

LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION

LEGISLATIVE EXPERIENCE OF ILLINOIS LAWMAKERS

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I

THE American state legislature is entitled to a great deal more attention than it has received from students of law and of government during the present century. This oversight has been due to a multiplicity of causes, prominent among them, no doubt, being: (1) the prominence in public interest of the national government, (2) the notion of lawyers that statute is but fripperent addenda to the common law, and (3) the failure of the political scientists to advance appreciably beyond the text-book writing stage.

This neglect cannot be justified on the ground that the state legislature is an unimportant cog in the governmental machine; the state legislature is still, in practice as well as in constitutional theory, the chief bureau for the pronouncement of public policy in the forty-eight commonwealths. The legislature, except where specific provision is made in the constitution, controls the destiny of the other branches of the government, creating and destroying, giving and taking away power.¹ The public income of the state, and in large part that of local governments, is obtained through a revenue system approved by the legislature. Public funds are apportioned among the various governmental functions as the legislature ordains. The adjustment of the great body of law to meet the changing needs and whims of society falls fully as much upon the hands of the legislator as upon those of the judge. And, lastly, the extension of governmental control to fields of activity formerly unregulated is accomplished by statutory enactment.²

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¹ Taft v. Adams, 69 Mass. 126 (1854); State *ex rel.* Yancey v. Hyde, 129 Ind. 296, 28 N.E. 186 (1891); *In re* Bulger, 45 Calif. 553 (1873). See also 6 R. C. L., "Constitutional Law," §§ 151, 152 (1915).

² See Bruncken, The Common Law and Statutes, 29 Yale L. J. 516-22 (1920); Harno, Social Planning and Perspective through Law, 7 Am. Law School Rev., 705-15 (1933), and in 19 Am. Bar Assn. J. 201 (1933).

Common sense suggests that a wise public will man its legislature with persons competent to perform these momentous yet delicate tasks of formulating public policy. Wisdom is no doubt an elusive quality, not always flaunting itself for easy detection. But experience is said to be the head tutor in the school where the wise are educated. More than one person in a position to speak from personal knowledge has suggested that long continued experience in the legislature is essential to competent legislation. It is experience in the state capitol that acquaints the legislator with the intricacies of the governmental machine and permits sound judgment in respect to the improvement of public administration; it is experience that helps him to distinguish public interest from selfish demand; it is experience that develops the facility for compromise and bargain which is necessary in the making of a decision applicable to groups antagonistic in their wants.³

This assumption that legislative experience is likely to run hand in hand with legislative competence is the principal justification for the present study of the service of Illinois legislators. The Illinois assembly is of special interest because it is one of the highest paid state legislatures in the United States, and because of the unique system of "cumulative voting" used in electing members of the lower chamber. It should be emphasized, however, that this study does not purport to isolate or assess the significance of these peculiar features.⁴

³ Mr. Charles A. Kettleborough, Director of the Legislative Bureau of the State of Indiana, recently stated to one of the writers that one hears no more constant complaint on the part of members of the legislature than that their lack of experience makes it impossible for them to act intelligently on legislation presented to them. Mr. DeWitt Billman, Secretary of the Illinois Legislative Reference Bureau, affirmed this statement without hesitation. In his autobiography, Al Smith states: "On several occasions (during the first session of service) I spoke to him of my discouragement with the whole situation and my apparent inability to get a proper understanding of it. I was reading amendments to laws that I had never heard of before. In fact, I never knew there was so much law. My early school training under the Christian Brothers made me familiar with the Commandments and, consequently, familiar with the Penal Code, but all the rest of it was Greek, and appeared to be too much for me. . . . My second term was as much of a blank to me, so far as knowledge of what was going on in the legislature was concerned, as my first one had been. I was still seated in the last row. . . . I was appointed (in the third session) to the Committees on Banks and on Public Lands and on Forestry. At the close of the session I found myself in about the same position as in 1904, in so far as having any understanding of its problems was concerned. I knew nothing about banking laws and had never been in a bank except to serve a jury notice, and I had never seen a forest." *Up to Now: An Autobiography* 71-75 (New York, 1929). Cf. John A. Lapp, *Making Legislators Law Makers*, 64 *Annals of Am. Acad. Pol. and Soc. Sci.* 177 (1916).

⁴ The Illinois General Assembly consists of a Senate of fifty-one members and a House of Representatives of 153 members. The state is apportioned into fifty-one districts, one senator and three representatives being elected from each. Senators are chosen for terms of four years, twenty-five being chosen at one election and twenty-six being named two years later. Repre-

II

The five latest sessions, 1925 to 1933 inclusive, were selected for study. This permitted comparison of three more or less normal sessions with two elected in the course of the Democratic landslide of 1930-32.⁵ It involved an analysis of the legislative records of 439 different individuals: 105 Senators, and 334 members of the House. The quality of legislation is determined perhaps not so much by the character of all members of the assembly as by the character of those who, because of personal influence or strategic position, are especially able to shape the statutory output. It seemed desirable, therefore, to isolate the key men of these five sessions and observe their legislative history. In want of better knowledge, it was assumed that those holding committee chairmanships and those enjoying membership on the more important committees were the chief moulders of the legislative product.⁶

Identifying the more important committees proved to be for the most part a succession of arbitrary decisions. The rules committee of each house was placed in the select group. It was arbitrarily decided that the committees charged with the greatest amount of legislation (i.e. those considering the most bills) should be accounted the principal cogs in the legislative machine. This test was further refined by taking into account only those bills which finally passed the legislature, whether ultimately becoming law or vetoed by the governor. Provisionally, therefore, the number of finally-enacted bills was tabulated by committees for the sessions 1925-1931.⁷ This tabulation, however, failed to establish any modal dis-

sentatives are elected for terms of two years, all being chosen on the same election day. In voting for representatives, each voter casts three votes—either one vote for each of three candidates, one and one-half votes for each of two, or three votes for one candidate. The compensation is fixed by statute (Ill. L. 1921, 470, 471) at \$3,500 for each two years of service, plus actual cost of railway transportation (not to exceed one trip for each week the assembly is in session), plus \$50 per session for incidental expenses.

⁵ The party composition of the two houses during the five sessions was:

	HOUSE		SENATE	
	Democrat	Republican	Democrat	Republican
1925.....	59	94	14	37
1927.....	60	93	11	40
1929.....	62	91	11	40
1931.....	72	81	18	33
1933.....	80	73	33	18

⁶ This included the Speaker of the House, who was in all five sessions a member of the Committee on Rules.

⁷ The 1933 session had not adjourned at this stage of the research.

tributions which would suggest a dividing line between important and unimportant committees. It also revealed a lack of consistency in the ranking of particular committees in different sessions. Some further criterion had to be adopted. A committee was arbitrarily designated as important if it ranked among the first five committees in bill output in any session, or if it ranked among the first five in respect to the total number of bills considered in the four sessions. This method produced seven House committees and seven Senate committees for study, which with the two Rules committees made a total of eight for each chamber.⁸

This mode of selection failed to isolate a small group of persons who might be supposed to constitute the central junta in the formulation of public policy. Of the 334 different individuals who served in the House during the five sessions, 319 enjoyed one or more appointments to the eight principal House committees. The situation in the Senate was much the same. All but one of the 105 different individuals who served in the Senate were found to have served on one or more of the eight chief committees.

Other devices for determining objectively the key men in the Illinois legislature were considered but seemed to promise no more satisfactory results than those just described. Certain of the tabulations concerning the sixteen selected committees are of interest and are included.

III

As pointed out above, 439 different individuals served in the two houses during the years 1925-33. The total legislative experience of these different persons ranged, among House members, from one to twenty sessions; among Senators, from one to seventeen sessions.⁹ The median is probably more useful than range as an index for comparison of length of service.¹⁰ Table I

⁸ The eight House committees were: Appropriations; Education; Elections; Judiciary; Municipalities; Revenue; Roads and Bridges; and Rules. The eight Senate committees were: Appropriations; Education; Elections; Judiciary; Municipalities; Revenue and Finance; Roads, Highways and Bridges; and Rules. There is some variance in the names of these committees in the five sessions.

⁹ Only regular sessions are taken into account in this study; special sessions were not included in computing the length of service. This seemed a proper procedure in view of the fact that in Illinois several special sessions are sometimes concurrently in existence; that special sessions are often of short duration; and that special sessions are frequently not so well attended as regular sessions. While the figures here represented do not give an accurate picture of legislative service, it must be admitted that the picture would hardly have been improved by calling a special session the equivalent of a regular session.

In reckoning service of a legislator, his experience in either house of the Illinois legislature was counted. Experience in other legislative bodies was not inquired into and not counted.

¹⁰ The median member is the middle member. Thus in the 1933 session, sixteen senators

(showing the number of sessions of service, including the one then being served) reveals that the median Senator in three of the five sessions has had the advantage of a bit more experience than the median House member, and in only one session, less experience. Of still greater interest, however, are tables which distribute legislators into groups according to the

TABLE 1
SESSIONS OF SERVICE OF MEDIAN MEMBER
(Including session being served)

SESSION	SERVICE OF MEDIAN MEMBER	
	House	Senate
1. 1933.....	3	2
2. 1931.....	3	3
3. 1929.....	3	4
4. 1927.....	3	5
5. 1925.....	2	4

TABLE 2
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
ALL MEMBERS (153) OF HOUSE—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

SERVING	AVERAGE OF ALL 5 SESSIONS		1933		1931		1929		1927		1925	
	Total of All 5 Sessions	Percentage of All 5 Sessions	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members
1. 1st session.....	211	27.6	43	28.1	42	27.5	41	26.8	35	22.9	50	32.7
2. 2d session.....	165	21.6	32	20.9	33	21.6	27	17.6	35	22.9	38	24.8
3. 3d session.....	113	14.8	27	17.6	13	8.5	23	15	30	19.6	20	13.1
4. 4th to 5th sessions...	142	18.6	20	13	32	20.9	38	24.8	27	17.6	25	16.3
5. 6th to 10th sessions...	113	14.8	26	17	29	19	19	12.4	22	14.4	17	11.1
6. 1st to 3d sessions....	489	63.9	102	66.7	88	57.5	91	59.5	100	65.4	108	70.6
7. 1st to 5th sessions....	631	82.5	122	79.7	120	78.4	129	84.3	127	83.1	133	86.9
8. 1st to 10th sessions...	744	97.3	148	96.7	149	97.4	148	96.7	149	97.4	150	98
9. 4th or more sessions..	276	36.1	51	33.3	65	42.5	62	40.5	53	34.6	45	29.4
10. 6th or more sessions..	134	17.5	31	20.3	33	21.6	24	15.7	26	17	20	13.1
11. 11th or more sessions.	21	2.7	5	3.3	4	2.6	5	3.3	4	2.6	3	2

length of their service. These tables (Tables 2, 3, and 4) permit one to draw a very accurate picture of the experience of members of House and Senate for each of the five sessions, and furthermore, permit comparison of the two chambers. Table 4 carries percentages only, since the variance in

were serving their first term, and fourteen were serving their second. Ranked according to length of service, the twenty-sixth or middle man (there are fifty-one senators) was serving his second term, as Table 1 indicates.

the size of the two houses makes absolute numbers unsatisfactory for purposes of comparison.

Attention may be called to a number of significant facts disclosed by the tables. Each session saw an influx of inexperienced legislators. In each

TABLE 3
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
ALL MEMBERS (51) OF SENATE—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

SERVING	AVERAGE OF ALL 5 SESSIONS		1933		1931		1929		1927		1925	
	Total of All 5 Sessions	Percentage of All 5 Sessions	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members	Members	Percentage of All Members
1. 1st session.....	51	20	16	31.4	13	25.5	11	21.6	8	15.7	3	5.9
2. 2d session.....	47	18.4	14	27.5	12	23.5	8	15.7	3	5.0	10	19.6
3. 3d session.....	27	10.6	4	7.8	5	9.8	3	5.0	5	9.8	10	19.6
4. 4th to 5th sessions...	40	15.7	6	11.8	4	7.8	7	13.7	14	27.5	9	17.6
5. 6th to 10th sessions...	67	26.3	8	15.7	12	23.5	17	33.3	16	31.4	14	27.5
6. 1st to 3d sessions....	125	49	34	66.7	30	58.8	22	43.1	16	31.4	23	45.1
7. 1st to 5th sessions...	165	64.7	40	78.4	34	66.7	29	58.9	30	58.8	32	62.7
8. 1st to 10th sessions...	232	91	48	94.1	46	90.2	46	90.2	46	90.2	46	90.2
9. 4th or more sessions...	130	51	17	33.3	21	41.1	29	56.8	35	68.7	28	54.9
10. 6th or more sessions...	90	35.3	11	21.6	17	33.3	22	43.1	21	41.2	19	37.3
11. 11th or more sessions.	23	9	3	5.9	5	9.8	5	9.8	5	9.8	5	9.8

TABLE 4
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
HOUSE AND SENATE COMPARED—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

SERVING	AVERAGE OF 5 SESSIONS PERCENTAGE OF ALL MEMBERS		1933 PERCENTAGE		1931 PERCENTAGE		1929 PERCENTAGE		1927 PERCENTAGE		1925 PERCENTAGE	
	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate
1. 1st session.....	27.6	20	28.1	31.4	27.5	25.5	26.8	21.6	22.9	15.7	32.7	5.9
2. 2d session.....	21.6	18.4	20.9	27.5	21.6	23.5	17.6	15.7	22.9	5.9	24.8	19.6
3. 3d session.....	14.8	10.6	17.6	7.8	8.5	9.8	15	5.9	19.6	9.8	13.1	19.6
4. 4th to 5th sessions...	18.6	15.7	13.1	11.8	20.9	7.8	24.8	13.7	17.6	27.5	16.3	17.6
5. 6th to 10th sessions...	14.8	26.3	17	15.7	19	23.5	12.4	33.3	14.4	31.4	11.1	27.5
6. 1st to 3d sessions....	83.9	49	66	66.7	57.5	58.8	59.5	43.1	65.4	31.4	70.6	45.1
7. 1st to 5th sessions...	82.5	64.7	79.7	78.4	78.4	66.7	84.3	58.9	83	58.8	86.9	62.9
8. 1st to 10th sessions...	97.3	91	96.7	94.1	97.4	90.2	96.7	90.2	97.4	90.2	98	90.2
9. 4th or more sessions...	36.1	51	33.4	34.4	42.5	40.9	40.5	36.8	34.6	58.7	29.4	54.9
10. 6th or more sessions...	17.5	35.3	20.3	21.6	21.6	33.1	15.7	43.1	17	31.2	13.1	37.3
11. 11th or more sessions	2.7	9	3.3	5.9	2.6	9.8	3.3	9.8	2.6	9.8	2	9.8

session from one-fifth to one-third of the House members were getting their first instruction in the lawmaking process. The Senate (elected for two sessions instead of one, which is the case with the House) has usually

undergone less of a purging at election time, but has made a steady march toward the poor record of the other chamber.¹¹ On the average, 27.6% of the House were new members, 20% of the Senate.

Observers, doubtless, would not agree in setting a point at which the legislator has accomplished the transition from novice to experienced solon. The tables have been arranged to satisfy persons of different mind on that matter. In no case has the lower House convened with as many as 50% of its membership able to testify to the completion of three sessions of service, whereas the Senate has been able in three of the five sessions to show such a body of experience. In two sessions, the House could boast that 20% of its members had completed five sessions of service; the Senate, on the other hand, could show a better record in every case. Considering arithmetic averages, the record of the Senate is twice as good as that of the House. 17.5% of the House had served five prior sessions; 35.3% of the Senate. If one is of the opinion that the accumulation of ten sessions of service is necessary to equip a legislator for effective service, then he will concede that both House and Senate have suffered consistently from lack of experience. In no case has either chamber possessed more than five members with ten sessions of lawmaking to their credit. On a percentage basis, however, the Senate record appears much superior to that of the House.

A superficial comparison of the sessions with one another suggests that a more careful analysis might reveal a number of interesting facts. The Democratic landslide of 1930-32 evidently had less effect on the personnel of the House than on that of the Senate, a fact attributable for the most part, no doubt, to the use of cumulative voting in the selection of the lower chamber. Certainly the Democrats modified their own success by failure to nominate the number of candidates which their voting strength entitled them to. This, however, is a matter better left for a later article.

IV

As was noted above, efforts to isolate the more important committees of the two houses met with little success. A more or less arbitrary process of selection yielded the two Rules Committees and seven bill-considering committees in each chamber. A roll of the membership of these committees might easily be mistaken for the roll of the entire legislature. The average membership of the seven bill-considering committees of the Senate ranged from 24 to 40; that of the seven House committees ranged from 29 to 59. In the House roughly one-third of the whole body are members

¹¹ As noted above, approximately one half the senate hold over and so are not subject to election risks.

of the important Appropriations and Judiciary Committees, and each of the other six committees claims about one-fifth of the total membership. Only 11 members of the Senate, on the average, have failed being appointed to that body's Appropriations Committee during the five sessions (4 persons in 1927), and in every case but one during the five sessions, these persons found a berth on one or more of the other seven important committees.

As a consequence of this democratic dispersion of committee memberships, figures as to the total legislative experience of committee members so closely resemble those for the entire membership of the two houses as to make their inclusion pointless. A comparison of the various committees

TABLE 5
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
MEMBERS OF EIGHT PRINCIPAL HOUSE COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE	TOTAL NUMBER OF ALL MEMBERS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL MEMBERS SERVING					
		1st to 3d Sessions	1st to 5th Sessions	1st to 10th Sessions	4th or More Sessions	6th or More Sessions	11th or More Sessions
1. Appropriations.....	297	38.2	67.8	94	61.8	32.2	6
2. Education.....	166	78.8	94.4	99.4	21.2	5.6	.6
3. Elections.....	144	67.4	81.8	97.2	32.6	18.2	2.8
4. Judiciary.....	237	61.6	79.6	96.8	38.4	20.4	3.2
5. Municipalities.....	160	66.4	82.6	98	33.6	17.4	2
6. Revenue.....	157	63	78.4	97.9	37	21.6	2.1
7. Roads and Bridges...	212	70	88.2	98.4	30	11.8	1.6
8. Rules.....	49	26.6	49.4	76.6	73.4	50.6	23.4

with one another is of some interest, however. Tables 5 and 6 total the membership (for five sessions) of each of the selected committees, and then indicate the percentage of that total membership enjoying a particular amount of legislative service.¹² The House Committee on Rules emerges as the most experienced group. Only slightly more than one-fourth of its members (26.6%) fall in that group of novices who are serving their first, second, or third session. Nearly as many (23.4%) have completed ten sessions of service. No other committee can approach that record. Senate committees are, on the whole, much more experienced than those of the House. Excepting the Rules Committee and possibly the Appropriations Committee, no House group can show as good a record

¹² Total membership means "memberships" and not "individuals." If A served on the Judiciary Committee in three sessions, he is counted three times in totaling the membership of that committee.

in legislative experience as the least experienced Senate committee. The House Committee on Education is distinctly the least experienced.

Figures as to the number of sessions spent as a member of a particular committee are of doubtful value. Experience on the Revenue Committee is doubtless of great use in subsequent service on the Appropriations Committee. A new appointee to the Committee on Municipalities may prove, because of his experience on other committees, to be a veteran in the consideration of legislation dealing with cities. Three tables portraying length of committee service are nevertheless included for whatever they may be worth.

TABLE 6
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
MEMBERS OF EIGHT PRINCIPAL SENATE COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE	TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL MEMBERS SERVING					
		1st to 3d Sessions	1st to 5th Sessions	1st to 10th Sessions	4th or More Sessions	6th or More Sessions	11th or More Sessions
1. Appropriations.....	202	43.2	61.2	89.2	56.8	38.8	10.8
2. Education.....	160	49.4	63.2	91.2	50.6	36.8	8.8
3. Elections.....	123	39.8	56.2	89.8	60.2	43.8	10.2
4. Judiciary.....	150	47.6	67.4	90.4	52.4	26.6	9.6
5. Municipalities.....	138	51	66.8	91.2	49	33.2	8.8
6. Revenue.....	156	44.4	57	90.6	55.6	43	9.4
7. Roads.....	166	50.2	64.6	90.2	49.8	35.4	9.8
8. Rules.....	57	41.2	55	87.8	58.8	45	12.2

Table 7 shows the number of sessions that the median member of each committee had spent (including the current session) as a member of that particular committee. These figures reveal that House committeemen are, in general, more recently appointed to their committee tasks than are Senate committeemen, and they show the effect of the ascendancy to power of the Democratic party in the 1933 session.

Tables 8 and 9 are counterparts of Tables 5 and 6. They total the membership (for five sessions) of each of the selected committees, and then indicate the percentage of that membership enjoying a particular amount of service on that committee. The House Elections Committee appears as a body of temporary membership, 92.8% of its five session membership consisting of persons enjoying only three sessions or less of service on that committee. Senate committees show, on the whole, more stable membership than House committees. Four House and two Senate committees could at no time during the five sessions boast a single individual who had

completed ten sessions of service as a member of that particular committee. Not revealed in the tables is the further interesting fact that only two committees, Senate Appropriations and Senate Judiciary, could point

TABLE 7
SESSIONS OF SERVICE ON COMMITTEE OF MEDIAN MEMBERS
EIGHT PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE	SESSIONS BEING SERVED BY MEDIAN MEMBER									
	1933		1931		1929		1927		1925	
	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate
1. Appropriations.....	2	1	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
2. Education.....	2	1	1	2	2	3	1	4	1	3
3. Elections.....	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	3	1	3
4. Judiciary.....	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3
5. Municipalities.....	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	2	3
6. Revenue.....	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	3
7. Roads and Bridges.....	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	3
8. Rules.....	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	3

TABLE 8
SESSIONS OF SERVICE ON COMMITTEE
MEMBERS OF EIGHT PRINCIPAL HOUSE COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE	TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL MEMBERS SERVING					
		1st to 3d Sessions	1st to 5th Sessions	1st to 10th Sessions	4th or More Sessions	6th or More Sessions	11th or More Sessions
1. Appropriations.....	297	74.2	87	98.6	25.8	13	1.4
2. Education.....	166	86.4	98	99.8	13.6	2.	.2
3. Elections.....	144	92.8	99.4	100	7.2	.6	.....
4. Judiciary.....	237	61.8	81.2	98.4	38.2	18.8	1.6
5. Municipalities.....	160	77	92.8	100	23	7.2	.....
6. Revenue.....	157	87.2	97	100	12.8	3	.....
7. Roads.....	212	80.2	95	99.6	19.8	5	.4
8. Rules.....	49	75.2	85.4	100	24.8	14.6	.....

in each of the five sessions to a nucleus of veterans who had completed ten sessions of service on that committee.

V

Chairmen of legislative committees presumably play important parts in the legislative process. The length of their service in the legislature, on

committees, and in chairmanships is of interest. A study of the records of the 162 House chairmanships and the 182 Senate chairmanships of the five sessions (Tables 10 and 11) reveals a number of interesting facts.¹³ In

TABLE 9
SESSIONS OF SERVICE ON COMMITTEE
MEMBERS OF EIGHT PRINCIPAL SENATE COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEES	TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL MEMBERS SERVING					
		1st to 3d Sessions	1st to 5th Sessions	1st to 10th Sessions	4th or More Sessions	6th or More Sessions	11th or More Sessions
1. Appropriations.....	202	60.6	76.8	97.2	39.4	23.2	2.8
2. Education.....	160	64.2	79.2	98.2	35.8	20.8	1.8
3. Elections.....	123	68.4	84.2	100	31.6	15.8	.....
4. Judiciary.....	150	59.6	78.2	93.8	40.4	21.8	6.2
5. Municipalities.....	138	65	83.6	98.4	35	16.4	1.6
6. Revenue.....	156	72.4	86.2	97.6	27.6	13.8	2.4
7. Roads.....	166	65.8	86.4	98.2	34.2	13.6	1.8
8. Rules.....	57	79.8	96	100	20.2	4	.....

TABLE 10
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
CHAIRMEN (162) OF ALL HOUSE COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN SERVING	AVERAGE OF 5 SESSIONS		1933 TOTAL No. —32		1931 TOTAL No. —32		1929 TOTAL No. —33		1927 TOTAL No. —33		1925 TOTAL No. —32	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1. 1st session.....	.4	1.2	1	3	1	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
2. 2d session.....	6.4	19.8	8	25	6	19	1	3	7	21	10	31
3. 3d session.....	7.6	23.2	8	25	3	9	8	24	11	33	8	25
4. 4th and 5th sessions.	10.6	32.8	6	19	13	41	18	55	8	24	8	25
5. 6th to 10th sessions.	5.6	17.4	6	19	7	22	4	12	6	18	5	16
6. 1st to 3d sessions....	14.4	44.4	17	53	10	31	9	27	18	55	18	56
7. 1st to 5th sessions...	25	77.2	23	72	23	72	27	82	26	79	26	81
8. 1st to 10th sessions..	30.6	94.6	29	91	30	94	31	94	32	97	31	97
9. 4th or more sessions.	18	55.6	15	47	22	69	24	73	15	45	14	44
10. 6th or more sessions.	7.4	22.8	9	28	9	28	6	18	7	21	6	19
11. 11th or more sessions	1.8	5.4	3	9	2	6	2	6	1	3	1	3

no session has the House had more than one committee headed by a person just arrived for his first term in the Assembly; in three sessions every chairman had completed at least one term of legislative service. In the Senate the number of committees closely approximates the number of members of the majority party, and it is rare that one member is given

¹³ The 162 house chairmanships were held by ninety-seven different persons; the 182 senate chairmanships were held by eighty-four different persons.

chairmanship of more than one committee.¹⁴ Consequently, some of the chairmanships must go to the newcomers of the dominant party. Table 11 shows the extent to which this is true. Comparing the two houses as to percentage of chairmen who had completed three or more sessions of service, the House could show the better record in three of the five sessions. When one considers, however, those chairmen who were serving at least their sixth session in the legislature, the Senate presents the better record in all but the 1933 session. The same is true in considering chairmen who have ten sessions to their credit.

TABLE 11
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE
CHAIRMEN (182) OF ALL SENATE COMMITTEES—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE CHAIR- MEN SERVING	AVERAGE OF 5 SESSIONS		1933 TOTAL No. —29		1931 TOTAL No. —34		1929 TOTAL No. —41		1927 TOTAL No. —41		1925 TOTAL No. —37	
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent
1. 1st session.....	7.2	20.8	11	38	6	18	8	20	8	20	3	8
2. 2d session.....	6.2	17.8	10	34	8	23	7	17	3	7	3	8
3. 3d session.....	4.2	11.8	3	10	4	12	4	10	2	5	8	22
4. 4th and 5th sessions.	5.4	13.8	1	3	2	6	5	12	12	29	7	19
5. 6th to 10th sessions.	9.8	25.8	2	7	11	32	12	29	12	29	12	32
6. 1st to 3d sessions....	17.6	50.6	24	83	18	53	19	47	13	32	14	38
7. 1st to 5th sessions...	23	64.4	25	86	20	59	24	59	25	61	21	57
8. 1st to 10th sessions..	34.8	90.2	27	93	31	91	36	88	37	90	33	89
9. 4th or more sessions.	18.8	49.4	5	17	16	47	22	53	28	68	23	62
10. 6th or more sessions.	13.4	35.6	4	14	14	41	17	41	16	39	16	43
11. 11th or more sessions	3.6	9.8	2	7	3	9	5	12	4	10	4	11

The coming of the 1933 session saw the Senate, in substituting Democratic for Republican control, entrust its committees to less-experienced leadership to an extent quite out of proportion to its practice in previous sessions. The House, in changing party leadership, can hardly be said to have adopted either more or less experienced leadership.

In respect to the chairmen of the sixteen committees selected for especial study, we have data not available for other House and Senate chairmen. Tables 12 and 13 tabulate the data as to the length of their service in the legislature, their service as members of their respective committees, and their service in their respective chairmanships. In only one instance was one of the chief House committees led by a person serving his first session in the legislature. The record shows that this situation occurred five times in the other chamber, three of the instances being in the Rules Committee. In only six instances did the House choose for chairman of

¹⁴ In only eight instances during the five sessions did one man hold two senate chairmanships. In no instance did one man hold more than two.

one of its eight important committees a person never before having been a member of that particular committee. In the Senate this occurred eleven times, the Rules Committee furnishing four of the instances.

It is not surprising to note that the Democratic party, coming into power in 1933, filled House and Senate chairmanships with men who had

TABLE 12
RECORDS OF CHAIRMEN OF EIGHT PRINCIPAL HOUSE COMMITTEES SHOWING
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE, ON COMMITTEE, AND AS
CHAIRMAN—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE	1933			1931			1929			1927			1925		
	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man
1. Appropriations	8	1	1	10	10	2	9	9	1	11	7	2	10	6	1
2. Education.....	2	2	1	6	6	2	5	5	1	4	4	3	2	2	2
3. Elections.....	11	3	1	5	3	2	4	2	1	7	4	2	3	3	1
4. Judiciary.....	2	2	1	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	1
5. Municipalities.....	7	2	1	4	4	1	4	2	1	6	5	2	5	4	1
6. Revenue.....	1	1	1	5	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	1	5	1	1
7. Roads and bridges.....	8	3	1	5	5	2	4	4	1	5	2	2	4	1	1
8. Rules.....	11	6	1	19	8	7	18	7	6	3	2	2	2	1	1

TABLE 13
RECORDS OF CHAIRMEN OF EIGHT PRINCIPAL SENATE COMMITTEES SHOWING
SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE, ON COMMITTEE, AND AS
CHAIRMAN—5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)
(Including session being served)

COMMITTEE	1933			1931			1929			1927			1925		
	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man	In Leg- isla- ture	On Com- mit- tee	As Chair- man
1. Appropriations	1	1	1	7	7	3	6	6	2	4	4	2	3	3	1
2. Education.....	1	1	1	6	6	4	5	5	3	4	4	2	3	3	1
3. Elections.....	2	1	1	15	9	3	2	2	1	3	1	1	12	6	2
4. Judiciary.....	2	2	1	8	8	2	7	7	1	10	10	4	9	9	3
5. Municipalities.....	2	2	1	3	3	1	4	1	1	6	6	5	5	5	4
6. Revenue.....	3	3	1	18	16	5	17	15	14	4	4	1	6	4	1
7. Roads and bridges.....	2	1	1	5	2	2	4	11	1	5	4	4	4	3	3
8. Rules.....	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	1

not previously held those positions. It is much more surprising to observe the extent to which these chairmanships changed hands in the midst of Republican supremacy. Sixteen times out of a possible thirty-two, the Republican party chose a different head for one of the eight principal House committees, fifteen of these sixteen selections never having previously held that chairmanship. Seven times change in leadership was made

necessary by the failure of the previous chairman to return to the legislature; one time it was accompanied by a shift of the previous chairman to a different chairmanship; eight times it appears to have been a case of rejection of the older leadership.¹⁵ Six of the eight cases of repudiation came in the 1925 session. In the Senate the Republican party changed its chairmen in nineteen of a possible thirty-two times, five of these changes putting in the chairmanship a man who had earlier held that office. Six of

TABLE 14

SESSIONS OF SERVICE IN LEGISLATURE

ALL MEMBERS, ALL CHAIRMEN, CHAIRMEN OF PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES
HOUSE AND SENATE—AVERAGE OF ALL 5 SESSIONS (1925-1933)

(Including session being served)

Serving	All House Members Per Cent	All Senate Members Per Cent	All House Chairmen Per Cent	All Senate Chairmen Per Cent	8 House Chairmen Per Cent	8 Senate Chairmen Per Cent
1. 1st session.....	27.6	20	1.2	20.8	2.5	12.5
2. 2d session.....	21.6	18.4	19.8	17.8	12.5	15
3. 3d session.....	14.8	10.6	23.2	11.8	7.5	15
4. 4th and 5th sessions...	18.6	15.7	32.8	13.8	40	25
5. 6th to 10th sessions...	14.8	26.3	17.4	25.8	25	22.5
6. 1st to 3d sessions.....	63.9	49	44.4	50.6	22.5	42.5
7. 1st to 5th sessions.....	82.5	64.7	77.2	64.4	62.5	67.5
8. 1st to 10th sessions....	97.3	91	94.6	90.2	87.5	90
9. 4th or more sessions...	36.1	51	55.6	49.4	77.5	57.5
10. 6th or more sessions...	17.5	35.3	22.8	35.6	37.5	32.5
11. 11th or more sessions..	2.7	9	5.4	9.8	12.5	10

these nineteen changes were due to failure of the previous chairman to return to the legislature; eleven were accompanied by a shift of the former incumbent to chairmanship of a different committee; in only two cases was there apparent repudiation of old leadership.¹⁶

In only four instances (House Rules two times, Senate Municipalities and Roads once each) was a chairmanship in the hands of a man who had four times before held that position. In only seventeen out of eighty possibilities was the chairman a person with two or more previous sessions of experience in that position. Twelve of these instances were in the Senate.

When all members of the two houses, all chairmen, and chairmen of the sixteen principal committees are compared as to amount of experience in the legislature (Table 14) it will be seen that the chairmen of the eight select House committees present distinctly the better record.

¹⁵ In six of the eight instances of removal from all chairmanships, the ex-chairman was given membership on the committee he had previously headed.

¹⁶ In each of these two cases the ex-chairman was continued as a member of the committee.

VI

A most cursory examination of the tables presented here will make it clear to the reader that the foregoing explanatory paragraphs call attention to only a few of the significant facts revealed in the data which have been compiled. It has been particularly the wish to avoid explanation of why Illinois lawmakers do not longer continue their service in the legislature, on committees, and in chairmanships. It would be of interest to make a comparative analysis of the records of rural and urban representatives, Democrats and Republicans, and minority and majority representatives from particular assembly districts. These things may properly be objectives of later articles.