

**Interview with Rep. Frank T. Bow (R-OH)**

April 1964

He began by pointing out that Rep. John Taber (R-NY), former ranking Appropriations Committee member, was much too old in his last terms; that it was a shame, etc. He said Taber was not much use, and that he should have retired before his last term. Yet, he did say that he had some influence still. "Our thinking is the same as it always was. Mr. [Ben] Jensen [R-IA, present ranking Appropriations Committee member] worked with Mr. Taber. I was schooled under John Taber. We carry on the same tradition. Often times, we'll say, 'John would have said this; John would have said that.' You hear that a great deal. There's a carry-over of respect."

Regarding the Bow task force (see Fenno 1966, 257-258): The Committee minority decided on it during the first meeting of the year. Jensen appointed a five-man subcommittee. Bow called former Budget Director Maurice Stans and asked him to do it. Each ranking subcommittee member worked with the Stans staff group. He said that no increase in partisanship resulted. "We tried to keep it bipartisan. All of our press releases and the things we said emphasized that this was a bipartisan job and not a Republican show. We could have said that, and then they would have said, 'We'll show the so-and-so's they can't cut the budget.' That would have done a lot of damage. It would have done more harm than good. We kept it on a bipartisan level. We couldn't have had the success we did without the help of the majority." He talked also of a liaison with the Democrats. Some of whom were on the Appropriations Committee, but most of whom were not. There was, in other words, an economy bloc.

The Appropriations Committee is the least partisan committee in the House, and it should be. He and State, Justice, Commerce, and the Judiciary Subcommittee Chairman John J. Rooney (D-NY) work hand in glove still.

The House Republican leadership has never said anything to him or pressed him. The leadership and the Republican Policy Committee sat with the Bow task force. He would tell them if they asked him "what's the thinking of your committee, and do you think you could go along with this? I would tell them, but that's about as far as it would go. But they never have asked me."

Regarding the conference dispute (see Fenno 1959, 635-641): "That was a little thing between Mr. [Clarence] Cannon [D-MO, House Appropriations Committee Chairman] and Mr. [Carl] Hayden [D-AZ, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman]. It was blown up all out of proportion. It didn't make any difference to me. The only thing that galled me was that we had to walk so far to get over there [into the Senate side of the Capitol]. We'd have quorum calls in the House and have to walk back here. That's all been resolved now. We meet in the middle and have an equal walk. Our subcommittee was never bothered much. John Rooney just said, 'you go ahead Senator [John L.] McClellan [D-AR].' The Senator does it one session and the Congressman the other. The chairman can guide things a little."

I asked him about the demise of the Commerce Subcommittee. It was precipitated by Prince H. Preston's (D-GA) defeat in 1960. He did not say why. He spoke of his and Rooney's membership on both subcommittees (Commerce and State, Justice, and the Judiciary). "Natural thing to bring it back home." He saw the Preston chairmanship as the aberration. The point is that it could have gone to someone else and it did go to Rep. George W. Andrews (D-AL). He shed no light on the Andrew's appointment. (Congress scholar Jeffrey Pressman says that Andrews said he didn't really care about being chairman and that he more or less "retired" from the job.)

The Appropriations Committee is "not a very popular committee."

Regarding his floor fight against changes in Bureau of Standards authorization: it was bypassing the Appropriations Committee—appropriations on a legislative bill. He got into it by himself, and there was no time to organize. They lost by just a few votes, and he said that members of the Appropriations Committee voted against him without knowing what was at stake. They came out of the Committee where they were holding hearings and voted aye. After they found out what was involved, they were sorry they had voted as they did.