Charismatic leadership may sometimes—or even often—be less than desirable in achieving the maturation of government

institutions. Other character attributes may be more useful in terms of creating generative realities and calling forth the ability of others to engage in acts of symbolic creation.

Weber (cited in Trice & Beyer, 1993), in fact, identified four contingencies that combine to form cases of genuine charismatic leadership. These were (1) an exceptional leader, (2) a period of social crisis, (3) a vision on the part of the leader that provides a solution to the crisis through a radical break with the past, and (4) the attraction of a group of followers who attribute extraordinary powers to the leader and his or her vision.

If MacIntyre (1984) is correct—and I would argue that he is—that contemporary "politics is civil war carried out by other means" (p. 253)—then charismatic leadership promoting a radical break with the past is counterindicated. Genuine moral consensus may indeed be an impossible goal, but the provision of a public forum for the expression of rival social goods is not. The internal good of informed deliberation and decision making arises from and is completed by the character of the participants. This is what creates the legislative "tao," the space between the immediate interests of various constituencies that enables the past and future to be brought together to meet the crisis of the present moment.

Again, the formulation presented in Chapter II bears consideration: Character → Vision → Action. Ryan's own character attributes and close identification with the legislative institution provided the base for his vision of the

role of the legislature in society. He was able to communicate this vision clearly by distinguishing among his multiple roles as House Speaker, thus creating a generative reality that emphasized, not only policy outcomes, but legislative process.

The contrast here is with processes of deletion, distortion, and over-generalization that serve to deny the present reality and, in so doing, block the creation of generative themes. One way to discern such "blocking processes" is that they follow a highly predictable pattern that takes the general form of: (a) deny that a problem exists, (b) deny the extent of the problem, (c) deny the solvability of the problem, and (d) deny the ability of government to solve the problem. These processes, too, are mythic, but they are not generative. This is why Fundamentalist Christians are opposed to school children being taught how to engage in informed deliberation with those who do not share their values.

The symbolic creations that are generated through exercise of the expressive obligation are multifaceted and unpredictable. This is why, as politics has become more and more bureaucratized, members of both political parties have become more and more reluctant to engage in symbol-making in this broad sense, relying instead upon ideal of charismatic leadership to provide a quick fix. Simply put, visionary projections that are tied to actions in the here and now, that arise from the character of the leader, and that are based in a recognition of rival concepts of "the public good" are unlikely to fit well with the political cost-benefit analysis provided by public polling.

A fascinating aspect of the confidence crisis is how the hunger for the sense of wholeness and legitimation that comes only through symbolic creations continues to manifest itself, sometimes in bizarre ways. This, it is arguable, is the real meaning of the nationwide movement to restore capitol buildings. If we cannot have a politics that serves to overcome social divisiveness, at least we can have symbols that stand in for a sense of unification.

When former President Richard Nixon died recently, the entire nation literally shut down to mourn his passing. This surely says something about the guilt and shame of the "children" when they have actually succeeded in slaying the "father." The lingering question is whether this paroxysm of remorse and reconciliation carried with it any awareness of the extent to which Nixon's tragedy was acutely symbolic of the rise of a consumer politics and soundbite democracy. Might Nixon's rather Hobbesian view of the world have been more palatable were it not for his five o'clock shadow? Might we have been more capable of seeing his positive attributes had we not been blinded by the glamour of Jack and Jackie? Were we so seduced by Camelot that relations with China seemed unimportant?

This study of an exemplary state legislative leader suggests that the path of combining symbol with substance is often neither dramatic nor glamorous and may, indeed, require eschewing "charismatic leadership." This kind of political leadership, although it may be intensely interesting, is not well suited to "soundbite explication." The interest derives from active participation or, at a

minimum, knowledgeable observation; the excitement is in the process. Social activism must be tempered by the utilitarianism and pragmatism necessary to aggregate broad support for legislative initiatives, and visionary projects must be operationalized by finding effective means of using the legislative institution to help society reach higher standards of community.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

If there is one thought that has guided this work throughout, it is consideration of Erikson's (1975) statement:

How a leader survives himself and how an idea survives a man, how the community absorbs him and his idea, and how the sense of wider identity created by his presence survives the limitations of his person and of the historical moment—these are matters that the psycho-historian cannot approach without the help of the student of tradition building and institution forming. He, in turn, may want to consider the "metabolism" of generations and the influence of a leader's or an elite's image on the world image and the life stages of the led. (p. 166)

What this study has not done, except perhaps by inference, is to look at the "metabolism of generations" in connection with Michigan's mixed political culture. At one level, the question is whether periods of high moralism inevitably cycle into periods of high individualism. A corollary is the question of whether different styles of leadership are more suited to different points in a state's cultural evolution. Are there periods when a confrontational leadership style is functional in terms of bringing cultural tensions to the surface of awareness?

This study was limited to a single legislative leader, and direct research was conducted with only a limited number of elite informants. A critic might say that Mr. Ryan was simply in the right place with the right set of alliances at the right time. There may be other criticisms of Mr. Ryan's performance that would be revealed if one were to expand the study of Ryan himself by obtaining input from other legislators and interest group representatives.

Another way of expanding this study would be to examine the behavior of those who have held the position of House Speaker since Ryan's time. How has the political climate changed since the early 1970s, and what effects have these changes had on the threats facing and opportunities available to legislative leaders? Have state legislatures become so lacking in boundaries and so lost the essential characteristics of "institutions" that the close ego identification exhibited by Ryan is no longer a realistic possibility? Have traditional legislative norms been undermined so badly that the pursuit of the internal goods of legislative performance occurs only at the expense of external rewards?

Mr. Ryan's theory of government is another important line of inquiry that has been pursued only at the margins of this study. An entire research project could be devoted to an explication of the "12 cooperative necessities" as a framework for social policy. In addition, Mr. Ryan's statement that "most wars are fought because either you're trying to take away my justice or trying to take away my liberty" would provide a fascinating framework for any number of different studies.

Still another important question is whether the "unprepossessing" leadership model presented here is exemplary only in legislative organizations. Would this type of leadership be equally effective in more hierarchical organizations in either the public or the private sector? Are state legislators as a class particularly sensitive to the nuances of power and thus uniquely capable of understanding and responding to an undomineering leader?

Endnotes

1. Interview 27 September 1993.
2. Interview 27 September 1993
3. Interview 1 November 1993
4. Interview 27 September 1993.
5. Interview 2 September 1993

Appendix A
Research Design

RESEARCH DESIGN

This section describes the epistemological basis for this study, the rationale for approaching the research hypotheses through the vehicle of an interpretative life history and case study of a single exemplar, data collection techniques, and the tactics used to ensure that the research project met tests for construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability (Yin, 1989).

Epistemology

This study was essentially an examination of an "ideal type" of an American state legislator. It followed in the tradition of nineteenth-century social scientists such as Weber and Dilthey (Smith, 1982), as well as the naturalistic paradigm advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The naturalistic paradigm contrasts sharply with the positivist paradigm with respect to basic assumptions about the nature of reality, the relationship between the investigator and what is being investigated, the relationship between facts and values in the process of investigation, and beliefs about the appropriate goal of research (Smith, 1982). Lincoln and Guba's (1985) analysis of the differences between these two paradigms includes five central features, as follows:

1. The naturalistic paradigm challenges the positivist assumption of a single, tangible reality "out there" fragmentable into independent variables and processes. Rather, realities are both multiple and constructed, and the study of them is likely to raise more questions than it answers.

2. Prediction and control, the primary objectives of the positivist paradigm, are unlikely outcomes of inquiry; understanding is the more achievable objective.

3. With respect to epistemology, the naturalist paradigm assumes that the researcher and the key informant are interactive and essentially inseparable. The act of researching inevitably influences the object of the research. This contrasts with the positivist assumption that the researcher and the object of inquiry are independent of one another.

4. The naturalist paradigm assumes generalization is rarely valid. The aim of inquiry is developing an idiographic body of knowledge in the form of "working hypotheses" that describe individual cases. Similarly, this paradigm posits that, because of the effects described in 2, above, cause and effect are indistinguishable.

5. The positivist paradigm assumes that inquiry is value-free and can be guaranteed to be so by virtue of the objective methodology employed. The

naturalist paradigm assumes that inquiry is inevitably "value-bound" in at least five ways:

1. Inquiries are influenced by *inquirer* values as expressed choice of a problem, evaluand, or policy option, and in the framing, bounding, and focusing of that problem, evaluand, or policy option.
2. Inquiry is influenced by the choice of the *paradigm* that guides the investigation into the problem.
3. Inquiry is influenced by the choice of the *substantive theory* utilized to guide the collection and analysis of data and in the interpretation of findings.
4. Inquiry is influenced by the values that inhere in the *context*.
5. With respect to corollaries 1 through 4 above, inquiry is either *value-resonant* (reinforcing or congruent) or *value-dissonant* (conflicting.) Problem, evaluand, or policy option, paradigm, theory *and* context must exhibit congruence (value-resonance) if the inquiry is to produce meaningful results. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 37-38)

The rationale for using this paradigm as the epistemological basis for a study of administrative virtue in legislative leadership is straightforward. The exercise of administrative virtue in a complex institutional and social environment can be understood only on a qualitative, case-by-case basis. It is only *immorality*—and, in fact, *lawlessness*—that can be studied on a quantitative basis. This is why, at the Conference on the Study of Government Ethics organized by the Ethics in Public Service Network (EthNet) in 1991 to report the findings of

empirical research on the study of government ethics, papers presented in the section on Legislative and Political Corruption and Ethics were all devoted to political corruption.

So long as social scientists pray at the altar of the positivist tradition, they cut themselves off from understanding of some of the most important aspects of the human condition. This is particularly problematic when it comes to issues of morality. The problem with studying political ethics through vehicles that are centered on the incidence of corruption, or attitudes toward corruption, is that the opposite of corrupt behavior is *not* ethical or virtuous behavior; it is law-abiding behavior. Thus, the devotion to quantitative research keeps twentieth-century ethics researchers locked into the Machiavellian framework, where the focus is on men "as they are or are capable of speedily becoming." The concern with corruption—and the related movement to create a more ethical body politic through the establishment of stronger "ethics laws" and a more vigilant "ethics bureaucracy"—raises two correlated problems.

First, the condition of being law-abiding, while in general a desirable goal for elected officials, is insufficient as a response to the social dynamics underlying the confidence crisis. In addition, no matter how strong the laws or how vigilant the watchdogs, there will inevitably be individuals who exhibit aber-

rant behavior. In other words, as long as "ethics" is framed in terms of corruption, there will be material to feed this focus. Thus, a focus on corruption is inevitably part of the feedback loop that exacerbates the "confidence crisis" and that contributes to a confusion between law-abiding behavior and ethical behavior.

Second, the condition of being law-abiding, or rule-oriented, is not a universally desirable characteristic in a democratic society. Indeed, too strong an orientation to laws and rules is one of the major contributing factors to many of the genuine ethical dilemmas for the individual actor in a massively bureaucratized democracy such as the United States today, problems such as "dirty hands" and "groupthink." The abilities to distinguish instances where the law, or rule, or majority, or leader, is wrong, to articulate why this is so, and to formulate an *ethically correct, institutionally viable and socially dynamic* corrective action plan are the hallmarks of the moral exemplar. This is arguably particularly true in the realm of the legislative branch of government, where law-making, -breaking, and alteration is the very business of the organization.

The only way to know about political *ethics* is to study how individuals exercise and act on moral judgement in a political environment. The exercise of political ethics, viewed this way, is a complex and individualistic process. The

epistemological position of ontological idealism applies: the truth about what constitutes politically ethical behavior is a construct that can be understood only in terms of "socially and historically conditioned agreement. What is true is what we can agree on at any particular time and place" (Smith, 1982, p. 10).

My argument is that the study of political ethics undertaken through the vehicle of quantitative research on corruption is not a value-free endeavor but rather is inherently biased toward law-abiding moral minimalism as a behavioral standard. The problem that "quantitative ethicists" have with studying political ethics as the behavior of moral actors may not, however, be lightly dismissed. This concern follows from the understanding of politics as a process of values allocation. Because political actors are engaged in allocating values, and because there is an on-going tension in American political culture over what are the most important values, the study of moral agency in political action will inevitably be premised in a given political ideology that counts certain values as paramount to the possible exclusion of competing, equally legitimate values. The value base for this study is premised in Ryan's definition of the purpose of government, which is to ensure the adequacy of the 12 basic human needs for every individual in the society.

Research Strategy

The purpose of this research was twofold. The first objective was to develop a life history of William A. Ryan, the second to study Ryan as a "case" in which an individual was able to use his roles in the state legislature to perform moral works at the levels of both institution-building and social policy-making.

Life History Approach

"Life histories are helpful in defining problems and in studying aspects of certain professions" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 96). At this level, the aim of the research was to understand and describe Ryan's growth and development, with a particular emphasis on his years in the Michigan House of Representatives, and to make theoretical sense of the exchange processes between Ryan the individual, Ryan the legislator and Speaker, other key actors, and the institutional and social milieu.

The guiding theoretical framework for the life history aspect of this project was that of the interpretative biography. The following assumptions and arguments guided the research. First, the understanding of and connections between "biographically meaningful experiences to society-at-hand and . . . the larger culture- and meaning-making institutions of the late postmodern period . . .

are best given by the persons who experience them" (Denzin, 1989, p. 25). Preoccupation with the "objective" concerns of "validity, reliability, generalizability, and theoretical relevance . . . must be set aside in favor of a concern for meaning and interpretation" (Denzin, 1989, p. 25). At the level of analysis, the study deliberately sought to use the "strategies and techniques of literary interpretation and criticism" (Denzin, 1989, p. 25).

The argument for this approach was premised in the assumption that all biography, including autobiography, is in a sense ultimately fictional:

Lives and the biographical methods that construct them are literary productions. Lives are arbitrary constructions, constrained by the cultural writing practices of the time. These cultural practices lead to the inventions and influences of gendered, knowing others who can locate subjects within . . . social spaces where lives have beginnings, turning points, and clearly defined endings. Such texts create "real" persons about whom truthful statements are presumably made. In fact, . . . these texts are narrative fictions, cut from the same kinds of cloth as the lives they tell about.

When a writer writes a biography, he or she writes him- or herself into the life of the subject written about. When the reader reads a biographical text, that text is read through the life of the reader. Hence, writers and readers conspire to create the lives they write and read about. Along the way, the produced text is cluttered by the traces of the life of the "real" person being written about. (Denzin, 1989, p. 26)

Thus, the method for this study was based in philosophical idealism, with the researcher seeking to develop empathic understanding with the key informant,

rather than attempting to stand outside and obtain questionably "objective" knowledge.

Case Study

Yin (1989) defined a case study as "an empirical inquiry that:

- * investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
- * the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which
- * multiple sources of evidence are used. (p. 23)

The first two elements of this definition have been addressed; the third will be met below, under "data collection techniques." The rationale for using a single-case study design is that William A. Ryan is both a unique and a revelatory case (Yin, 1989, pp. 47-48). He is a unique case insofar as he was able to combine the exercise of a coherent moral-political philosophy with political and institutional success; he is a revelatory case due to his willingness to open himself to in-depth investigation of the relations between himself as a political leader and the arena in which he operated.

Data Collection Techniques, Tests and Tactics

Data Collection Techniques

Yin (1989) pointed out that the case study, while relying on many of the same techniques as a history, "adds two sources of evidence not usually included in the historian's repertoire: direct observation and systematic interviewing" (p. 19). My own biographical data, which were included in Chapter 1 as an auto-ethnographic portion of this study, encompass a history of 20 years as a member of the staff of the Michigan House of Representatives. Mr. Ryan was the first speaker under whom I served. I began my service in 1972, three years after Mr. Ryan had assumed the speakership, and thus was in a position to be able to directly observe both him and the changes he implemented in the institution while he occupied this position. Subsequently, I had many opportunities to observe Mr. Ryan's interactions with other legislative and "extra-legislative" actors through my direct participation in legislative committee meetings and other legislative activities. In my tenure as a member of House staff, I served under a total of four Democratic speakers, and (briefly) under the Democratic and Republican co-speakers who currently preside.

This personal history provided the background against which this study was undertaken. At the same time, of course, my own past involvement with Mr. Ryan and the Michigan House of Representatives posed a considerable threat to the validity and reliability of this study. In a sense, my own history held the potential to exacerbate the major limitations of both the life history and the case study as research strategies. As Marshall and Rossman (1989) pointed out:

The major limitation of the life history is its perceived lack of generality. A major content difficulty is the lack of accepted principles of selection and of suitable analytical concepts to establish a coherent frame of reference. Since life histories are often autobiographical as well as biographical, the issues of truth and bias pose some limitations. Is the writer of the document telling the truth? Is the writer influenced consciously or unconsciously by her conception of her audience? Does any person know the causes of her own behavior sufficiently well for her statements to be given full credence? (p. 97)

Tactics that were used to circumvent these possible flaws are described below, under "Tests and Tactics."

In-depth phenomenological interviews with Ryan and other informants were the primary direct data collection technique used for this study. Due to my own political and legislative background, the interviews generally turned into fairly open conversations about legislative process and leadership, past and present, as well as Ryan himself. The interview guides that were used to generate questions and discussion are listed in Appendix C.

Informants other than Ryan were drawn from three different selection pools: (1) Democratic legislators who served simultaneously with Ryan, (2) Republican legislators who served simultaneously with Ryan, and (3) key members of legislative staff who worked closely with Ryan. The nature of the research project dictated as an additional selection criterion for members of all three groups a degree of interest in and concern for the questions under study.

Tests and Tactics

Yin (1989) pointed out that the quality of a research design may be judged according to four logical tests. These tests and the tactics that were used to address them, are described here.

The test of construct validity has to do with ensuring that correct operational measures are established for the concepts being studied. The major concepts under examination in this study were "virtue," "moral exemplarship," "social change," and "legislative leadership." I sought to get at these concepts through the use of "conceptual levers" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 111) by using, for example, Kohlberg's, Hart's, and Cooper's frameworks to address moral exemplarship. Working definitions of the major concepts comprise Appendix B.

Yin (1989) suggested the use of **multiple sources of evidence**, the establishment of a **chain of evidence**, and **review by key informants** of the draft case study report as measures to increase construct validity in a case study. The first two tactics were undertaken during the data collection phase of the project, the third during the composition phase. **Sources of evidence** in addition to the interview data were archival material, historically contemporary newspaper and newsletter articles, and retrospective histories and analyses. Specific documentary sources of evidence and the information sought from each source comprise Appendix E.

The purpose of a **chain of evidence** "is to allow an external observer—the reader of the case study, for example—to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions" (Yin, 1989, p. 102). A chain of evidence was established through maintenance of a case study data base in the form of interview transcripts and other raw material. Each informant cited in this study was provided with a transcript of his or her interview and allowed to make clarifying additions as well as editorial changes.

Additional inside informants reviewed portions of the manuscript and were helpful in expanding my thinking regarding the applicability of much of the

material to the contemporary political scene. These informants were guaranteed anonymity and thus have not been referred to directly.

Yin (1989) stated that internal validity, the problem of "establishing a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships," is a relevant test "for explanatory or causal studies only, and not for descriptive or exploratory studies (p. 40). Because this study was primarily exploratory, the establishment of causal connections was not a central concern. The test of external validity has to do with establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized. This work followed the naturalist paradigm's assumption that generalization is rarely valid. Rather, the effort was to develop a deep understanding of the connections between the character and actions of a legislative leader and the culture and actions of the legislative institution. At the same time, in terms of building theory, I was constantly attempting to recognize that what Ryan was able to accomplish was a function, not only of his self and his roles, but of the particular times in which he held office.

The issue of reliability has to do with "demonstrating that the operations of a study—such as the data collection procedures—can be repeated, with the same results" (Yin, 1989, pp. 40-41). Due to the critical role of the self as the

research instrument in naturalistic inquiry generally, and specifically to the nature and duration of the relationship between Mr. Ryan and me, it is doubtful that this research would be replicable. Moreover, environmental factors external to the research project itself inevitably impacted on this research and colored the findings. But this goes to Erikson's (1975) point that life history is always an interactive process, as well as Denzin's (1989) point that life history is always, in a sense, fictional. My efforts to maintain rigor led to a far heavier use of documentary sources of evidence and content analysis than was originally anticipated. This "qualitative triangulation" is a replicable process, and one that I believe is worth pursuing by other students of psychohistory.

Appendix B
Definitions of Major Concepts

DEFINITIONS OF MAJOR CONCEPTS

Legislator: A member of a state representative assembly, duly elected from a specific geographic district within the state.

Leadership: "Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers" (Burns, 1978, p. 425).

Legislative leader: A member of the legislature elected by his or her party caucus to perform specific functions with respect to party and/or legislative administration. In the state house, the principle leader is the speaker, who is both the chief executive officer for the house as a government body and the party leader for the political party holding the majority of seats within the house.

Psychological leader: The individual who, in the minds of the members of the group, is most highly endowed with superior characteristics (Berne, 1962).

Psychological leadership may or may not coincide with the formal leadership roles described above.

Moral exemplarship: Distinguishing characteristics of the administrative exemplar are: (a) good moral character as a constant (rather than intermittent) aspect of the personality; (b) free and intentional action; (c) relative "faultlessness," i.e., striving for virtue in most things; and (d) actions that bring about real good (Hart, 1992).

Exemplary moral activities include:

1. Moral episodes—events of restricted intervals in which the exemplar displays moral heroism in response to the immoral or amoral acts of others, in the face of real or perceived risks to the self.
2. Moral processes—"the intentional introduction of morality into the ordinary actions of everyday life." The two types of moral processes are moral projects and moral work. Moral projects are "intentional actions, taken during a specific period of time, by which the moral quality of individual and organizational life is improved." Moral work "refers to the intentional decision of an individual always to think and act in virtuous ways during the routine conduct of his or her personal and organizational life" (Hart, 1992).

Social Change: "Social change . . . is a transformation to a marked degree in the attitudes, norms, institutions, and behaviors that structure our daily lives. Such

changes embrace not only 'new cultural patterns and institutional arrangements' and 'new psychological dispositions' . . . but changes in material conditions, in the explicit, felt existence, the flesh and fabric of people's lives" (Burns, 1978, p. 415).

Virtue: Virtues are specific qualities of moral excellence or other exemplary qualities. They are "acquired character traits that include the full range of human faculties—dispositions to think, act, and feel in certain ways." Rather than being "simply conditioned feelings that support an objectively reasoned decision about the right course of conduct . . . one's moral response becomes the integrated total response of cognitive and affective capacities focused toward a single end, the good life. Thus, virtues are both cultivated and enduring character traits (Cooper, 1993). A person is not born (or elected) virtuous, but rather acquires virtue through both reflection and conduct.

Appendix C
Interview Guides

INTERVIEW GUIDES

Questions for Informants Other than Ryan

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. What were the circumstances that brought you to the Michigan House of Representatives?
3. What motivated you to [*for legislators:* run for office?] [*for staff:* become a member of legislative staff?]
4. What does responsibility mean in the role of legislator? Ultimately, to whom is the legislator responsible?
5. Are there inherent conflicting responsibilities in the role of legislator? How would you describe such conflicts?
6. Tell me about a conflict in responsibilities that you experienced in your role in the Michigan House and how you resolved it.
7. How would you describe the ideal legislative leader?
8. What does responsibility mean in the role of legislative leader? Ultimately, to whom is the legislative leader responsible?
9. Are there inherent conflicting responsibilities in the role of legislative leader? How would you describe such conflicts?

10. What does the word morality mean to you?
11. Is the ability to manage conflicting responsibilities the same thing as being virtuous in the role of legislator? What about in the role of legislative leader? What else is important?
12. When did you first meet Ryan? How would you describe your initial impression of him?
13. How would you describe your relationship with Ryan?
14. Did your opinion of Ryan change with time? How?
15. What do you know about how Ryan was selected for House leadership?
16. How would you describe Ryan's leadership style?
17. What were Ryan's greatest strengths as a legislative leader? His greatest weaknesses? How would you compare Ryan to other legislative leaders with whom you have served?
18. In your assessment, did Ryan gain or lose in moral authority during the time that he served in the House after stepping down from the speakership?
19. Tell me, if you can, about a policy change that you wanted to advance during the time that Ryan was Speaker, and what Ryan's role was in

terms of making that change. How did this change serve to contribute to the satisfaction of human needs and expectations in the state community?

20. Do you think that Ryan has "survived himself" in terms of what the Michigan House of Representatives is like today? How?

Questions for Ryan

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. Tell me about your early life. Who were the most important influences on you as you were growing up? Who were your heros, both living and dead?
3. How did you come to run for the House of Representatives? What motivated you to run for office? What particular skills and competencies did you have to offer? Or do you think you were offered the nomination to a large extent because you were a dependable vote for the UAW? What interested you in running for the legislature? What was the selection process at that time? How has it changed?
4. What kind of training and/or orientation did you undergo after you entered the legislature? Who were the most influential actors in the House of Representatives during your early years? Were these the same people who had

the greatest influence on your own development? How did they exercise leadership?

5. What was the character of the House of Representatives when you entered it? How was business conducted and how were decisions made? What kind of people held office (i.e., age, race, sex, level of education, policy interests)?

6. Did the character and composition of the Michigan House change significantly during the period before you became Speaker? For instance, can you tell me about the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1964 decision in *Reynolds v. Sims*, which interpreted the Equal Protection Clause as requiring "that the seats in both houses of a bicameral state legislature must be apportioned on a population basis"?

7. What does responsibility mean in the role of legislator? Ultimately, to whom is the legislator responsible?

8. Are there inherent conflicting responsibilities in the role of legislator? How would you describe such conflicts?

9. Tell me about a conflict in responsibilities that you experienced in your role in the Michigan House and how you resolved it.

10. How were you selected for leadership in the ranks of the House Democrats? What were the attractive features of leadership? The unattractive features?

11. How would you describe the ideal legislative leader?

12. What does responsibility mean in the role of legislative leader? Ultimately, to whom is the legislative leader responsible?

13. Are there inherent conflicting responsibilities in the role of legislative leader? How would you describe such conflicts?

14. What does the word morality mean to you?

15. Is the ability to manage conflicting responsibilities the same thing as being virtuous in the role of legislator? What about in the role of legislative leader? What else is important?

16. How would you describe your leadership style?

17. What were your greatest strengths as a legislative leader? Your greatest weaknesses? How would you compare yourself with other legislative leaders with whom you served?

18. What was your interest in increasing the number of legislative staff and in broadening staff roles? How did you draw the line between policy and

political purposes in staff activities? How did you identify people you thought would be desirable members of legislative staff?

19. Tell me about your relationship with Bobby Crim. What caused you to think he was a suitable person to succeed you in the speakership? What particular skills and personality characteristics did he have to offer?

20. What was your attitude toward women and minority group members as colleagues and staff members? Was it important to include women and minorities both in the House membership and in staff roles? How did you go about doing this?

21. How did you handle relationships with the press? The executive office? Lobbyists? Even when you were Speaker, you frequently "walked alone"—i.e., ate lunch alone, worked alone, appeared to be little involved in the typical socialization pattern? Was this really the case? Was this a self-conscious decision? Why?

22. What influenced your conception of "the public interest?" Did this concept change over time? What were the key influences?

23. What is your attitude toward the current interest in "ethics in government?" Campaign finance reform? Ethical problems in the House Fiscal Agency?

Appendix D

Protocol Clearance From the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Human Subject Institute with view Board

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49006-3d99
616 387-8293

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: October 8, 1993

To: Barbara A. K. Adams

From: M. Michele Burnette, Chair 

Re: HSIRB Project Number 93-08-13

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "William A. Ryan: Administrative virtue in legislative leadership" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

You must seek reapproval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: October 8, 1994

cc: Chandler, School of Public Affairs and Admin.

Appendix E
Documentary Sources of Evidence

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Source	Information to Be Obtained
Ryan's and Crim's clippings files in the Library of Michigan	Identify key activities, events in Ryan's career. (For instance, the March 30, 1967, <u>State Journal</u> discloses Ryan's election as minority leader as the outcome of "a bruising contest," a fact undisclosed by Ryan.) Clippings files will also be used to identify other key actors on whom to focus and possibly interview.
Gongwer News Michigan Reports (dates paralleling clippings)	Gain more in-depth information, additional perspective on key activities, events in Ryan's career. "Gongwer" is the specialized "insiders" news service, providing "information pertinent to Michigan's legislative and state department activities since 1906."

Source	Information to Be Obtained
Handbooks of the Michigan House	Identify Ryan's committee memberships and other formal roles throughout his career. Identify number of staff, staff agencies, other forms of organizational development. Identify Republican leadership succession.
Bill statuses	Bill statuses are published after each two-year session. They show all legislation introduced and display each stage of processing. Identify legislation introduced by Ryan and/or processed by committees of which he was a member or chair.

Source	Information to Be Obtained
Committee archives	<p>The state archives has a substantial collection of both standing House committee and special legislative committee (ad hoc committees established to investigate certain issues deemed to merit special attention) papers. There do not appear to be materials in the archives from committees of which Ryan was a member during the years 1958-1964. Examine Appropriations Committee archives for 1967-1968 with respect to Ryan's role as chair of the Social Services Subcommittee. Examine other committee archives of committee(s) Ryan chaired during the years 1975-1982, depending on issue(s) selected for focus (e.g., taxation issues, redlining).</p>

Source	Information to Be Obtained
Selected journals of the Michigan House of Representatives	<p>Identify floor amendments, "no vote explanations" offered by Ryan. Identify rule and procedural changes adopted during Ryan's years as speaker.</p> <p>Examine how Ryan used his leadership role with respect to formal proceedings of the House.</p>
Selected House bill analyses	<p>Ryan introduced the House bill analysis system.</p> <p>Selected bill analyses may be used to illustrate the purpose the system (later copied by the Senate) served. Bill analyses for focus issue(s) selected for the post-speaker years may also be used to describe how problem was framed, proposed solution formulated, and so on.</p>

Source	Information to Be Obtained
<p>Selected issues of <u>The Wage Earner</u></p>	<p><u>The Wage Earner</u> (now defunct) was the newsletter of the Detroit Catholic Labor Conference. Ryan was editor of this newsletter for several years before being elected to the Legislature and during his early years in the Legislature. Examine his writings in <u>The Wage Earner</u> both with respect to his philosophy of the 12 basic human needs and with respect to specific issues he was later to forward in the Legislature, e.g., the state general assistance program.</p>

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