



Bargaining with the President: A Simple Game and New Evidence

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BARGAINING WITH THE PRESIDENT: A SIMPLE GAME AND NEW EVIDENCE

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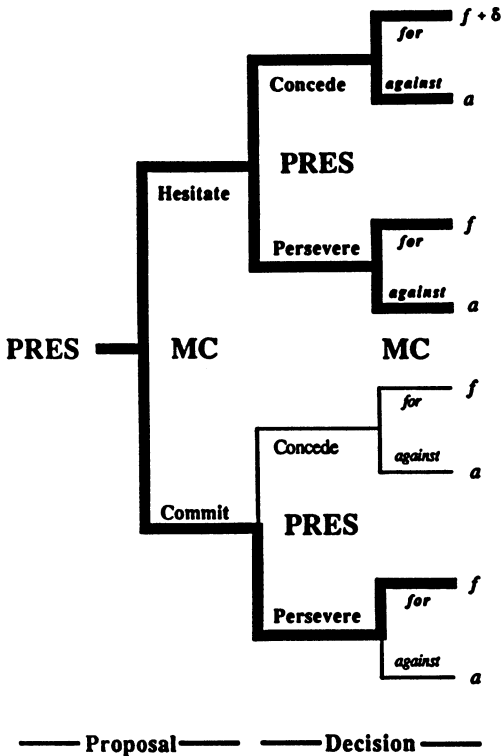
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I employ a simple game to suggest the effects of information and expectations on bargaining strategies and responses. I make use of members' predispositions in order to identify actors likely to be bargaining. Using administration headcounts, I show that while very few members misrepresent their preferences during the coalition-building process, those who do represent a large proportion of the administration's core supporters, make their misrepresentations unsystematic to avoid a costly reputation, and convert more readily than those who are not. Strategic considerations drive conversion among bluffing members, while identification with the administration determines conversion among other members. Compromise generates few conversions. A conservative estimate of bluffing suggests that the conversion of bluffers decided more than half the administration's critical votes. I speculate about a model to account for the observed bluffing.

Since Richard Neustadt's *Presidential Power* (1960) presidential scholars have accepted the observation that the president's power is the power to bargain successfully (p. 36). Yet since then, two problems have stymied efforts to expand Neustadt's observation into a research agenda. First, while many believe that bargaining matters, no one has developed a formal theory suggesting how it matters. Second, despite its obvious appeal,¹ all the discussion of bargaining, by analysts and politicians, flies in the face of the empirical research. For example, Edwards (1980, 1989) assesses presidential influence utilizing a variety of standard measures (e.g., presidential "batting averages" and "support scores"). He concludes that "presidential legislative skills do not seem to affect support for presidential policies, despite what conventional wisdom leads us to expect. Sources of information about presidential-congressional rela-

tions, particularly the press, seem to have focused upon the more unique examples of these relations, implying that what they are presenting was typical. When we rigorously and systematically evaluate the evidence, however, we reach different conclusions" (1980, 202). Instead, Edwards concludes that presidents rely on advantages more directly linked to electoral resources, such as party ties, coat-tails, popular prestige, and so on. While at variance with the practitioner's view, the appeal of these empirical results is unmistakable. If reelection drives members of Congress, the president's influence with these members depends upon their shared electoral "fate." This linkage would define the president's bargaining ability (see also Kingdon 1981, 199). Of course, the typical empirical approach to presidential influence actually estimates a model of presidential "success" in floor voting. With a specification more closely mirroring the coalition-building process, it is

Figure 1. A Simplistic Model of Bargaining



shall then identify member predispositions and describe new data on the actual prevailing positions of members. Using these data, I shall test the empirical expectations. The test results will help identify an opportunities model that is consistent with what actually happens and confirms the importance of the Edwards results yet demonstrates that bargaining matters.

Utilizing a Simple Game of Mutual Dependence

The foundation of Neustadt's familiar analysis is the "mutual dependence" between president and Congress, which affects their separate prospects for power (1960, 356). On the one hand, the president's ability to obtain the support of some congressional majority limits presidential fortunes; on the other, the president's influence tempers the power of every congressional majority. In developing this theme, even a simple game model of bargaining can be instructive. Figure 1 illustrates a game involving only two players: the president and a single member of Congress. This game proceeds in two stages:² a proposal stage initiated by the president and a decision stage dominated by the member. In this simplistic game setting, then, the president proposes and the Congress disposes. Since each cannot complete the game without the participation of the other, the two are mutually dependent.

In the decision stage and for reasons of simplicity, the model assumes that each player has only two options. The president either sticks to the current administration proposal or grants some concession. The member must decide either to vote *for* or *against* the current proposal. These options result in one of two outcomes, f (supporting the president) or a (opposing the president). In the proposal stage, the president initiates a proposal to begin the game, and only the member has

possible to discern what clearly are skill effects. Regardless of the accuracy of these past empirical analyses, however, no research has attempted to develop Neustadt's insights by modeling presidential-congressional bargaining itself. Without such a model, any speculation about the importance of presidential skill and influence remains just that.

My research agenda on presidential influence explicitly proceeds from a bargaining perspective. First I shall present a simple game representation of what Neustadt describes as the "mutual dependence" between presidents and members of Congress and discuss five reasonable empirical expectations about congressional bargaining with the president. I

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two options: one signals a commitment to the president's proposal, while the other signals some hesitancy about supporting the proposal.

While the outcome rests on mutual dependence, one other thing affects how players act: how much information is available. The simplistic model presented so far assumes that each knows the other's preferences and available responses (i.e., each player possesses complete information). In this simplification, what the president should do, once presented with the member's signal, will depend on the president's assessment of the member's preferences about voting. If the member prefers the proposal (i.e., prefers *f* to *a*) and hence will vote for the proposal anyway, there is no need to concede a favor even when the member is hesitant. If the member prefers not to have the proposal (prefers *a* to *f*) and hence will vote against the proposal even if the president concedes a favor, there is *still* no reason to concede. Of course, given complete information, the president can accurately assess how the member will vote. And the member knows that the president knows how the member will vote, and the president knows the member knows that the president knows, and so on.

In the end, this simplistic game, which models mutual dependence and focuses on information, generates two suggestive results. First, complete information precludes some choices. For example, a member has no incentive to vote against after initially committing even though such behavior is logically possible. Likewise, when the member initially commits, there is no need for the president to consider conceding, even though that too is a logical possibility. Thus, given complete information, a member's initial choice of committing results in *f* as a foregone conclusion. Hence, the game tree illustrates a single path (one of the heavy lines) down the *commit* side of Figure 1. Second, this simplistic game model generates a very

straightforward equilibrium: the president will concede only when that concession will result in changing the hesitant member's vote from *against* to *for*. Given that the member knows this is what the president has deduced, the member will hesitate only when a concession is necessary to change that vote. Thus, this simple model underscores the important linkage between what the member signals in the proposal stage and all of the choices either possible or made thereafter. It suggests further that the strength of that linkage between signaling and choice might be central to bargaining.

There are two possible research strategies for elaborating the simplistic game in order to assess bargaining. First, a researcher might develop new theories incrementally by adding more complex forms to the simple game model (see Sullivan 1988a). Second, a researcher might examine how presidents and members actually bargain in hopes of motivating appropriate extensions of the simple game. The first approach requires surmounting several theoretical problems with which theorists are grappling. The second approach focuses on theoretically important questions, but it also requires further empirical development. For example, it requires developing a technique for estimating the predispositions of members. It also requires the data to track a member's behavior prior to voting. The research reported here follows the second strategy. By utilizing a new technique it estimates predispositions. By utilizing new data, it tracks how different members bargain with the administration. In doing so, the research highlights two closely related elements familiar to the Neustadt perspective: expectations and reputation.

Expectations and Reputation

No bargaining takes place in the simple game, because information is complete; that is, each player knows the preferences

of the other, and each knows that the other knows that. Of course, no matter how astute and experienced they are, real politicians do not know for certain the preferences of their fellows. In game-theoretic parlance, they possess incomplete information. Through their choices, however, players can still signal something of their intentions to the others even though that signal is now less revealing. Via those signals, each participant still possesses some control over what others may expect and hence over the final outcome (see also Neustadt 1960, 84). Yet, with the addition of uncertainty, the linkage between signal and choices is far more complex. For example, without preference information, a member's hesitation might convince the president that the member prefers to vote *for* the proposal only if given some concession (i.e., the member prefers $f + \delta$ to a and a to f) when the member actually prefers the proposal. The president's bargaining problem is how to interpret hesitation and discern whether it results from a genuine reluctance to support; that is to say, the administration's job is to decide when hesitation necessitates haggling and when it is purely bluff. Fortunately for the administration, the lack of information also hampers the member. The member is never quite sure what impact initial hesitation might have on the president's calculus and how much information the president has about the member's true preferences. For that matter, incomplete information means that the member is never quite sure whether δ might not be too much to ask for (i.e., whether the president might not prefer a to $f + \delta$ even though surely preferring f to a). So there is no straightforward prediction about what course is best for the president (to concede or to persevere) even when the member is hesitant. Hence, there is no straightforward prediction about what course is best for the member (to hesitate or to commit).

Adjusting strategy selections in this new, uncertain situation involves some complicated processes (see Ellsberg 1956). For example, if the member expects that the president (deciding in ignorance) will always concede when the member hesitates, the member might always hesitate. The president, on the other hand, may suspect (or may learn) that in some (maybe in all) situations a concession is not necessary to obtain a *for* vote: the member bluffs hesitancy. As a result, the president might adopt different estimates of how important granting a costly concession really is. The president could decide never to concede, even though refusing to grant favors undoubtedly risks missing out on some of the potentially available support. Conversely, when the two interact over many issues the president might devise a strategy designed to punish a bluffing member (by withdrawing credit, for example) so that over time the total gains from bluffing would be zero. In turn, the member contemplating bargaining might adjust prior estimations of the president and seek some middle ground where the member rarely employs bluffing and hesitancy is typically genuine. Then the president might adjust in response, to make punishment rare as long as hesitancy *appears* genuine.

Thus, for both the member and the president, one important aspect of bargaining is a professional reputation defined as an expectation about the linkage between one's signals, preferences, and ultimate actions. When information is incomplete, reputation and the expectations they engender act as a force analogous to (but of course not quite identical to) complete information. Maintaining a reputation over time eliminates specific options by making unreasonable some strategies that are otherwise perfectly allowable. Also, as repetition confirms reputation, firmed expectations portend the appearance of an equilibrium similar to that under complete information, balancing

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signals and actions. The actual characterization of this equilibrium, however, is very complex (Kreps and Wilson 1982); and it often suggests some unusual behavior. For example, circumstances might force the president or a member to do something unreasonable in the short run in order to maintain a specific reputation. In particular, the need to preserve a reputation might force a member to carry through on a threat when the administration does not respond favorably.

Thus, the loss of complete information means that the ability to send signals, which was so critical to stabilizing the outcome in the original simple game, now undermines stability by allowing a player to manipulate the expectations of other players. At the same time, this signaling lays the ground work for a stable relationship, though even this is fraught with temptations. Such complexity is an important possibility both in developing bargaining theory with incomplete information and in the actual practice of leadership. Thus, assessing how often members of Congress misrepresent their support with their signals in the real bargaining process is an important empirical (as well as theoretical) consideration.

Empirical Expectations

Although the previous discussion did not develop a formal theory, it does suggest the following expectations about bargaining:

1. *The Infrequency of Misrepresentation.* Some, but not many, members initially misrepresent their positions as hesitancy.
2. *The Importance of Avoiding a Bad Reputation.* A diagnostic model performs poorly in predicting which members will respond with initial hesitancy. In addition, to the extent that any of their hesitancy is systematic, variables defining the bargaining situa-

tion are better descriptors than variables describing the member.

3. *The Absence of Unreasonable Positions.* Since it is an unreasonable strategy, members predisposed to oppose the administration do not commit in the proposal stage and then vote against the administration in the decision stage.
4. *The Relative Regularity of Conversion.* The rate of conversion among hesitant members identified under expectation 1 is considerably higher than other conversion rates.
5. *The Strategic Nature of Conversion.* Among members identified under expectation 1, a diagnostic model of conversion identifies strategic variables as significant while the same conversion model for others identifies only descriptors of the member as significant.

The first three expectations stem from the suggestion that members develop a balance between the desire to take every advantage and the necessity for restraint so as to nurture one's reputation. Given that presidential bargaining is a very complex game when it is based on expectations (which are manipulable), some misrepresentation is likely. Interestingly enough, an administration probably invites this manipulation. Presumably, it wants members to know that it rewards those who take "statesmanlike" positions, going against their constituency or their better judgment to make the hard, but nevertheless "right" decisions. Otherwise, the administration cannot expect to tempt potential supporters to cooperate, except on an exclusively quid pro quo basis. This desire to tempt members, of course, leaves the administration vulnerable to being bluffed. Even if members intend to support the administration, they also may consider reporting initial hesitancy, thus

creating an opportunity to demonstrate loyalty by later doing something that appears difficult (i.e., converting). In his published diary, for example, G. William Whitehurst (1983, 42) reported an incident in which a Republican colleague waited until the final few seconds before casting his vote supporting a Nixon veto. When approached by Whitehurst to explain his behavior in holding out so long, the member replied, "I just want them to see my name blank up there until the last minute. That way they appreciate me more." Presumably, this member was feigning hesitancy on the administration's headcounts, as well.

On the other hand, several considerations (but certainly three in particular) temper advantage taking so that few ever risk bluffing (expectation 1). First, some situations or combinations of preferences probably make it difficult to pressure effectively. For a bluffing signal to work, it must convey convincing information that contradicts the initial expectations of the administration, suggesting that the member would not be signaling such hesitation unless genuinely reluctant. The normal array of predispositions probably restricts the opportunity for such contradictory yet informative signaling.

Second, successfully pressing the administration for a policy compromise poses a complicated collective action problem. If it is to be successful, a member's demand for concession must usually occur as one among many similar demands. Yet the member is alone and in ignorance of what the others are doing when *reporting* hesitancy to the administration. No member can be sure what response colleagues are likely to make in their private conversations with the administration, especially as the legislative situation underlying any initial agreement begins to change. Members can be sure of the costs they risk incurring, however. Every administration maintains a credit balance with members on which they

might draw at some time in the future; often the administration checks this balance before granting requests (Dodd and Sullivan 1979; Holtzman 1970). In political parlance, this credit balance is the value of being a *friend*. Every demand reduces a member's credit with the administration, that is, there is a *friendship cost* associated with each demand regardless of type. Drawing down one's account has the effect of reducing the probability that the administration will grant a favor in the future. With some discounting, then, bluffing has a price even when the member is not caught outright. Also, it might be assumed that there are different kinds of costs associated with different options. For example, in general, producing a public policy concession is strictly more costly for the administration than producing a personal favor. Because of this differential in costs, an administration probably is slower to respond to policy demands unless made by a large group. Hence, every demand carries with it an *organizational cost* in proportion to how many individuals are necessary to make the demand respectable. In the simple game model with only one member, the organizational costs of every kind of demand are equally near zero because the single member's decision on how to vote is critical. But when more members are involved, the administration must be convinced that a net advantage will result from yielding on a publicly taken policy position. Thus, when considering concessions, an administration probably must be convinced that a large faction of members is at risk. And of course, as the number of total members in the game increases, so does the number of coincident demands necessary to trigger a response from the administration. Hence, as the number of members goes up, the organizational costs of coordinating demands for a concession rise dramatically while the organizational costs of demanding a personal favor still remain near zero. The

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end result may be that no one carries through on their promises to make a concerted demand. It is also difficult to coordinate a joint demand strategy specific enough to enable the administration to recognize what it must do. Eventually, the uncertainties and organizational problems are such that the group probably has to present its demands to the president in person and in detail. Thus, costs plus uncertainty may account for why members often visit the president *in delegations*, in order not only to make clear their demands but also to assure that everyone in the group actually cooperates. Of course, when others are demanding compromise or if the legislative situation is naturally close, members always run the risk that hesitancy might trigger the administration to respond, *but in the wrong direction*. An administration might overreact and withdraw its proposal, for example, thinking that if it had so little initial support it could not possibly win without giving away too much. In this situation, members contemplating a feint in order to demand a compromise might conclude instead that half a loaf is better than none. Since hesitancy always undermines the member's long-term relationship with the administration, adding that loss to the organizing costs may convince each member that a coordinated policy demand is just too costly.

Third, members eschew bluffing in order to avoid developing any one of a number of bad reputations (expectation 2). Presumably, the leadership's high discount on the signal it receives from such members forecloses their future opportunities.³ Three reputations seem particularly bad. The first two differ only in the member's typical demand, while with the third reputation the balance between gains and costs is poor. The first reputation is that of the member who is always bargaining for a favor regardless of the issue or legislative situation. This reputation is of a member "*We can't count on.*"

Over time, such a quid pro quo approach develops a negative credit balance with the administration, who, of course, cannot afford always to be conceding favors to anyone. Eventually, say the practitioners, the administration must close the window on these members, shutting them off from administration favors altogether. The second reputation is that of a member who, though constantly demanding compromise, always converts, regardless of the administration's response: a member *Always crying wolf*. One former whip said of a member who regularly opposed the leadership on headcounts in order to pressure the leadership: "Oh, Mr. _____ was always trying to get us to change legislation, to make it more conservative. After a while we realized that he was just pressuring us for some concession. We could always count on his vote, so we stopped being concerned about him. You learn to read a member." For members, the problem associated with crying wolf is not so much that the administration eventually figures them out or gets fed up as that the signaling involved leaves members with no effective way to communicate genuine hesitancy or a need for attention. The only type of unanticipated behavior from these members is committing to the administration, and no member gets the administration's attention by signaling commitment. Members avoid the third reputation, of committing to the administration initially and then voting against it on the critical vote. This reputation is of the member *We can't trust*, and it is the most damaging of all reputations. Just as every administration wants to reward conversion, every administration has an incentive to punish renegeing. The member the leadership does not trust risks engendering a dramatic drain of credit. In conjunction with the fact that initially committing to the administration forecloses concession, members gain nothing by bluffing support. One possibility, of course, is that

members might bluff support in order to lull the administration into a false sense of security and an ultimate floor defeat. The likelihood, however, is that few members would risk such deception since in a post mortem (and every administration conducts post mortems), the administration surely could discern which members participated. Moreover, since the administration starts off the coalition-building process with far less than a majority, the numbers necessary to lull it into a false sense of security would be very large. In the end then, there are high costs and no benefits associated with pursuing this strategy or developing this reputation (expectation 3). In addition to expectation 3, the argument here also supports another hypothesis. If there were such a lulling strategy, the incidence should concentrate on a few issues; otherwise, given the typically desperate legislative situation facing the administration, no false sense of security could arise.

If there actually are some who feign hesitancy, their behavior in the decision stage could appear complicated. For example, the administration's response is crucial for those seeking favors; it is, after all, a quid pro quo. On demands for policy compromises, the administration's response is less determinate, since when the policy under consideration is important, the member probably will fall into line regardless of the administration's response. Despite this contingent nature, two asymmetries bias conversion behavior. Whether a bluff succeeds or it is called, the member's payoff requires conversion, even despite the potentially harmful reputational effects from folding on a called bluff. As a result, the rate of conversion should be greatest among groups composed largely of bluffing, hesitant members (expectation 4). Two components determine the conversion rate: the first is *natural* conversion driven by predispositions and initiated by either compromise or the introduction of im-

proved information; the second component is *strategic* conversion driven by bargaining considerations, including bluffing strategies or the receipt of personal favors. Using this perspective on conversion components, an analysis of nonfeigning members should highlight basic member or policy characteristics, while on analysis of feigning members should highlight the unfolding strategic situation (expectation 5).

Testing the Expectations

Assessing bargaining requires data tracking member positions throughout the process, estimating member predispositions (in order to identify core supporters, etc.), and identifying specific groups with which to test the expectations.

Available Data

The data used in this research originated in Lyndon Johnson's Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) during the 90th Congress (1967-68). They span 51 different issues (see Table A-1 for a sample).⁴ They are a portion of a large data set of over six hundred counts covering five administrations, Eisenhower through Ford (Sullivan n.d.). On most of these issues, the Johnson administration took several counts over a long period of time; the median time between an "initial" count and the critical vote was thirteen days. On its count, the administration recorded members' responses, often including very detailed accounts. These responses include some that evidence hesitancy about the specifics of a proposal. For example on one of the most complicated issues of the Congress, the 1968 tax surcharge proposal, the liaison reported: "I talked today with Mim Daddario. He will not vote for the tax bill conference report; he will vote against the tax bill conference report as he refuses to be 'held

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up to ransom.' He is strongly in favor of a tax but with the current \$6 billion in spending cuts that the conference report contains he is against it."⁵ Some members make a specific policy demand. On this same bill, the liaison reported: "Mr. Brademus [*sic*]: Not [supporting] at the present time. . . . What really bothers Brademus [*sic*] is that the surtax package that the administration is pressing for does not contain anything that is calculated to make it politically attractive to the voters of his district. He thinks the tax increase should be packaged with some measure of tax reform. He says that he would not ask for the moon, but just some little "crumb" that he could take to his constituency along with the tax increase. . . . The 'oil fat cats,' etc. and others who have tax havens will not bear the burden of the surtax."⁶ Some responses link a member's position to a special favor. For example, on the tax surcharge bill, the liaison reported: "Kelly [NY]: Extremely upset about her redistricting problem. She wants help from the White House to keep Manny Celler from running in her district. She wants a call from the White House on this matter promptly. She won't comment on the tax increase until she hears about her problem."⁷

The OCR then translated these detailed reports and requests into summary categories ranging, in typical Johnson fashion, from *right* to *wrong*. The Johnson administration, like others, felt the detailed responses were useful only in determining which tack to take with a member. For summarizing a member's position, the administration believed the few broad-gauged values on the *right-wrong* scale were best. Moreover, for most considerations of strategy, the administration collapsed even these summaries into two categories: *right* or *in need of persuasion* (i.e. *hesitancy*). This two-valued schema reflects the kind of administration perspective that LBJ aide

Douglas Cater (1964) has described: "A President finds himself measuring Congress in terms of the coalitions for him and against him on specific issues" (see also Califano 1975 on the "nonpartisan" presidency). In the final stages of assessing strategic conversions the research introduces the administration's more detailed categorization schema as a control variable. Since the administration was far better at keeping its summary reports than it was at maintaining its detailed reports, I shall focus on assessing the strategic situation as the administration observed it through its count summaries. A later analysis will focus on assessing the administration's more detailed reports.

The data used here indicate that typically about 149 members committed to the administration's proposal on the initial count. This figure jibes with the recollections of the chief OCR officer during the 90th Congress. Harold ("Barefoot") Sanders recalled that the administration "could always start out with 145 to 150 votes in the House . . . , give or take twenty on a particular issue" (Sanders 1969, tape 2, nos. 13-14). It seems clear that Sanders's comments reflect his experiences with what actually happened rather than what he expected based on his "theory" of whence administration support came. Of course, this figure is shy of the 218 votes needed for an absolute majority. The remaining member positions run from *leaning right* through *undecided* to *wrong*. On the typical count, there are usually very few members who respond *undecided*, reflecting the highly charged nature of these presidential priorities. In any case, the administration considers everyone not *right* to be in need of persuasion of some kind.⁸

Empirical Techniques

Before applying data to the simple game-theoretic structures developed here,

the analysis utilizes two empirical techniques. The first identifies types of members by specifying a model of member predispositions. The second uses two diagnostic models developed in order to model hesitancy and conversion.

A Model of Predispositions. In order to approximate member predispositions, the analysis employs an "electoral connection" assumption: consistent differences in behavior between members result from differences in their constituencies. To utilize this assumption, a hierarchical cluster analysis identified voting patterns in an earlier Congress (the 89th) (Anderberg 1973; Uebersax 1979). Using a strong parameter of similarity made the clustering more focused than usual, although the resulting clusters were consistent with mainstream research (e.g., Clausen 1973; Sinclair 1982). The analysis identified two clusters as *civil liberties*, and *governing the economy*.⁹ A probit analysis then described member voting behavior on these two clusters by calculating parameters on some 26 constituency characteristics (see the Appendix). By applying these coefficients to constituency characteristics updated by forced redistricting prior to the 90th Congress, I produced a prediction about a member's response when a headcount came from an issue group. These predictions represent member predispositions.

The technique defines members as having a strong tendency to hesitate if their probit scores resulted in a probability of supporting the administration of .2 or less ($.2 \geq p$). These members are the administration's *core opponents*. Conversely, a probability of .8 or better ($p \geq .8$) indicates a strong proclivity to take the *right* position. These members are the administration's *core supporters*. Scores between the two extremes ($.2 < p < .8$) indicate a proclivity to be *cross-pressured*, sometimes supporting the administration, sometimes not (see also Bond and Fleisher

1990, chap. 4; Covington 1988). In the 90th House, the technique identifies 132 members as core opponents, 128 members as core supporters, and 173 members as cross-pressured. On the average initial count, members supported LBJ in direct proportion to their predispositions; that is, very few core opponents responded *right*, while the cross-pressured and core supporters made up the bulk of initial supporters.

The Diagnostic Models of Hesitancy and Conversion. In order to analyze the empirical patterns to hesitancy and then conversion, the analysis introduces two extensions to the basic model of predispositions (see the Appendix). In analyzing whether there is a systematic pattern to hesitancy (expectation 2), the first extension introduces variables controlling for the member's institutional position and for the bargaining situation. In analyzing conversion (expectation 5), the research further enhances the basic model by adding a variable describing the basic direction of administration compromise, as identified by Congressional Quarterly or administration memoranda. It also introduces an ordinal variable that measures the strength of member hesitancy using the administration's more detailed *right-wrong* schema. This variable will control for conversions that result from "natural" hesitation. In order to measure conversion, the analysis compares an initial count position with the closest vote on which the president took a position. The analysis depended on both internal administration documents and the determination of Congressional Quarterly when identifying whether the president took a position. Where the administration and Congressional Quarterly differed, the research relied on administration reports (see also Covington 1987a). The average split on these critical votes was 217 *right* votes to 185 *wrong* votes, an average victory margin of only seventeen.

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Table 1. Patterns of Hesitancy by Types of Member Predispositions

Member Type and Predisposition	Predicted As Initially Hesitant ^a			Actual Occurrences of Initial Hesitancy		
	n	p	n	n	Of Group (%)	Difference ^b (%)
$p \leq .2$ (core opponent)	132.7 ^c	.91	121.3	120.8	91.0	-.4
$.2 < p < .8$ (cross-pressured)	172.5 ^c	.57	98.7	124.6	72.3	26.2
$p \geq .8$ (core supporter)	128.0 ^c	.10	13.3	64.2	49.6	382.7

^aBased on average probit values.

^bThe "difference" is calculated as $(\text{actual} - \text{predicted})_{\text{hesitant}} / \text{predicted}_{\text{hesitant}}$. Differences in percentages of predicted and actual are due to rounding in these two categories.

^cAverages reflect the changing size of the House membership during the Congress.

Findings

For simplicity of exposition, the tables illustrate the weighted average between the *civil rights* and the *governing the economy* issue clusters. Responses from 25 counts fall into these two clusters during the 90th House, which in turn encompass about ten thousand initial positions.

Do Members Feign Hesitancy?

Table 1 addresses the question of misrepresentation. It reports data on member predispositions and initial position taking. This table distributes the members into the three broad predispositions and reports an expectation about initial position taking. For example, their average predisposition suggests that about 91% of the administration's core opponents should respond with hesitancy. If realized, that percentage would result in about 121 members. Then the table reports the actual levels of initial hesitancy based on observations taken from the headcounts and presented as averages (for core opponents, about 121 members). It reports the proportion the hesitant responses represent of the total group (for core opponents, 91.0%), and calculates the difference between the predicted and actual levels as a percentage of the predicted level of hesitancy (for core oppo-

nents, about .4%). In the final column the table summarizes which group or groups are responding in a very unusual way (signaling hesitancy) relative to their normal predispositions.

As is clear, the administration's core supporters are the only group to respond with unusual hesitancy. Based on their generally very weak predisposition to hesitancy (i.e., $1 - \bar{p}_{\text{core}} = .10$), their responses represent a difference of almost 400%! By contrast, the difference between expected and actual hesitancy among the other groups is never much more than 25%. The magnitude of differences between groups is very robust with respect to p .¹⁰ Despite the substantial percentage, the number of core supporters adopting hesitation is still a small proportion of the *total* membership (only about 12%). These data, then, strongly support the expectation that few misrepresent, but they also suggest something unexpected, namely, that circumstances or something else limits misrepresentation to the administration's core supporters.

Do Members Avoid a Reputation?

Was it possible for the administration to anticipate the actions of these core supporters? If there is a pattern to feints among the bargaining signals, the admin-

Table 2. A Logit Model of Initial Hesitancy among Core Supporters
($p \geq .8$)

Variables	MLE Coefficient	Standard Error	χ^2
Constant	11.201	2.256	24.65***
Constituency instrument	.003	.010	.09
Institutional context			
LBJ's Gallup approval	-.071	.011	45.37***
Seniority	.002	.003	.51
Democratic leader?	.320	.217	2.19
Total committee value	.059	.103	.33
State of the economy			
Inflation rate	-.010	.006	2.48
Unemployment rate	-.154	.042	13.24***
Strategic situation			
Initial closeness to majority	-.058	.012	22.45***
(Initial closeness) ²	.026	.010	7.33**
Number of cases	2,918		
χ^2_{Model}	257.37		
R ²	.059		
% Correct	59.6		

* $p \leq .05$.

** $p \leq .01$.

*** $p \leq .001$.

istration could discount them in anticipation of eventual floor support. Indeed, the earlier analysis suggested that this very prospect makes it unreasonable to expect regular patterns from members. Specifically, the expectation suggests that it would be difficult to predict hesitancy among core supporters.

Table 2 reports a logit model of initial hesitancy among core supporters. Obviously, the model does not perform well, although this specification performed better than any other tested. While not completely comparable with ordinary least squares regression, the logistic regression does report a coefficient of determination (R-squared) that is similar. For this model, R-squared is extremely low at .06. As expected, some variables have significant coefficients; and, as expected, these significant variables characterized the bargaining situation. Variables describing the member generally did not perform well. This result suggests that bargaining

(and especially bluffing) is basically un-systematic, as if members were attempting to avoid a bad reputation.¹¹ In sum, then, there is strong evidence that members balance their responses between taking advantage and restraint. It seems likely that few members misrepresent and that when they do, their bluffing is unsystematic.

Do Members Avoid Unreasonable Positions?

Table 3 reports data on whether members avoid the specific reputation of a member *We can't trust*. It details the numbers and percentages of members who initially commit to the administration and then vote against, along with information about their predispositions. Although the expectation focuses on core opponents, the table reports data on all three groups. Given the average predisposition of core opponents, the model would

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**Table 3. Initial Commitment and Final Opposition
by Type of Member Predispositions**

Member Type and Predisposition	n	Predicted as Initially Right ^a		Actual Occurrences of Right/Against		
		p	n	n	% Group	% Members
$p \leq .2$ (core opponent)	132.7 ^b	.09	11.4	1.2	.9	.3
$.2 < p < .8$ (cross-pressured)	187.3 ^b	.39	73.0	3.7	1.2	.9
$p \geq .8$ (core supporter)	125.8 ^b	.90	113.2	4.6	3.7	1.1

^aBased on probit values.

^bAverages reflect the changing membership of the House during the Congress. Total number of cases is 9,880.

suggest that about 9% might actually respond *right* on the initial count. If realized, that percentage would represent 11.4 members on the average count. Table 1 reported that the percentage of opponents taking *right* positions actually averaged 11.9 members, almost exactly that predicted by their predispositions. Table 3 reports the actual numbers of these initial commitments who voted *against*. On average, among core opponents, only 1.2 members actually committed and then voted against the administration. This average represents less than 1% of core opponents, which is about 10% of those opponents initially reporting *right* but also less than 1% of the core opponents, less than one incident per issue, and less than one-third of 1% of the total membership. In addition, while the incidence of such misrepresentation increased across the three groups, still, only about 2% of

the total membership initially committed and then voted *against*. Further, as expected, the incidents ranged so widely across issues that there was no support for the notion that these represented some concerted effort to lull the administration into a false security. Lulling the administration was simply too complex a task for anyone to consider practical. Of course, such very small proportions could reflect something as simple as coding errors, either in White House summaries or data preparation. As a result, these data represent strong evidence supporting the expectation that few will adopt unreasonable positions (expectation 3).

Is Conversion Regular?

As is obvious from Table 1, the Johnson administration's success depended on conversions. Table 4 reports on conver-

Table 4. Patterns of Conversion to Right by Types of Member Predispositions

Member Type and Predisposition	n	Actual Occurrences of		
		Initial Hesitancy	Converted	
		n	n	%
$p \leq .2$ (core opponent)	132.7 ^a	120.8	27.0	22.4
$.2 < p < .8$ (cross-pressured)	172.5 ^a	124.6	51.6	41.4
$p \leq .8$ (core supporter)	128.0 ^a	64.2	40.0	62.2

^aAverages reflect the changing membership of the House during the Congress. Total number of cases is 9,880.

sion among the initially hesitant, again by reference to their predispositions. The question is whether potential bluffers (now identified as concentrated among core supporters) converted wholesale by comparison to the group of more cross-pressured members who also initially responded with hesitancy. In these data, conversion correlates with predispositions. Core opponents convert the least, about 20%, cross-pressured members about 40%, while core supporters (and potential bluffers) convert a bit more than 60%. The rate for core supporters is 50% greater than the rate among the cross-pressured members. Yet despite the fact that these patterns are in the right direction and that the 50% difference is substantial, these data only weakly suggest that core supporters would convert wholesale. Obviously, these members convert more; but they do not *all* convert. There may be a reasonable explanation. During the 90th House, the administration faced a serious conservative challenge on all Great Society legislation. Almost every member of the administration who worked the House has mentioned this fact (e.g., see Sanders 1969). In addition, the average support on initial headcounts had been steadily declining since the high point in the 88th Congress (1964). The administration had lost 47 seats in the off-year election of 1966, mainly among Northern Democrats. Also, the circumstances of the Vietnam War had begun to spill over into domestic legislation.

Several issues presented the administration with unusual legislative problems. Issues like the 1968 tax surcharge or the 1968 railway dispute settlement plagued the administration's supporters—the Northern liberal (often labor-oriented) membership. Some, like Brademas, believed the tax increase should only come in conjunction with tax reform aimed at the "fat cats." Other members believed that the president's desire for a

tax increase should not come at the expense of Great Society programs: "Mr. Boland (MA): 'I think those of us who feel strongly on the Great Society programs have to make every effort to send the (tax) bill back to conference and get the conferees to come back with the \$4 billion ceiling—the way to do that is to vote down the previous question. That I intend to do.'"¹² On the rail dispute bill, some core supporters wanted the government to protect union rights to strike even at the expense of slowing transport of war material. On both of these issues, as on others, many core supporters were adamant in their initial opposition. For example, in the president's briefing book on the tax bill, the liaison reported on Robert Kastenmeier several times, for instance: "Mr. Kastenmeier: He is firmly opposed to the bill with the \$6 billion reduction and would only support it if the cuts came from Vietnam."¹³ and "Mr. Kastenmeier: 'This package was put together to please the Republicans and the conservatives—then let the Republicans and the conservatives pass it. Why should liberal Democrats save them?'"¹⁴ The administration also recorded John Dow of New York: "Mr. Dow: Wrong. He will not support a tax increase or an expenditure cut of any kind under any circumstances. He thinks the Vietnam war should be cut."¹⁵

On the tax surcharge and railway dispute, as on many other issues at that Congress, the administration built its final coalition not by "staying at home" but by compromising with conservatives, as Kastenmeier so hotly noted. In these two situations, the administration compromise left the initially hesitant core supporters unable to hold the administration's toes to the fire. Some of these core supporters responded by carrying through on their threats. Brademas, for example, did not support the administration, nor did Edna Kelly. Undoubtedly, some core supporters carried through because they were genuinely unable to

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Table 5. Logit Models of Conversion among Hesitant Core Supporters and the Cross-pressured

Variables	Core Supporters		Cross-pressured	
	MLE Coefficient	Standard Error	MLE Coefficient	Standard Error
Constant	-12.121	4.968*	8.875	3.236***
Constituency instrument	.013	.021	.021	.004***
Institutional context				
LBJ's Gallup approval	-.002	.031	.051	.022*
Democratic leader?	.607	.531	.494	.456
Seniority	-.012	.006	-.006	.004
Total committee value	-.104	.225	-.091	.124
State of the economy				
Inflation rate	.024	.016	-.013	.010
Unemployment rate	.447	.115***	-.291	.065***
Strategic situation				
Initial closeness to majority	-.215	.036***	-.010	.014
(Initial closeness) ²	.178	.032***	-.014	.013
Control for hesitancy: Member's initial response	.203	.044***	.323	.040***
Policy compromise: White House stood firm?	.061	.279	.099	.162
Number of cases		685		1,665
X^2_{Model}		127.50		268.55
$-2 \log(\text{likelihood}_{intercepts})$		936.39		2,254.58
$P(-2 \text{ LOG LR})$.000		.000
R^2		.113		.110
% correct		68.8		67.7

* $p \leq .05$.

** $p \leq .01$.

*** $p \leq .001$.

reconcile themselves (or perhaps their constituents) to supporting the administration. Others probably saw the situation as an opportunity to reinforce their reputation, since the administration had called their bluff. In any event, the evidence seems to suggest that sometimes core supporters uphold their threats in order to preserve their reputations; and it is this reputational effect that prevents wholesale conversion. Of course, the evidence also suggests that regardless of how firm their objections seem, core supporters convert when their administration needed their support. Despite his strong initial hesitancy, for example, Kastemeier converted on the tax surcharge, as

did Edward Boland, Emilio Daddario, and John Dow.

Is Conversion Strategic?

The previous section suggests that coalition outcomes often can have a strategic as well as a "normal" character. I shall analyze a logit model of conversion designed to capture both the normal and the potentially strategic elements of the coalition-building process. It focuses on the patterns of compromise and conversion among core supporters and suggests a minimum estimate of how many were bargaining and how many were merely bluffing. Table 5 reports the logit model

of conversion. In a side-by-side comparison, it reports conversion among hesitant core supporters and hesitant cross-pressured members. The logit specification used the basic diagnostic model plus an intercept dummy describing administration compromise (*standing firm* is the reference value). On these issues the administration either held firm or compromised with conservatives. The model also included a control variable describing the strength of each member's initial hesitancy, using the administration's *right-wrong* scale. This variable controlled for the fact that members with weaker hesitancy might more easily convert. Using predisposition and hesitancy reflects (and controls for) the potential for "normal" conversion. The use of initial hesitancy means that the results reported here probably underestimate the degree of strategic behavior. If members are trying to develop a framework within which they can take advantage without damaging their reputation, they probably consider the strength of their signal as well as its content. They want to be able to signal hesitancy in a way that suggests conversion is possible so that the subsequent conversion will not appear contrived. Given these incentives to hesitate, but gently, there is a correlation between how strongly core supporters hesitate and the bargaining situation.¹⁶ Thus, the use of this hesitancy control reduced estimates of the strategic variables and is a conservative approach to estimating the impact of the bargaining situation on conversion. The adoption of this conservative strategy makes the results reported here stronger evidence of how important the bargaining situation is to the conversion of core supporters. The first expectation was that to the extent there is any systematic variation, the model of conversion would identify as significant the variables describing member predispositions or their initial hesitancy. The second expectation (from expectation 5) was that the model of con-

version would identify two other patterns. For potentially bluffing members the model would identify the variables describing the bargaining situation as significant. Among cross-pressured members, the model would identify variables describing members or their relationships with the administration.

The evidence from Table 5 is suggestive. First, the results support the expectation that normal conversion is less important among hesitant core supporters (presumed to be bluffing for the most part) than among the cross-pressured. Among core supporters, the variable describing the member's predisposition is not significant, while only the variable identifying the member's initial hesitancy is. Among the cross-pressured, on the other hand, both variables are significant. Second, as expected, to the extent that there is order to it, conversion among core supporters reflects strategic characteristics, while, by comparison, conversion for cross-pressured members reflects only member characteristics. For example, once the model controls for level of initial hesitancy, the remaining significant variables for core supporters describe the bargaining situation. These include the second-degree equation describing how close to an absolute majority is the initial coalition and the unemployment rate. Meanwhile, member descriptors (e.g., seniority and predisposition) played no role whatsoever in converting core supporters. On the other hand, conversion among cross-pressured members is almost exclusively a matter of the connection between member, constituency, and the president. For example, four of the five variables identified as significant describe the member or the linkage between member and president. The fifth is the unemployment rate.

Combining the results from Tables 2 and 5 provides a picture of how core supporters bargain. It suggests that strategic considerations put an interesting twist on their behavior. Table 2 indicates that

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given some leeway in the coalition situation (as measured by closeness) core supporters will bargain with the administration. And when their bargaining fails to generate a policy compromise (as on most of the bills here), Table 5 suggests that initial leeway leads to less conversion. When their votes were less important, core supporters could afford to be stubborn for reputation's sake. Both tables, however, suggest that as the administration's initial support nears majority size, core supporters bargain less and convert more readily. The data are interesting because some formal notions of bargaining power suppose that as the initial coalition approaches winning, each additional bargaining member's conversion becomes extraordinarily valuable. Hence, we might expect members to bargain more as the administration's initial coalition efforts come close to winning. Since closeness merely raises the potential value of conversion, however, these models suggest nothing about conversion rates. In order to understand this phenomena, it should be recalled that when information is incomplete, core supporters must walk the fine line between taking advantage and avoiding what would be a policy calamity: without their support *their* administration's proposal could fail. That possibility, plus the fact that policy compromise usually requires coordinated, mass hesitancy, would suggest that as the initial situation narrows to a few votes, it is more likely that any additional hesitant core supporter could cause the administration to give up in defeat and less likely that there are enough others hesitating to force a compromise. In effect, this analysis suggests that members tread a thin line between exercising their potential for power and fearing its consequences: wanting to have bargaining power over the administration without risking affecting the administration's strategic chances for winning. Presented with this complex relationship (including not knowing ex-

actly where things stand with the administration and other supporters), members often will forego their opportunities whenever those opportunities are coincident with high risks. This is just the kind of balance that the earlier discussion presumed would characterize the bargaining relationship between presidents, each member, and their colleagues. This result suggests that future analysis of the detailed member responses might reveal a tendency, as the initial situation becomes close, for members to hesitate by requesting favors rather than requesting policy compromises.

The only other variable accounting for conversion among core supporters also has a strategic connection to Table 2. As the economy worsens, core supporters convert more readily, rallying to the administration in what is a period of weakening influence for presidents. This kind of rally corroborates the results found in Table 2, which suggested that as the economy deteriorated, core supporters were less likely to report hesitancy. In a sense, then, these results suggest that as the president's position weakens, the administration's core foregoes its bargaining advantage and rallies to the administration. On the other hand, cross-pressured members respond to deteriorating economic conditions in ways reflecting the more traditional interpretation of how deteriorating economic performance affects presidential influence.

Finally, there appears to be no evidence to support the notion that compromises converted potentially bluffing members. The coefficient on the compromise variable was insignificant. This result is consistent with my previous findings on compromise covering all counts from the 90th House and including all members (Sullivan 1987). My interpretation stressed the seemingly strategic nature of responses to compromise and the seemingly wholesale conversion of liberal members despite conservative administra-

tion compromises. I concluded that presumably "liberals are rallying around the Johnson administration's compromise in order to stem off some worse alternative—in the politician's vernacular, they are getting 'half a loaf' " (Sullivan 1987, 299). That conclusion is certainly consistent with the bargaining behavior identified in the research here.

On the bills analyzed here, the administration never adopted compromises aimed at assuaging its hesitant core supporters; although it did compromise with them on other bills not included in this data. The administration did, however, compromise with its core opponents. For core supporters, these compromised bills cover 52% of the incidents of initial hesitancy. On the other bills, despite core supporter pleas for liberal concessions (similar to those suggested in the report on Brademas quoted earlier), the administration remained firm. Depending on how one reads the demands of hesitant core supporters, it is possible to develop an estimation of what proportion is bluffing. For example, even when the administration cut a deal with conservatives, more than half (53%) of the initially hesitant core supporters converted. These include members like Kastenmeier, Boland, Daddario, and Dow in the tax surcharge example. At the very least, hesitant core supporters who converted despite such conservative compromises represent the absolute minimum estimate of how often members bluff the administration. Afforded that minimum estimate, the quarter of conversions (53% converting of the 52% hesitant) now identified as bluff represents an average of 16.6 votes. That figure is the exact average for the administration's victory margin on its critical votes during the 90th House (217-185). Thus, without those "conversions," the administration would have lost the average critical vote. In addition, on some issues hesitant core supporters were not simply looking to counteract

conservative pressure for compromise but were in fact seeking a policy compromise favorable to *their* position. The fact that the administration stood firm and never once gave in represents a negative administration response, which suggests that surely some proportion of the remaining converts probably represent more bluffing hesitancy. If only half of the conversions that took place when the administration remained firm were actually bluffs, as well, the total number of votes involved would be about 27. Given those 27 members, the administration would have lost more than half (55%) of its critical votes in the 90th House. In the end, then, bluffers made up a small but very significant proportion of the administration's core of support, support that was critical to the administration's overall success. For example, on the issues about which it cared a great deal, the administration's batting average for the 90th House would have declined from an impressive 73% to a very disappointing 45%. The administration's overall batting average on counted issues during its full tenure (1963-1968) would have declined from 86% to 54%. That change would have afforded LBJ a success score placing him exactly at the mean success rate for the other post-war administrations for which commitment data are currently available (DDE .596, JFK .615, RMN .512, and GRF .473) instead of his current position as by far the most successful president.

Discussion

While a good deal of this research has been about members' bargaining responses, its implications and the model from which it develops describe aspects of presidential power as well. In order to develop insights about presidential bargaining power properly and apply them to the controversy over bargaining/skill,

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both the necessary theoretical and empirical agendas are quite substantial. The topics include the theoretical nature of influence (Collier and Sullivan 1988, Sullivan n.d.) and its measurement (Sullivan n.d.), presidential strategies for submitting proposals and signaling (Sullivan 1990), actual member bargaining, the demands members make when they bargain, presidential response strategies, the effect of compromise strategies (Sullivan 1987), and so on. In addition, that agenda would necessarily include developing predisposition models and applying the analysis here to data covering a larger number of Congresses and administrations. Currently, data are available from about six hundred counting efforts drawn from the five administrations Eisenhower through Ford (see Sullivan n.d.). I plan to apply my approach to this larger data set.

The specific empirical analysis reported addressed a central element of "mutual dependence"—the linkage between signaling and choice, or how reputation constrains actual bargaining. It suggests that something limits bargaining so that a specific few members bargain with the administration by withholding support. I shall now propose a simple spatial representation of bargaining. In this representation, bargaining depends on the distribution of opportunity in much the way that Edwards's empirical findings would suggest, that is, elections shape opportunities. The interesting result here is that within this spatial representation it is possible to account for the observed patterns of bargaining only by underscoring the importance of reputation and expectations. Finally, I shall briefly discuss how incomplete information generates a presidential "vantage point."

Two patterns to actual bargaining are important to model. First, of the total membership, few members bluff. Some might have anticipated this pattern, although in the literature on presidential leadership there is no discussion of how to

justify such an anticipation. Second, a substantial number of the administration's core supporters feign hesitancy. Clearly, no literature has anticipated this second pattern of bluffing.¹⁷

One potential methodological problem, of course, is that the method used here might overestimate misrepresentation, especially among core supporters. The central issue is how to interpret the difference between predicted predispositions and actual behavior: as bias or as politics. There are two general sources of bias: random error and systematic error. There seems little doubt that whatever bias might exist in the model of predispositions, the source is systematic rather than random. For example, the method produced behavioral results that seemed consistent with the expectations advanced, particularly for all $p < .8$.

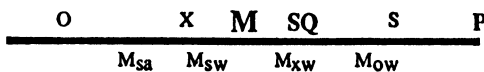
As for the reasonable possibility that any error may be systematic, here the question is both one of interpretation and methodology. The interpretive question is whether the systematic difference between behavior and predisposition is bias and hence whether the differences are residuals. If so, the problem is misspecification and calls for some better approximation of predisposition. On the other hand, these differences could be strategic and indicative of a political process. The standard practice in studies of mass behavior, of course, is to presume that such systematic differences are residuals in need of corrective measures. When studying elite behavior among professional national politicians, however, there ought to be just as strong a presumption that such differences are not residuals but the tracks of some rational, strategic behavior. This second presumption ought to be particularly strong when the model of predisposition is as powerful as the current model. Indeed, the specification presented here is a better approximation of voting behavior (for example) than standard models of voting (see Weisberg 1978). The fact is

that most voting studies do not attempt to focus only on the votes critical to the administration's program. Sometimes the administration keeps the identity of these votes confidential (see Covington 1987b). Sometimes the administration prefers to make its most determined effort in private (see Covington 1987a). In addition to its power, the method adopted here also provides a reliable and valid measure across the range of member predispositions. Thus, it seems reasonable to believe that while every model inevitably excludes some variables, the model presented here does not suffer from such misspecification any more than any modeling effort ever does. Hence, the results of this analysis not only ring true and seem valid but probably are a good approximation (if a first approximation) to what actually happens.¹⁸ The interpretation given these results, therefore, ought to be that the differences between actual behavior and predisposition are probably neither error nor residuals. Instead, the analysis ought to proceed from the presumption that the differences represent the tracks of bargaining behavior between the president and members of Congress. Given that methodological conclusion, it is important to pursue a new model of behavior that would make sense of these strategic deviations from predispositions. That is the objective of the discussion in this final section.

Bargaining Opportunities

The conjecture proposed here is that not everyone has the opportunity to bluff. Take the situation illustrated in Figure 2,

**Figure 2. Bluffing Potential
of Different Factions
According to Predispositions**



which arrays the administration, members, and policy options along a single dimension. The dimension depicts locations from the somewhat extraordinary perspective of the president (extraordinary, that is, by spatial standards, not by those of politicians). This spatial representation approximates Cater's (1964) observation that coalition formation is best understood using the "presidential perspective" on support and opposition. Here, the president's ideal outcome is at *P*, which also represents one end of the dimension—a perfect predisposition to support the administration. The status quo ante is at *SQ*, the median of the previous Congress. The president's expectation of the House's decision under normal circumstances is *M*, the actual "median voter" in the House.¹⁹ Also, the figure locates the median of three different groups. These are the administration's core supporters, the cross-pressured, and core opponents (*S*, *X*, and *O*, respectively—and also as located according to the actual medians for the 90th House). As in the simple game, a group pressures the administration by signaling its intentions. Of course, this model assumes (because the evidence supports it) that members can bring little pressure to bear by committing to vote for the administration. As a result, the analysis presumes that a group must threaten either to vote against the administration or to "take a walk." The administration can anticipate the effect of each threat as a shift in the location of the expected final outcome. The figure indicates these changes as new outcomes M_{ij} , where the subscript denotes the i^{th} group and the j^{th} action. Hence, M_{ow} represents the new outcome the administration expects from its opponents' taking a walk. Since a large proportion of the cross-pressured members and most of the opponents are expected to vote *against*, it is assumed that those two threats (M_{oa} and M_{xa} already are represented by *M*. Four other potential shifts remain as distinct from *M*.

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Of the four, two are improvements, from the administration's perspective. If the cross-pressured or core opponents were actually to take a walk, the administration would realize a better outcome than it could have anticipated. Indeed, in this specific situation those located to the left of M cannot pressure the administration because their threats cannot guarantee a worse outcome. Only those to the right can. Those close to M (say, between M and SQ) could pressure the administration except for two elements that probably undermine their potential. First, their absence cannot greatly dislocate the expected outcome. Second, their position on the dimension so close to M will obscure their threat. The administration might mistake their pressure to be M_{xw} . Only the absence of support from the core (either by their voting *against* or taking a walk) could generate outcomes unambiguously moving away from the administration's ideal. Since, in this situation, only the core supporters can misrepresent and make demands on the administration, this model accounts for the two behavior patterns reported earlier. Of course, this is merely a proposal, not a fully articulated model. It does suggest, however, how the distribution and structure of their policy ideals (which, presumably, electoral forces determine) constrain member opportunities. Thus, in the proposed model, opportunities constrain the necessity for presidential bargaining/skill. Hence, such skills may not matter, just as Edwards suggests.

One implication of this representation is that the closer that P comes to M , the more vulnerable to demands and bargaining the president becomes. Thus, a more moderate president (like a Jimmy Carter),²⁰ whose policy ideal resembles M , faces a situation in which any member's absence drives the outcome away from the administration's preferred policy outcome. Such a president in that kind of situation ends up vulnerable to

threats from all quarters as both ends play against the administration's middle. This is not to suggest that these administrations are necessarily less successful than other administrations, since the model only suggests the extent to which bargaining opportunities through threats are available to members. It does suggest, however, why such administrations have a difficult time dealing with the Congress. In effect, this model suggests a paradoxical conclusion. Presidents who can expect to get their ideal policies from the Congress face more troublesome bargaining than those who must *sell* their policies. It further suggests a justification for thinking that bargaining matters, at least for moderate administrations: an administration skilled at bargaining could overcome these kinds of difficulties and still be successful. It also provides a justification for believing that "transformational" leadership (Burns 1978) has some strategic advantages: a president with a vision can narrow the scope of strategic bargaining.

This spatial representation of opportunities seems appealing, it appears to support the Edwards conclusions about bargaining and even suggests some interesting hypotheses about other presidencies. Yet it does not account for all of the observed behavior. It cannot explain why members who *could* bargain nevertheless avoid applying pressure to the administration. Consistent with the reputational hypothesis presented earlier (expectation 2), Table 2 reported that bluffing appears distributed evenly among core supporters. Further examination of Tables 2 and 5 provided evidence that members do not avail themselves of all the opportunities presented them. Rather, they gauged their responses in accordance with how tight the current bargaining situation was, foregoing opportunity whenever *their* administration was in trouble. These two elements are not strictly a part of the opportunities model. They are more strategic in nature.

Also, given the Edwards/opportunity model it is unreasonable to expect that core supporters (or generally any group able to drive the outcome away from the president's ideal) would actually threaten the administration. Such threats made by the administration's core supporters promise to produce a policy that they prefer less than what the administration is proposing. Of course, with complete information, the core supporter's threat would be no threat at all. Were it not for incomplete information, then, members could not utilize their threat potential. And were it not for maintaining a reputation under incomplete information, that is, for periodically carrying out a threat so as to underwrite some future bluff, some members would never carry through on their professed hesitancy.

These considerations simply return the discussion to the notion that the bargaining process matters. In addition to being appealing topics of concern to politicians, reputation and expectations actually play a role in the legislative process mediating between opportunity, threat potential, and choices. A president capable of affecting reputations and expectations can affect the realization of opportunity and block the potential for threat. Hence, the skill to bargain successfully becomes a foundation for presidential power even within the broader context of electorally determined opportunities.

Actually, the limitations of the Edwards/opportunity model in accounting for all that happens has a fairly well established theoretical basis. The preeminent formal result in this area of game theory is that incomplete information generates a very large number of equilibria, or stable bargaining arrangements. An opportunity-driven equilibrium could be one of these, but it need not be the only one. An often-proposed solution to this plethora of equilibria is to identify a "reasonable" set of restrictions on expectations and reputations that would limit

thereby the resulting equilibrium set (Fudenberg and Tirole 1983). That recommendation is similar to how a skillful president might limit expectations. Substantive research on what actually happens (like that reported here) is very useful in identifying such reasonable limitations. This search for theoretically meaningful restrictions suggests something useful to presidential scholars as well. While improving the use of information is important (e.g., George 1980), the "proper" exercise of presidential power may require effectively identifying asymmetries and other kinds of restrictions on experiences that shape expectations. In fact, identifying such asymmetries may be one of the ways presidents can find meaning in Neustadt's prescription that presidents should consider their power stakes in the decisions they make. That is to recommend that power stakes should involve the situations, organizations, and behavior patterns that control information and shape expectations.

Information Asymmetries: Exploiting a Presidential Vantage Point

The previous discussion suggests that one advantage an administration can easily develop in bargaining rests on its ability to utilize information. Given their offices, incomplete information is an individual strength for members but a collective weakness. A member's ability to bluff, of course, rests on incomplete information; and some members clearly take advantage of this condition. On the other hand, given the drain on credit, organizing costs, the uncertainty of others' intentions, and the possibility of overreacting to pressure, incomplete information reduces the expected value to members of pressuring the administration. The greater the uncertainty surrounding member positions and strategies, the smaller the expected return to bargaining. An administration can enhance its bargaining by

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recognizing and taking advantage of the insecurities that members have about their own information, especially as it predicts the collective actions of their colleagues. In particular, it is important for administrations to centralize control over head counting, removing from the congressional party the ability to judge for itself the legislative situation. Indeed, for the most part, that is exactly what the JFK/LBJ OCR accomplished and what the Nixon/Ford/Carter OCRs did not.

Typically, administrations have had the resources necessary to control information, anticipate members' positions, and exploit this uncertainty. Administrations that have utilized their OCRs to gather information about positions (at least the five from Eisenhower through Ford) have gone so far as to perform detailed analyses about their supporters. These studies identify and then analyze critical votes (critical as defined by the administration, not Congressional Quarterly). They also maintain survey data on congressional elections and information about campaign finances in order to monitor the constituency developments that might affect predispositions. (For example, the Johnson administration maintained extensive records on how well members—especially the new members from the 1964 election—were getting on in their constituencies). These kinds of studies improve an administration's picture of its possibilities in Congress. Indeed, one of the reasons LBJ could successfully call their bluffs was his ability to identify just how far he could push the situation and compromise without risking his core supporters. Indeed, because of this skill and information, LBJ managed to maintain sway over the Congress despite ever decreasing levels of initial support (Sullivan n.d.). Clearly, theory development and these kinds of data analyses can broaden current understanding of the president's power to bargain

successfully, as well as how members bargain with the president.

Appendix

I shall specify the model of member predispositions and the diagnostic models. The basic member calculus contains two principal components: characteristics of the member (including the constituency and various institutional elements) and characteristics of the bargaining situation. Constituency describes a basic model of preferences, while institutional position and the bargaining situation elaborate that model.

The Model of Predispositions

The model assumes that constituency interests drive member decision making. The link between constituency and choice is a standard element of congressional studies and needs no elaboration. Member preferences reflect the character of their constituencies (see Cox and McCubbins 1986; Cox, McCubbins, and Sullivan 1984; Mayhew 1974; or McCubbins and Sullivan 1984). Presidents can take advantage of this motivation since both the president and members share an electoral fate. Hence, similar constituent bases can unify the two officials behind a common set of long-term political interest, while dissimilar constituencies may set the two apart. These kinds of common outlooks are likely to be long-term, contextual forces acting to identify the member with the policies of the president.

Constituency. Constituency descriptors available from the Census Bureau make up the bulk of the probit estimation used to characterize member predispositions. Table A-2 reports the predisposition model for the *governing the economy* issue cluster. The dependent variable is the probability of supporting the administration $P(Y = 1)$.

Table A-1. A Sample of Counting Efforts in the House, 1967

Leadership Signals	Subject of Counting	Date
Favor	1968 civil rights final passage	1/5
Favor	debt limit increase to \$336 billion	2/2
Oppose	recommit on debt limit: exclude certificates	2/2
Favor	Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) final passage	3/15
Favor	Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization	4/19
Favor	debt limit increase	5/15
Favor	International American Development Bank at \$250 million	5/26
Favor	International American Development Bank at \$300 million	5/26
Favor	seven-year debt limit extension	6/2
Favor	debt limit increase to \$358 billion	6/8
Favor	railway dispute settlement bill	6/14
Favor	District of Columbia reorganization plan	6/19
Favor	Elementary and Secondary Education Act conference report	6/20
Favor	railway dispute conference report	7/16
Favor	rat control bill	7/18
Favor	omnibus safe streets and crime control bill	7/28
Favor	defense appropriations conference report	9/11
Favor	Department of Defense appropriations conference, Byrnes Amendment	9/12
Favor	highway beautification reauthorization	10/18
Favor	rent supplements appropriation	10/20
Favor	participation certificates in Independent Offices Appropriations	10/20
Favor	model cities appropriation	10/20
Oppose	Green Amendment on OEO	11/4
Oppose	recommit motion on OEO	11/4
Favor	OEO conference report	11/15

It is apparent from the summary statistics that this model performs well. For example, it correctly predicts about 83% of the votes. One way to assess just how well this model performs is to compare it to two benchmark models of voting. The first voting model predicts that each member will vote with the majority. A second benchmark takes account of the situations in which the majority votes against the administration. The model of preference is a significant improvement as measured by the Goodman/Kruskal λ (see Weisberg 1978 for an explanation of λ). By comparison, using constituency characteristics improves modeling by nearly 60%: $\lambda_{\text{majority}}$.586 and $\lambda_{\text{adj. majority}} = .599$.

The Diagnostic Models

To evaluate initial hesitancy and conversion, two diagnostic models elaborate

on the electoral model of predispositions. The new diagnostic models start with a constituency instrument based on the predisposition model but avoiding the more complex statement of individual variables. Added to that model are variables describing the member, the bargaining situation, administration compromises or that control for differing degrees of hesitancy.

Describing the Member. This collection of variables includes the constituency instrument and some variables describing characteristics of the member's institutional setting, including Gallup approval ratings of the president. Of course, a member pursues an institutional career, eventually representing a committee or a party as well as a district. Holding a position of institutional authority increases the probability that any particular coalition will reflect the preferences of that

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member (see Cox, McCubbins, and Sullivan 1984; McCubbins and Sullivan 1984; Sullivan 1984). In utilizing their positions, members employ the organizational mechanisms for accommodation and compromise that are so important to developing coalitions. Over time, the

necessity for maintaining these mechanisms redefines the member's preferences. Three variables represent institutional identification within the party hierarchy and the committee system. Membership in the Democratic party hierarchy is a dummy variable (Yes is the reference

Table A-2. A Probit Estimate of the Impact of Constituency Variables on Voting on Governing the Economy Issues, 89th Congress (A Model of Predisposition)

Variable Name	MLE Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error	t
Constant	-7.770	-.053		
Party identification	3.823	1.809	.033	116.22***
North region	.215	.098	.029	7.52***
South region	-.794	-.329	.052	-15.18***
Percent				
White	-.025	-.004	.144	-.17
Negro	-.875	-.119	.356	-2.46*
Living in standard metropolitan statistical area (SMSA)	2.566	.239	.598	4.30***
Living in SMSA * Party	-.781	-.245	.202	-3.87***
Labor force in military	-1.758	-.085	.355	-4.95***
Labor in private sector	2.708	.223	.443	6.12***
Labor in government work	3.707	.158	.930	3.99***
Labor self-employed	3.758	.225	2.700	1.39
Percent employed in				
Public administration	-1.231	-.028	.623	-1.97*
Manufacturing	-.935	-.097	.153	-6.11***
Agriculture	-2.664	-.194	.268	-9.95***
Retail/wholesale	-1.742	-.043	.582	-2.99**
Transportation	4.597	.070	1.060	4.34***
Construction	.459	.007	1.209	.38
Mining	-.903	-.025	.595	-1.52
Median grade education	-.159	-.205	.018	-8.65***
Median income	.067	.092	.026	2.58**
LBJ's % in district 1964	.044	.545	.002	28.80***
LBJ's % in district 1964 * party	-.021	-.653	.004	-5.00***
Electoral safety	.529	.150	.056	9.43***
Electoral safety * party	-.668	-.297	.464	-1.44
Election cohort	.010	.090	.002	5.82***
Number of weighted cases	16,562.17			
Likelihood ratio statistic	9,332.378			
$P_{(-2 \text{ LOG LR})} =$.000			
$\approx R^2$.488 ^a			
F	.660			
Percent predicted	.830			

^aThe formula for $\approx R^2$ is from Aldrich and Nelson (1984).

- * $p \leq .05$.
- ** $p \leq .01$.
- *** $p \leq .0001$.

value). A second variable measures caucus seniority. A third (*total committee value*) measures committee position. The committee value begins with a seniority score calculated by dividing the member's committee rank by the size of the relevant committee caucus. Then, the technique calculates a *seniority value* by adding one to the additive inverse of this seniority score and then multiplying that total by the *Bullock value* for the committee (Bullock 1962). The member's total committee value is the sum of the member's committee seniority values. A final variable in this set links the member to the administration through the president's popularity (Edwards 1980, Neustadt 1960, Rivers and Rose 1985). Gallup polling results act as the operational definition of the president's popularity.

Describing the Bargaining Situation. This collection of variables includes two variables describing the state of the economy and two variables describing the strategic situation. A poor economy undercuts the president's bargaining position as members attempt to insulate themselves from the administration's policies. The unemployment rate for the nation and the change in the consumer price index (the inflation rate) describe the state of the economy. Two variables describe the initial strategic situation. The first is a ratio of *right* responses to the working absolute majority. A second variable is the square of this first variable acting to dampen the main effect.

Controlling for Member Hesitancy. As described earlier, the administration summarized member responses in a variety of ways. On one end of the spectrum were the detailed reports of specific conversations. On the other end were the summary statements ranging from *right* to *wrong* and the grosser distinction between *right* and *hesitancy*. A control variable measures the ordinal relationship captured in the summary statements that ranged from *right* to *wrong*.

Controlling for Administration Compromise. The research assessed the stories in Congressional Quarterly's *Weekly Report* and *Almanac*. It also analyzed White House strategy memorandum to determine the extent to which the administration compromised its position during the coalition-building effort. This variable took on one of three values (-1, 1): liberal compromise, standing firm, or conservative compromise.

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1. Note, for example, how Jeff Fishel articulates the theoretical appeal of presidential bargaining: "Presidential leadership is important. From Richard Neustadt to Paul Light, *the evidence is incontrovertible*. The judicious mix of push and pull, the adroit calculation of resources and costs, the careful ordering of priorities, the selection of senior associates who are politically astute and substantively informed, and the capacity to articulate and sustain a unified vision of where the administration is going, and why, are essential to agenda building and accomplishment" (1985, 188; second emphasis mine).

2. The actions of presidents are exogenous. In making proposals, of course, presidents anticipate

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Table 6. Table 1 Revised Using Different Cutoff Values of p

Member Type and Predisposition	n	Predicted As Initially Hesitant ^a		Actual Occurrences of Initial Hesitancy		
		p	n	n	Of Group (%)	Difference ^b (%)
$p \leq .1$ (core opponent)	80.6 ^c	.95	76.9	73.2	90.8	-4.8
$.1 < p < .9$ (cross-pressured)	290.9 ^c	.52	152.1	205.3	70.6	35.0
$p \geq .9$ (core supporter)	61.6 ^c	.07	4.3	30.3	49.3	604.7
$p \leq .25$ (core opponent)	130.1 ^c	.92	115.9	117.3	90.2	-1.2
$.25 < p < .75$ (cross-pressured)	130.1 ^c	.61	74.2	94.5	72.6	27.3
$p \geq .75$ (core supporter)	143.3 ^c	.10	16.6	70.3	49.1	323.7

^aBased on average probit values.

^bThe "difference" is (actual - predicted)_{hesitant} / predicted_{hesitant}. There is some rounding in these categories.

^cAverages reflect the changing size of the House membership during the Congress.

congressional reactions, which in turn are dependent on likely presidential propositions, anticipated presidential reactions, and the anticipated reactions of others. The latter, according to Kingdon (1981) and Fenno (1978), may include members of the state delegation, other members in general, or key constituencies. Thus, by comparison with the real world, the basic theory of legislative leadership under examination here is decidedly simple and one-sided. An argument could be presented to the effect that presidents do not have as much flexibility as members do in acting out sophisticated strategies; thus to understand successful presidential leadership, it would first be necessary to develop a theory of how members act.

3. Kingdon (1981, 131) recounts a leadership run-down reflecting the detrimental effect of a bad reputation: "They actually take a list of the members and go down it. . . . _____ will say, 'He just wants me to call so he'll think I'm obligated to him, so don't call him—he'll be all right without it.'"

4. The research focused on the 90th House because it is fairly representative of the postwar presidential experience. The administration was not riding the crest of an election victory. The 1966 midterm elections had eliminated 47 Democratic seats (the 1964 election had created only 38). And LBJ's batting average for the 90th House stood at 80%, only slightly higher than the 1952-1978 average of 74% (Edwards 1980, 19-20).

5. Memo, John Gonella to Barefoot Sanders, 22 May 1968, Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 28, "Democratic Opinions on the Tax Bill, 1968," LBJ Library.

6. Memo, Tom Finley to Barefoot Sanders, n.d., Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 29, LBJ Library.

7. Memo, Joseph Spilman to Barefoot Sanders, 31

January 1968, Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 29, LBJ Library.

8. One peculiarity of these counts is the treatment of members who respond without comment. The administration treats these as different from *undecided*. The analysis here continues this practice by correlating these responses with *wrong* rather than with *undecided*. Using Poole and Rosenthal (1985) ideal points (arrayed from -1.0 to 1.0), an analysis of the spatial location of member coding verifies that the average member coded by the administration as *no comment* is very similar to those members who responded *wrong*. The average locations are *right* (-.274), *leaning right* (-.042), *undecided* (.172), *leaning wrong* (.169), *no comment* (.317), and *wrong* (.388).

9. The *Civil liberties* cluster included jury reform amendments, District of Columbia Charter Act, Voting Rights Act, and so on. *Governing the economy* included Appalachian regional development reauthorization, Equal Opportunity Act, section 14b of Taft-Hartley, clean air, urban renewal, fair labor standards, and so on.

10. Table 6 revises Table 1 under two plausible alternatives to p (i.e., 2, .8).

11. Table 2 also tests whether the pattern of hesitancy among core supporters merely was an artifact of the original support probabilities among these members. If so, one core supporter would be hesitant more than another merely because the first had a lower support probability than the second. The coefficient on the constituency instrument derived from the original probit model of preferences (see the Appendix) is insignificant; thus, the relationship does not appear to be spurious. The analysis might have anticipated this result, since the delineation for the core supporters is .8, leaving little room for variance.

12. Memo, DeSautels to Barefoot Sanders, 17 May 1968, Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 28, "Democratic Opinions on Tax Bill, 1968," LBJ Library.

13. Memo, Samuel Jones to Barefoot Sanders, 17 May 1968, Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 28, "Democratic Opinions on Tax Bill, 1968," LBJ Library.

14. Memo, DeSautels to Barefoot Sanders, 3 June 1968, Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 28, "Democratic Opinions on Tax Bill, 1968," LBJ Library.

15. Memo, Asst. Sec. Lashman (HUD) to Barefoot Sanders, 16 May 1968, Personal Papers of Barefoot Sanders, Box 28, "Democratic Opinions on Tax Bill, 1968," LBJ Library.

16. A diagnostic regression assessing which variables affected the strength of core supporter hesitancy confirmed this expectation. It identified as significant all the variables describing the bargaining situation. It identified as significant only the president's popularity from among the constituency-member-administration variables. In addition, the value on the second-degree variable describing the strategic situation suggested that as the situation became tighter, hesitant core supporters ameliorated their hesitancy. Apparently, these bluffing members backed off in order to avoid some calamitous signal.

17. Of course, one possibility to be considered is that the observed patterns may be merely artifacts of modeling predispositions. With a better specification, the model might identify more feigning actors or it might describe as something else altogether the behavior now identified as feigning. While it is impossible to rule out these possibilities, their likelihood is remote. As to the possibility that there are *more* bluffers, the relevant question to ask is, From which group would more bluffing come? There is no rational model to account for bluffing among core opponents. As argued earlier, the administration has a great incentive to assure that such bluffs are extremely costly. That the analysis reported so very few who appeared to bluff their support lends validity to the technique. Among cross-pressured members, there are some good reasons to suspect that the incidence of misrepresentation is very small. For example, since their policy ideals locate them closer to the status quo ante, it is not likely that they could expect to prompt a favorable policy response by feigning positions rather than sincerely stating them. With no rational reason to adopt a feigning strategy aimed at generating a compromise, the only remaining possibility is that these members might feign hesitancy to pressure for some personal favor. It is impossible to rule out this, but a preliminary study of detailed responses suggests that only a small proportion of responses seem to involve requests for favors. So overall, while it remains possible that the lack of strategic actors is an artifact, it seems unlikely. While it is also possible that the model underesti-

mated the incidence of misrepresentation among core supporters, this too seems unlikely. There simply is such large proportion already.

18. There are two specific possibilities worth pursuing in discussing excluded variables. One type of excluded variable describes the economic base of the constituency. While the Census Bureau maintains a Census of Manufacturing, which it regularly includes in its *Congressional District Databook*, it included data reported in 1958. Since the Census Bureau did not update the manufacturing data for the databook supplements following the three waves of court-enforced redistricting in 24 states prior to the 90th House, I excluded them as unreliable. As a result, accurate business data for congressional districts are simply unavailable for this period. To some extent, of course, the demographics of the constituencies reflect some of these kinds of differences. Another possibility is that the model of predisposition might exclude some information captured in the support scores issued by various lobbyists. The model excludes these measures because they are not descriptors of the member's constituency (except where such measures merely are instruments of the constituency variables that determine them). While inclusion of such a score is theoretically inconsistent with the current electoral connection model, results using such an "enhanced" model suggest that there is no difference in how members are *partitioned* on the basis of their predispositions and hence no difference in the analysis of the variance between predicted and actual position taking.

19. The location of medians utilized the probit values describing member predispositions. The location of the median using predisposition was very similar to the location of the median using Poole-Rosenthal mappings.

20. King and Ragsdale (1987, Table 2-17) estimate that during their respective second Congresses, Carter's reconstructed ADA score would have been 73, while LBJ's score would have been 95.

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