
From Caucus to Convention in Pennsylvania Politics, 1790–1830

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During the first century of the Republic, legislatures stood at the heart of state government and, during the first third of that century, at the heart of state politics as well. The Pennsylvania legislature, like those in other states, not only made policy, its members also participated in the choosing of governors and presidential electors. It elected U.S. Senators and state treasurers as well as officers within the legislature. These functions gave it an important place in the development of political parties and also had implications for the legislature's own development. But by 1830, the legislature's substantial political power had dwindled to the point where it was left with only a secondary role in state politics. Its primacy in policymaking continued but its ability to choose governors and influence presidential elections had been sharply curtailed by the forces of political change. This article will examine the legislature's evolving role in Pennsylvania politics between 1790 and 1830 with emphasis on its most important political instrument, the caucus.¹

The early nineteenth century caucus used to be portrayed as "King Caucus," an aristocratic tool by which a small group of leaders kept a vise-like grip on power. Progressive school historians explained its replacement by the nominating convention as a victory for democracy over aristocracy. More recently, the caucus has been seen in a less hostile light as a key ingredient in party development, "the cradle of the organization of American parties," as Mosei Ostrogorsky put it.²

None of these interpretations fully explains the importance of caucuses in political life. The battle over caucuses cannot be depicted as simply a class struggle won by democratic elements, and it was not treated that way at the time. Yet the caucus had a significance beyond merely facilitating nominations and other party business. For one thing, it was closely linked to evolving republican ideology. The caucus was able to develop in the first place because of ambiguities over the proper position of legislatures in political affairs. The attack on it later came after those ambiguities had been clarified by actual operation of the caucus, which exposed the ideological contradictions of legislative nominations for other branches of government. Moreover, the caucus had an importance for the legislature itself which is not well understood. The caucus solidified the legislature's position in politics and insured that it would continue to attract top political leaders. It held out the promise of disciplined legislative parties voting in accordance with party ideology. But the legislative institution itself

worked against the use of caucuses for anything other than nominations. Local-oriented members and decentralized power within the legislature discouraged ideological voting. Finally, the vehement opposition to the caucus, which eventually ended its use for gubernatorial and presidential nominations, also lessened the legislature's own reputation and contributed to a dropping-off in the quality of members.

The use of caucuses varied widely from one region of the nation to another. Congressional caucuses, starting about 1796 among Republicans for issues and 1800 for the presidential nominations of both parties, inspired caucus development in the states, but many state caucuses preceded those in Congress. Not surprisingly, caucuses tended to be stronger in states with intense party competition and among Republican members, who paid more attention to organization. Southern caucuses were generally weak. In competitive New Jersey, though, the Republican caucus was used regularly not only for nominations but for many policy decisions. New Jersey's constitution, which gave the governor's election and much patronage to the legislature, no doubt encouraged an active caucus and defused opposition to it. The caucus was probably at its strongest in New England states like Massachusetts, where Federalists as well as Republicans used it well. In the case of the Massachusetts Federalists, the legislative caucus became the main instrument of party organization for a quarter century.³

Pennsylvania fit between these extremes. Party organization developed early in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Republicans were among the first to establish the caucus and the first to drop it in favor of state conventions. In no state, however, did ideological battle over the caucus rage more fiercely than in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania had long been at or near the center of the debate over republican ideology. With the most pro-legislative constitution of the Revolutionary era and a revised constitution in 1790 which seemingly created one of the most powerful gubernatorial offices in the nation, Pennsylvanians had much experience debating government and the proper role of each branch within it. This debate persisted well into the nineteenth century. Moreover, as the nation's capital during the formative years of the first party system, Philadelphia attracted fervent ideologues from many camps. Some, like the caustic democrat and editor of the Philadelphia *Aurora*, William Duane, stayed on to contribute to the party battles of the early nineteenth century after the federal and state governments had moved away. Pennsylvania's social and economic diversity may have also stimulated this debate. As Kim Phillips has suggested, Pennsylvania's varied population and economic sophistication made it especially well attuned to political change.⁴

The debate over the caucus is closely related to the debate over the legislature and its role in politics. The legislature's importance is now clear to most students of nineteenth century politics,⁵ but how it achieved that status is not so obvious when seen in the light of late eighteenth century political theory.

Colonial Americans formed their ideas about legislatures from two overlapping but different philosophies of government. Classical and British theory both provided the ideal of balanced government—opposing social classes were to be “balanced” within the government itself to prevent any one from becoming tyrannical. On the other hand, writers in the tradition of the British commonwealth and later Whig opposition desired a very powerful legislature to counter the evils of corruption that they saw in the executive.⁶ This second point of view, in which the legislative branch would predominate, guided what Jack P. Greene has termed the “quest for power” by colonial assemblies which led to the overthrow of royal authority during the Revolution.⁷ Not surprisingly, the first set of revolutionary constitutions strongly favored legislatures, circumscribed executive power, and left the judiciary weak and dependent.⁸ Nowhere was this more true than in Pennsylvania, whose 1776 constitution was the most democratic of any state. The Pennsylvania governor was replaced with a weak executive council, the supreme court was appointed by the council for seven-year terms, and the one-branch legislature, which held most of the power, was elected by all adult males who paid taxes.

Experience with this constitution soon led to a reaction. Legislatures in Pennsylvania and elsewhere seemed to be using power arrogantly and unwisely, acting with a capriciousness that alarmed not only conservative property owners but all those who simply wanted stable government. In the 1780's and 1790's interest in the balanced government theory revived and the constitutions written then reflected that theory, although instead of balancing classes as in Europe, they balanced branches of government. In the new state and federal constitutions, executives were given a qualified veto over legislative actions, judges were made more independent, and one-house legislatures, like Pennsylvania's, were divided into two chambers. In Pennsylvania, the reaction against the older type of constitution went far. The 1790 Pennsylvania constitution greatly reinforced the executive branch by creating an elective governorship with a veto and appointive powers second to none in the nation. The judiciary's independence was strengthened through life tenure for judges, subject to impeachment. The new legislature had an annually elected lower House with up to 100 members and a Senate of up to thirty-three members with four-year terms. In theory, then, the three branches were, to use the common phrase, “equal and coordinate.”⁹

But a closer look shows that legislative supremacy had not died out either in theory or practice. Even balanced government supporters, in their more candid moments, admitted that power in a representative democracy was centered in the legislature. “In republican government, the legislative authority necessarily predominates,” said Madison in the *Federalist Papers*.¹⁰ This was echoed in Pennsylvania, where James Wilson, one of the principal authors of the 1790 constitution, conceded that “the executive and judicial powers are not connected with the people by a relation so strong, or near, or dear” as the legislature.¹¹ The

executive branch never quite shook off the Revolutionary era's suspicion surrounding strong governors and eventually the constitution of 1838 eliminated most gubernatorial patronage. Many people also remained uneasy about the judiciary, especially after judges were granted lifetime tenure in 1790.¹²

In actual practice, too, the executive and judiciary were weaker than they appeared on paper. The governor's patronage—which extended all the way to sheriffs, registers of wills, and several other local offices—proved less powerful than it might have been. Party organizations were not yet well developed enough to use such a patronage in the style of latter-day machine politicians. Patronage probably did as much to divide parties as unite them, especially following the collapse of the Federalists after 1800.¹³ Nomination by legislative caucus also had the effect of undermining governors. The first governor, Thomas Mifflin, tried to avoid the developing party politics of the 1790's. Thomas McKean—the executive who used patronage most forcefully—was also the one who had the most difficult relationship with the legislature and who was most responsible for driving a wedge through the Republican party. McKean was succeeded by a series of much weaker governors, including Simon Snyder, a popular figure who had greater success keeping Republicans unified; William Findlay, who governed under the cloud of his apparent misconduct as state treasurer; Joseph Hiester, the Old School Republican who defeated the Snyder-Findlay wing of the party in 1820 but made no effort to capitalize on his victory by building a political machine; and John Shulze, who was content to stay above the political turmoil of the mid-1820s. Yet fear of the governor's patronage became an important part of the argument against caucuses. A definitive study of patronage has yet to be written, but judging from letters of application to members of the legislature asking for their intervention, it would appear that governors relied heavily on legislators for advice on local appointments rather than the other way around.¹⁴

In other relations with the legislature, too, governors tended to be cautious, seeing their role less as policymakers than as executors of the law.¹⁵ Vetoes were rare and could be overturned by a two-thirds vote in both houses. For the great majority of questions, there was never any contest over the legislature's superiority in policymaking.¹⁶ Relations between the legislature and the judiciary followed a similar path. The judicial system had to endure a lingering suspicion that it was aristocratic and Federalist. Radical Republicans led persistent, if usually unsuccessful, attacks on the courts through impeachments, changes in jurisdiction of cases, and bills to reform the court system.¹⁷ Thus, while the judiciary seemingly had a good check on the legislature in the form of judicial review, only twice under the 1790 constitution (in 1793 and 1830) did the court strike down a law.¹⁸

The legislature, then, quickly established itself as the most important branch. Thus, it is not surprising that many important political as well as policy decisions gravitated there soon after parties developed in the 1790's. Legislative



The old capitol in Harrisburg, where many of the legislative caucuses were held.

service was attractive—enough so to lure many of the state's most prominent politicians. Despite the high turnover in nineteenth century legislatures, in the first few decades under the new constitution each legislature typically had a core of members with at least a few years' experience. Usually some of the most important party leaders were included in this group. In the early 1790s, for example, political leaders such as William Findlay, Albert Gallatin, Cadwalader Evans, and William Bingham could be found in the legislature.¹⁹

With the legislature's position in government and state leadership secure, it was easy for the legislature to use its influence in Pennsylvania's growing political system. The first American parties developed within Congress in the early 1790's from conflicts between Congressmen and between Congress and executive officials. State parties formed around national issues at about the same time or slightly later. The legislature's role in party formation was not so critical as that of Congress. But because the impetus for state parties, as well as national parties, came more from political leaders than mass popular movements, and because many of those leaders were in the assembly, the legislature was always at or near the locus of party development.²⁰

Legislatures influenced partisan politics in two principal ways. First, legislators, meeting as the representatives of their party in caucus, nominated candidates for office both in and out of the legislature. Second, legislators from time to time voted on bills with an obvious partisan content; such bills were both policy statements and possible tests of party cohesion. The legislative caucus was the more successful of the two. Both there and in policymaking, legislators

exercised very real power but fell short of reaching their potential for party leadership.

Not much is known about the first appearance of caucuses in Pennsylvania, but they began to be used with some regularity in the 1790's. As the Federalist-Republican split developed in the early and mid-1790's, members of each party met before closely contested races to nominate candidates for speaker, treasurer, and U.S. Senator. Whether or not the vote in caucus was considered binding at that time is unclear, since caucuses were rarely reported in newspapers. No doubt many of the early meetings between members of a party or faction were more in the nature of informal discussions rather than meetings where obligatory decisions were made.

When parties first appeared, the Federalists held a majority in both houses and the governorship. But, although the parties met separately to talk over nominations, voting was far from regular. Thus, in the 1793 senatorial election Republican Albert Gallatin managed to outpoll Federalist Henry Miller by ten votes, despite a Federalist majority.²¹ By the end of the decade, when Republican gains intensified party competition, both parties were capable of showing discipline. In the 1799 House speaker's contest, for example, Republicans held a 41-37 edge in membership, according to the *Aurora's* calculations. In the vote for speaker, the Republican candidate won with a 37-32 majority, with two votes scattering. Although who voted for whom was evidently not recorded, it appears to have been a straight party vote. Federalists won the Senate speakership race that year 15-9, a margin that reflected their relative strength.²² But even in very partisan years, opportunities for this kind of party voting did not come very often. Typically a speaker or state treasurer, once elected, served for several years with little further opposition.²³

Caucuses for gubernatorial and presidential elector nominations developed in a similar fashion. In 1790 it was not yet established how the governor was to be nominated and the subject was a matter of lively debate between different factions of politicians. Pennsylvania's delegation to Congress, then meeting in New York, included the topic at their regular meetings together that spring. However, in September a meeting of Pennsylvania legislators and some constitutional convention members (some of whom were also congressmen) chose Arthur St. Clair. The group published a broadside but attached no party label to their candidates. Everyone agreed the other candidate would be Thomas Mifflin, president of the executive council, a popular, easygoing war hero. Mifflin was not formally nominated by a single group but by various local meetings within a month or so of the election. Mifflin won overwhelmingly.²⁴

Over the next decade, nominations for governor followed an irregular course. In 1793 Governor Mifflin was renominated by what was probably the first purely legislative caucus for that purpose in Pennsylvania and one of the earliest in any state. His opponent, Frederick Muhlenberg, was chosen informally.

Mifflin won easily in a lackluster election. In 1796 Mifflin was nominated locally by both Republicans and Federalists and won with no serious opposition.²⁵ In 1799, when Mifflin's constitutional term expired, both parties used a loose form of "mixed caucus" to nominate his successor. Republican leaders in the legislature and Congress as well as some important private figures met a number of times to discuss possible candidates. At a final, and somewhat larger, meeting in March 1799 they formally nominated Chief Justice Thomas McKean and chose a corresponding committee to run the campaign.²⁶ The Federalists nominated James Ross after private meetings between legislators and citizens. They appointed not only a central campaign committee but also corresponding committees for individual counties. Thus, by 1799 both parties had accepted gubernatorial nominations by meetings of the political elite in which legislators played a major role. Though both parties tried to show that their meetings were attended by representatives from all parts of the state, neither could realistically make the claim that they represented the directly expressed wishes of the people on the subject.²⁷

The development of the caucus in presidential elections was more straightforward. In 1796, the first year witnessing a contest for the presidency, both parties held meetings to nominate electors at which not only legislators but other party leaders also attended. The Republican meeting contained "several members of this state in Congress, and of both houses of the State Legislature."²⁸ This body recommended a ticket of electors and appointed a committee to run the campaign. The Federalist meeting consisted primarily of state legislators who also nominated a full ticket of electors.²⁹ In 1800 the legislature had the opportunity to select electors because of a deadlock between the Federalist Senate and the Republican House over whether electors should be chosen by district or at large. Both sides exhibited strong cohesion throughout the contest and the situation was resolved only when it was agreed that the House would choose eight and the Senate seven electors. The final vote by joint ballot went along party lines which, no doubt, was reinforced by meetings among legislators.³⁰

The legislature also had a role in the choice of congressmen, though the issues here were somewhat different since the legislature did not nominate congressmen directly. In 1788 congressmen, who all ran at large that year, were nominated by a method that proved innovative. Both supporters and opponents of the new federal constitution held delegate conventions attended by most of the state's counties; each convention selected 8 nominees. In the 1792 congressional elections a dispute arose when the legislature adjourned before it was able to apportion the state. This meant that once again congressmen would have to be selected at large. In the ensuing controversy over whether to do this by delegate convention or correspondence committee (Federalists supporting the former), the nascent Federalist and Republican state organizations gained influence. Thus, the legislature inadvertently encouraged party organization. The idea of a state

convention, nevertheless, withered after this experience, not to be revived until the 1810's.³¹ In subsequent years, legislatures drew up districts for each of the state's congressmen and the necessary reapportionments every ten years became a test of strength between the two parties.

By 1800 several forces promoted caucuses for gubernatorial and presidential nominations composed entirely of state legislators. Removal of the national capital to Washington in 1800 made it more difficult for congressional leaders to attend Pennsylvania party meetings. Removal of the state capital from Philadelphia to Lancaster in 1799 also put the legislature another step away from nonlegislative party leaders and newspaper editors, many of whom resided in Philadelphia. Legislators now had several good arguments in favor of a pure legislative caucus. Poor transportation made it hard for party members from different parts of the state to assemble in one place. Legislators were already together in the state capital and actively involved in discussing important political issues. Considering the high regard for legislatures in republican ideology, locating statewide nominations there could be seen as a natural evolutionary step in party development, one that brought order to a previously haphazard nominating process. Most urgently, the sharp conflict between Federalists and Republicans demanded closely disciplined parties, and legislators, who spent several months together over the winter, were well equipped to act in concert. These arguments were seldom explicitly made and there is little evidence to suggest that caucuses were widely popular. But at the turn of the century, few voices rose in opposition to caucuses. The arguments for them were enough—for the moment—to head off objections that legislative nominations further unbalanced the government. Caucuses were not contemplated in the constitution, but then neither were political parties. Nor did the exclusion of nonlegislative leaders from caucuses seem to arouse opposition, since all factions were represented in the legislature.³²

The years between 1800 and 1814 were the high water mark for the legislative caucus in Pennsylvania. In the early part of this period Republicans made their extra-legislative nominations by pure legislative caucus; later a mixed caucus was used for awhile in response to criticisms and, toward the end of the period, Republican dissidents were mounting strenuous opposition to it. Federalists and minority Republican factions made much less use of the caucus. In 1802 the first purely legislative caucus in nearly a decade met to renominate Governor McKean, who easily defeated the informally selected Federalist candidate. During the 1804 presidential contest, Republican members met to select an electoral ticket and issue a campaign address to the people. Caucus members felt only a slight need to justify their newly expanded role. The caucus address of 1804, for example, merely stated in reference to its nominations that it was "under the impression, that it would be acceptable to its fellow-citizens."³³ The



Thomas McKean

word caucus itself was avoided by its supporters, who preferred the term "meeting."

Caucus unity, though, was soon to disintegrate. It is one of the ironies of politics in this period that the caucus, which grew largely out of the conflict between Federalists and Republicans, should reach its apogee after competition between those parties had effectively ended. There was an institutional lag. It took several years for the caucus to develop and then, just when legislators were beginning to take it for granted, one of the major justifications for it disappeared. The Federalist party declined so quickly in Pennsylvania that by the fall of 1802 only nine of the eighty-six newly elected representatives were Federalists. Thomas Jefferson won the presidency in 1804 by a nearly twenty to one margin. Contests for speaker were taken easily by Republicans, and the 1802 U.S. Senate election was essentially a choice between three Republican candidates.³⁴

This sudden disappearance of opposition removed much of the incentive for Republican party discipline. The hopeless position of the Federalists no doubt discouraged them from using the caucus. Republicans kept the caucus alive, but divisions within the party made unity harder to achieve. Governor McKean's vetoes of bills on the constitution and judiciary so offended the more radical element of the party that by 1805 a serious breach had developed between McKean's moderate Republicans and a faction favorable to House speaker Simon Snyder. Snyder was nominated over McKean at the regular caucus by a vote of 42-7. A number of Republicans, though, refused to join the caucus and, along with all eight Federalists, signed a paper recommending McKean's re-election. McKean won a hotly contested fight by gaining Federalist support. His backers that year won a majority of the lower house. In 1807 the McKean-backed candidate won the U.S. Senate election over two other Republican candidates. The Snyder forces soon regrouped, however. Snyder was narrowly reinstated as speaker in 1806 and in 1808, after healing another breach in the party, received the caucus nomination for governor and won at the polls over Federalist James Ross, who had been nominated at a Philadelphia meeting, and over a diehard from the McKean faction.³⁵

The rift in the Republican party, however, led to a reaction against the caucus by the anti-Snyder Duane-Leib wing of the party, which had little chance of victory there. *Aurora* editor William Duane had acquiesced in earlier caucuses, but now decided that they represented a threat to republican government. Inspired by Duane, meetings in Philadelphia and Delaware counties called for nominating the governor by a delegate convention representing the whole state and attacked the caucus as a usurpation of power. Although this was obviously a political move against Snyder, who was very strong among country Republicans in the legislature, the 1808 caucus (which also picked presidential electors) for the first time invited counties not represented by the party to send specially selected delegates to join with legislators in making the nominations.³⁶ This mixed caucus idea was continued for the 1811 gubernatorial nominations, when 17 delegates joined with 85 members in unanimously choosing Snyder. But in 1812 the Republican presidential elector nominees were again chosen by a purely legislative caucus, and in 1814 Snyder was nominated for a third term by the same means.³⁷

How did the central role of the caucus effect Pennsylvania politics? Here answers are inevitably speculative, but several conclusions can be drawn. First and most obviously, the caucus enhanced the role of legislators over other party leaders in making political decisions. This not only meant that legislators were choosing candidates for governor and influencing presidential election campaigns, but also that they were drawing more on members of their own group to fill the offices at their disposal. Among the governors nominated in the 1790's, Mifflin had been assembly speaker in the mid-1780's but had come to the



Simon Snyder

governorship from the executive council. McKean had been chief justice for well over a decade before he was elected governor. Of the seven men sent to the U.S. Senate between 1789 and 1801, five had little or no recent connection with the legislature.

After 1800 it was a different story. Simon Snyder was much less a public figure than Mifflin and McKean were at the time of their nominations, but he was well known to legislators as House speaker. His successor, William Findlay, had been in the legislature a decade before winning the state treasurership at about the time of Snyder's first election. The legislature continued to support him in that office annually until he was elected governor in 1817. Four of the five U.S. Senators elected between 1803 and 1817 were in or had recently been in the legislature, as were both treasurers. This tradition continued even as the caucus declined. Governors Hiester, Shulze, and Wolf all had legislative careers. Three

of four U.S. Senators between 1819 and 1827 and two of four treasurers between 1817 and 1830 were chosen directly from the legislature.³⁸

The heyday of the caucus also produced what to its opponents seemed like an oligarchy whereby legislators nominated the governor and were then rewarded with his patronage, which helped keep them all in power.³⁹ Snyder and Findlay were depicted by their enemies as using patronage to corrupt the legislature and secure renomination. But proof that either governor made patronage a really effective tool in their own cause has yet to be presented; neither fits the mold of machine boss. The legislature seems to have gotten the better of the situation. McKean's conflict with the legislature cost him caucus support in 1805. In Snyder, the caucus found a much more congenial governor.

In any case, the legislature's political role encouraged a good portion of the state's leadership to take up legislative careers and was probably also a factor in convincing a number of members to serve at least several terms there. To be sure, many older Republican and Federalist leaders, such as Albert Gallatin, Alexander J. Dallas, Peter Muhlenberg, and James Ross, preferred national to state office.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, many important party figures went to the legislature after 1800. During and after the McKean era, for example, such leaders as Michael Leib, Nathaniel Boileau, John Sergeant, Abner Lacock, Walter Lowrie, Simon Snyder, and Duane's son, William J. Duane, could be found in the legislature for varying periods of time, especially in election years. Many members, including some of these leaders, came back for several terms. Considering the generally high turnover (about half the House members were new each year), the presence of a nucleus of well-experienced members did much to bring stability and continuity to legislative proceedings.⁴¹

Another influence of the caucus, one much harder to prove, is its effect on the state's political machinery. State and county campaign organizations evolved in the 1790's. State campaigns were generally managed by a central correspondence committee which coordinated the campaign by keeping in touch with county committees. During the caucus era, the Republican committee was often appointed by legislators. On the county level, nominations were frequently made by delegate conventions but outlying districts were not always represented equally with locations near the county seat. In many cases, tickets appeared in newspapers without any pretense of a popular meeting to support them. In better organized counties, individual townships had vigilance committees which kept an eye on the progress of the election.⁴² It seems that little further development occurred during the first decade or two of the nineteenth century. No doubt the major reason for this was the decline in party competition after 1800 and the subsequent factionalism within the Republican party. But with nominations for all statewide contests occurring in the legislature (at least for the dominant Republican faction), there was also less incentive for state and county parties to organize, except in the last weeks before the election.⁴³

Despite the impact that caucuses had on state politics, they had the potential to have considerably more. This period was perhaps the one time in American history when a large part of the nominating machinery was in the hands of the same people who made policy. The fact that party members could come together at least once or twice a session to choose nominees for legislative officers, state treasurers, and, in appropriate years, governors and presidential electors and then, most of the time, successfully stay together as a group during related votes on the floor, suggests that they could have used this same caucus device to act as unified parties on important issues. Moreover, had the caucus really wanted to flex its muscles, it could have punished nonconforming members by denying them choice committee seats and agreeing not to support bills for their districts.

But Pennsylvania parties showed little interest in making issues, outside of a handful of national questions that directly related to parties and occasional campaign addresses. Vote analysis reveals relatively low party cohesion on the great majority of issues that came to roll call votes, including important state issues such as banks and internal improvements.⁴⁴ A striking example of the separation between state issues and party nominations came during the 1813-14 session when Governor Snyder issued one of his rare vetoes of a widely-supported bill creating forty-one new banks, most in Republican districts, at the very time when the caucus that renominated him was meeting.⁴⁵ Only on a few national issues did parties stick together. In 1807-08, for example, Snyder Republicans on one side and Federalists and constitutional Republicans on the other held together through several votes on limiting the terms of federal judges and, later, on the embargo. In 1810-11 Republicans, again united, generally stayed together against Federalists on the question of rechartering the Bank of the United States and, in 1811-12, on the conduct of the government toward Britain and France. In other words, parties were capable of cohesion where the lines were clearly drawn. But such issues were comparatively rare in this period and there is little evidence to suggest that cohesion on these votes was obtained by caucuses. The issues were so clearly related to national party stands that members knew how they were expected to vote and did so.⁴⁶

Even had caucus leaders been inclined to institute a form of responsible party government, after the developing British model, they would have run up against insurmountable odds. Legislative nominations were controlled locally, the exercise of power by officeholders was looked upon with misgivings, members were expected to represent the interests of their districts first, and politicians were not eager to express themselves on issues, except those essential for the formation of national parties. Moreover, power was spread out within the legislature and many decisions were made by a fluid system of select and standing committees. This militated against rewards and punishments for proper party voting. Perhaps, had party competition remained keen after 1800, some-

thing different would have developed. But the swift fall of Federalism seems to have sapped the two parties of their ideological vigor. Thus, even at their height caucuses were not important in policy formation, however significant they may have been in directing the affairs of political parties.⁴⁷

The Snyder wing's continuing success in the caucus and the inability of Duane and his followers to make any headway against it led to increasingly bitter attacks on caucus nominations after the 1808 election. The Duane group, now called the Old School and once more opposed to Snyder, opened another assault on caucuses through a Philadelphia meeting in 1810 which accused Snyder of trying to win re-election by using his patronage powers. In 1812 Duane's son led a walkout of over thirty legislators from the U.S. Senate caucus, though the regular caucus nominee, Abner Lacock, won anyway.⁴⁸ Gradually these attacks began to make headway. The turning point came in 1816-17 when the Old School was able to take the controversial nomination of James Monroe for president by the congressional caucus and use it to advantage against the state caucus. Monroe had been nominated by just eleven votes over William H. Crawford. This was the first time the congressional caucus vote had been close and it stirred up fears that in the future the caucus could nominate anyone it chose without allowing the people to express their opinions. Even the Snyder faction was unhappy with the congressional caucus because a tentative agreement to choose Snyder for vice-president fell through. Immediately after the news came from Washington, Old School Republicans and Federalists launched a scathing attack on both the congressional caucus and the legislative caucus which, a few days before, had nominated Pennsylvania's Republican electors. As the 1817 gubernatorial election approached, the method of that nomination also came up for discussion.⁴⁹

Opposition to the caucus, of course, was largely opportunistic. It is ironic that the most vocal opponents of caucuses came not from those in the Monroe era who still harbored the anti-party attitudes of the previous generation, but rather from men who favored party organization. The attack on caucuses never became a general attack on parties. Anti-party men, of course, did not like caucuses, either. After the Federalist party lost any chance to win state contests, its papers joined the anti-caucus movement but left most of the fighting to disgruntled Republicans.

Nevertheless, arguments against the caucus drew on the fundamental ideas about government that had been so ardently debated in the first years of the Republic and for this reason they gained wide influence in the public mind. Most influential was the balanced government theory. Caucuses violated the separation of powers, it was believed, by creating an unholy alliance between the executive and legislative branches. The dissident Republicans who led the attack on caucuses, and who generally came out of the legislative supremacy tradition, worried most about the potentially corrupting influence of gubernatorial candidates on legislatures even though they could not make a convincing case for it.

"The patronage of this officer is so great . . . the motives to corruption and intrigue are so strong," declared the *Philadelphia Democratic Press*, "that nothing less than a virtual consolidation of these two branches of the government must be the consequence of the Legislature taking upon itself to designate a candidate for the executive chair." To the *Aurora*, caucuses turned executive officials into "so many drill serjeants . . . disciplining the members of the legislature."⁵⁰

Other critics like the *Harrisburg Chronicle* put the blame on the legislative side, which used the caucus "to establish a claim upon his gratitude . . . by [which] the Governor is confined to legislative favorites for office." In sum, said the *Chronicle*, "the trust given by the Constitution and by the people to the General Assembly is purely legislative, and any exercise of another trust, while administering the legislative power, is an assumption of authority violative of the Constitution."⁵¹ The use of legislators to pick presidential electors was also considered undue interference with another branch of government. To a people already suspicious of government power, the notion that legislators should act beyond their clearly constituted sphere—even unofficially—was ripe for challenge.

Other arguments against the caucus appealed to different facets of republican ideology. The belief that the legislature and governor were acting in collusion led to further accusations that caucuses kept an "aristocracy of office" in power which made it difficult for outsiders to participate. This ran counter to the increasing appeal of rotation in office and conjured up visions of corrupt government in the eighteenth century mold.⁵² Caucuses also violated the notion of republican frugality in government by causing "the neglect of legislation, the waste of money, [and] the prolonging [of] sessions."⁵³ More sensationally, caucuses were cast in the same mold of dark conspiracies and secret societies that Americans in this period feared. "A caucus cabal determines every question of a political character," the *Aurora* claimed. By caucusing, the members "unite in a common conspiracy against the rights of the people."⁵⁴ Thus, however exaggerated it might have been, the anti-caucus argument struck a responsive chord in American political ideology. By the late 1810's the word "caucus" was as damaging a political epithet as the word "Federalist." To reformers, the solution to the caucus problem was simple: gubernatorial and presidential nominations should be made by conventions of delegates chosen expressly for that purpose, preferably "the most fit and virtuous citizens in the state."⁵⁵ Ideally the convention should meet outside the state capital, where it would be less likely to come under executive or legislative influence.

The caucus had few outright proponents and they could make only a weak case. Many could do little more than point to long usage as sanctioning caucuses. In defending the congressional caucus, the *Pennsylvania Intelligencer* argued that members of legislative bodies were the best informed as to opinions throughout the country and met at no cost to the community.⁵⁶ The *Harrisburg*



William Findlay

Republican protested that an 1820 caucus to set up a state convention was quite open and public, not a secret meeting as charged.⁵⁷ Caucus supporters were clearly on the defensive.

Events in 1817 began a pattern of retreat from the caucus that, within a few years, swept it away for gubernatorial and presidential elections. The Old School Republicans held a delegate convention in Carlisle to nominate Hiester for governor which, though not well attended, was the first such convention for governor in Pennsylvania. But, more significantly, the pro-caucus Snyder faction (which nominated Findlay) was forced to reinstitute the mixed caucus and pointedly invited more outside delegates than legislators. Moreover, the 44 legislators who attended had been instructed to do so by their constituents.⁵⁸

In 1820 the Snyder/Findlay party finally abandoned the gubernatorial and presidential elector caucuses and held a convention which, like the Hiester party,

carefully avoided Harrisburg. But the Findlay meeting (which also nominated pro-Monroe presidential electors) was still attacked for legislative influence at the convention and at the caucus which scheduled it and this may have been a factor in Hiester's narrow victory.⁵⁹ So important had the caucus issue become, in fact, that objections to it were cropping up in areas that had previously not been in dispute. In the caucus for speaker at the opening of the 1819-20 session, the chairman expressed what had been the prevailing opinion, that "the minority were bound to abide by the decision, and that such were the principles of democracy," but a resolution to that effect failed to carry.⁶⁰ When a pro-administration U.S. Senate caucus broke up without nominating in 1818, an *Aurora* correspondent gloated that "the caucus system is going out of fashion." Caucus discipline in U.S. Senate elections failed again in 1820 (resulting in a deadlock) and 1824 (when 29 ballots were required for election).⁶¹ Even the Pennsylvania congressional delegation in 1820 unanimously decided to boycott the presidential nominating caucus that year.⁶²

In the 1820's no Pennsylvania governor was nominated by a caucus, but legislative influence died hard. In 1823 the regular Republicans held a convention in Harrisburg under the watchful eye of the legislature, whose members were permitted to act as delegates for counties which failed to appoint any. Though only a fifth of the delegates were members, the convention passed up the opportunity to nominate a well-known figure like George Bryan or Samuel D. Ingham and instead chose an almost unknown state senator, John Shulze. The Independent Republicans, who had nearly died after three years of the determinedly nonpartisan Hiester, responded to the resulting outcry by calling a convention at Lewistown, but their candidate was easily defeated by Shulze despite the now familiar attacks on "corrupt nominations and legislative influence."⁶³

The caucus issue was still being argued in 1824 when the Republican party (now often called the Democratic party) met in convention in Harrisburg on March 4 and nominated Jackson. Not only were there protests against the arrangements of the convention by a legislative caucus, which again provided that counties not sending delegates would be represented by their legislators, but an unsuccessful motion in the convention tried to bar legislators from the electoral ticket. The coup de grace for the caucus came that year from Congress, where a poorly attended caucus tried to foist the ailing William H. Crawford on the disintegrating remnants of the Republican party.⁶⁴

After 1824, legislators confined themselves to a subsidiary role in state nominations. They met in caucus to call state conventions, a duty which such a meeting in 1831 stated rather self-consciously was "according to the usages of the democratic party, recognized and approved by the people."⁶⁵ They also fixed the place of conventions, which were now generally held in Harrisburg even though some papers still worried about legislative influence.⁶⁶ Finally, while

almost every convention had a few legislators in attendance and Harrisburg intrigues remained a part of every election year, the legislature's role in nominations was no longer decisive. By contrast, caucuses within the legislature for officers, treasurers, and U.S. Senators gradually revived with the advent of the second party system and by the mid-1830's became a regular element of each party's legislative agenda.⁶⁷

The decline of the caucus had some important implications. For one thing, shifting gubernatorial and presidential elector nominations from legislature to convention gave a spur to local party organization. Previously, party meetings, the selection of vigilance committees, and other indicators of party organization had generally been concentrated in the few weeks before elections. But state conventions, which were most often held in March, called for earlier and more thorough organization. Moreover, as the state delegate convention idea took hold, county conventions, which had often been rather haphazard, began meeting more regularly, with delegates being carefully sent from each township and listed in the local papers. Self nominations virtually disappeared. Thus, in years when a governor or president was being chosen (roughly one out of every two), local party organization occurred in two waves instead of one—in the winter to call a county convention to select delegates to the state convention (and often to appoint a county central committee for that year) and in the late summer, when another county convention was held to nominate local candidates and appoint vigilance committees.⁶⁸ All this was well in step with the nascent second party system's enthusiasm for political organization and voter mobilization. It is probably too much to say that the fall of the caucus was necessary before the second party system could appear. But had nominations for governors and electors continued to be made by a small group of men in the state legislature, the second party system might well have developed along a different course. Conventions encouraged organization, provided opportunities for more people to enter politics, added to the political spectacle, and lengthened the political year.

The victory of the delegate convention was not necessarily a victory for democracy. To be sure, nominations by delegates chosen for the task were likely to better reflect popular opinion. But the delegate process itself was not always an expression of democracy. As Philip Klein has cautioned, township and county meetings that selected delegates, far from being the gathering places of disinterested citizens, were too often just little cabals of local politicians who arranged matters among themselves.⁶⁹ The convention system also deemphasized ideology. Unlike legislators, who at least had some practical exposure to state questions, convention delegates were county politicians with less concern for broad issues. Thus, conventions tended to accentuate the political system's already strong localism. Conventions did occasionally produce more indepen-

dent governors—Porter and Bigler for example—but they did not turn up men of outstanding stature any more than the caucus system had.

Finally, the advent of state conventions eventually had an effect on the legislature itself. The immediate impact was a loss of political power and reputation. The attack on caucuses produced nearly the level of anti-legislative sentiment shown in the 1780s and in the decades after 1850, when the legislature was accused of corruption. Yet important political leaders continued to serve in the legislature through the 1820's, such as the leading Republican of Southwark, Joel B. Sutherland, former U.S. Senator Jonathan Roberts, William J. Duane of the Duane faction, internal improvements advocate William Lehman, and "Amalgamation" leader Isaac D. Barnard. Moreover, U.S. Senators and treasurers were still chosen largely from among the ranks of members or recent former members through 1830. But over the long run, the decline of the caucus made the legislature a less attractive place to serve. In the 1830's a noticeable drop in the quality of legislators set in, part of which may be attributed to the legislature's smaller political role. Fewer major leaders ran for legislative office; violence and corruption among members became problems. The legislature began choosing prominent outside politicians for the U.S. Senate, such as James Buchanan, George M. Dallas, and Simon Cameron.⁷⁰ When, around 1840, the clamor for office became so great that county conventions began limiting House terms to two sessions, the long careers that many legislative leaders had enjoyed came to an end. The legislature maintained its primacy in policymaking but, without its traditional leaders, it lost some of its ability to write laws.⁷¹ The capitol would always remain a hotbed of state politics, but legislators would never again have as vital a role in their parties as they had at the height of the caucus era.

Notes

1. The word caucus is often used rather loosely to refer to small meetings of politicians. Here it will be construed more strictly to mean a gathering of members of a legislative body who belong to the same party or faction and who at least tacitly agree that decisions reached there will be binding. Caucus is most likely of Algonquian origin, according to *The American Heritage Dictionary* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), p. 214. Mosei Ostrogorski, in "The Rise and Fall of the Nominating Caucus, Legislative and Congressional," *American Historical Review*, 5 (January 1900), p. 258, says the word was first used in its political sense to refer to the secret meetings in Boston before the Revolution.

2. Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The Beards' New Basic History of the United States* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1960), pp. 208-209; Ostrogorsky, "Rise and Fall of the Nominating Caucus," p. 253; Sanford W. Higginbotham, *The Keystone in the Democratic Arch: Pennsylvania Politics, 1800-1816* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1952), p. 332; Philip S. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics, 1817-1832: A Game Without Rules* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1940), pp. 56-58; Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 209-210. Ostrogorsky fully sub-

scribed to the view that the caucus died because of surging democracy, but he was also aware of the importance of caucuses in party development.

3. On the congressional caucus, see Charles S. Thompson, *An Essay on the Rise and Fall of the Congressional Caucus* (New Haven, 1902), pp. 19-24; William G. Morgan, "The Origin and Development of the Congressional Nominating Caucus," *American Philosophical Society Proceedings*, 113 (April 1969), pp. 184-196; James S. Young, *The Washington Community, 1800-1828* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), pp. 113-117; and Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans: The Formation of Party Organization, 1789-1801* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), pp. 82, 162-166. Books which discuss state caucuses include Richard P. McCormick, *The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966); Carl E. Prince, *New Jersey's Jeffersonian Republicans: The Genesis of an Early Party Machine, 1789-1817* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), pp. 98-157, 209-215; Peter D. Levine, *The Behavior of State Legislative Parties in the Jacksonian Era: New Jersey, 1829-1844* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1977), pp. 38-39, 140-141, 229; and James M. Banner, Jr., *To the Hartford Convention: The Federalists and the Origins of Party Politics in Massachusetts, 1789-1815* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), pp. 221-235.

4. Kim T. Phillips, "The Pennsylvania Origins of the Jackson Movement," *Political Science Quarterly*, 91 (Fall 1976), pp. 507-508; Ostrogorski, "Rise and Fall of the Nominating Caucus," pp. 277-280.

5. Recent studies that make a particularly good case for the legislature's primacy are L. Ray Gunn, "The New York State Legislature, A Developmental Perspective, 1777-1846," *Social Science History*, 4 (Summer 1980), pp. 267-294; Ballard C. Campbell, *Representative Democracy: Public Policy and Midwestern Legislatures in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980); and James H. Broussard, "Party and Partisanship in American Legislatures: The South Atlantic States,

1800-1812," *Journal of Southern History*, 43 (February 1977), pp. 39-58.

6. Lance Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 21-69; Bernard Bailyn, *The Origins of American Politics* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), pp. 14-52.

7. Jack P. Greene, *The Quest for Power: The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963).

8. Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1969), pp. 148-150, 206-214.

9. Robert L. Brunhouse, *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776-1790* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1942), pp. 221-227; Harry M. Tinckom, *The Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790-1801* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1950), pp. 1-17.

10. James Madison, *Federalist Papers*, no. 51.

11. James Wilson, *The Works of James Wilson* ed. by Robert G. McCloskey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 1:293.

12. See William Duane, *Experience the Test of Government* (Philadelphia: William Duane, 1807), pp. 9-14, 54-56.

13. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, pp. 24-26, 70-72.

14. See, for example, the constituent correspondence in the John Tod Papers, 1808-1817, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pa.; Meredith Papers, 1824-1828, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.; and J.D. Mathiot Papers, 1831-1834, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, Pa.

15. Douglas E. Bowers, "The Pennsylvania Legislature, 1815-1860: A Study of Democracy at Work" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1974), pp. 225-230.

16. McKean was the first governor to use vetoes extensively and his relationship with the legislature was predictably abrasive. Snyder twice vetoes the most important banking bill

of his generation, only to see the second veto overridden in 1814. Between the 1814-15 and 1829-30 sessions just nine laws were vetoed, three of which were successfully repassed by the legislature. Most of these vetoes came not because the governor was trying to reshape policy but because he had constitutional objections or thought the bill was confusing.

17. Bowers, "Pennsylvania Legislature," pp. 232-236; Richard E. Ellis, *The Jeffersonian Crisis: Courts and Politics in the Young Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 157-183 and *passim*.

18. *Austin v. Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania*, 1 Yeates 261; *Indiana T.R. Company v. Phillips*, 2 Penrose & Watts 184.

19. Of course, much of the leadership remained outside the legislature, especially that centered in Philadelphia.

20. On the role of party leaders, see, for example, Cunningham, Jr., *Jeffersonian Republicans: Formation*, pp. 105, 110-111.

21. Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 148-151. Gallatin was subsequently disqualified and a Federalist chosen to replace him.

22. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Nov. 1, Dec. 9, 1799; Pennsylvania, *Senate Journal*, 1799-1800, p. 4; Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 243-244.

23. For example, Robert Hare was re-elected Senate speaker several times in the late 1790's with only his own vote in dissent; the victor in 1799 was not contested the following year; and P.C. Lane, after a narrow victory in 1806, won unanimously for the next seven years. William Findlay won easy re-elections for a decade as state treasurer after his first victory in 1807; his predecessor had been contested only once in three elections.

24. Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 33-40; Thomas Fitzsimmons to Arthur St. Clair, [1790], in William H. Smith, ed., *The St. Clair Papers* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1882), 11:191-192.

25. Joseph S. Walton, "Nominating Conventions in Pennsylvania," *American Historical Review*, 2 (January 1897), p. 270; Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 135-138, 159; George D. Luetscher, *Early Political Machinery in the*

United States (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1903), p. 133.

26. No list of attendees is available but, in the final voting, legislators must have figured heavily since they most likely outnumbered nonlegislators.

27. Republicans, for example, asserted that, in addition to legislators, their meeting was attended by "citizens of like sentiments from parts of the state represented in the Legislature by our opponents." Philadelphia *Aurora*, April 25, April 11, 1799; Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 223-228. But before 1800 there was little objection to nominations by caucus, pure or otherwise.

28. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Oct. 24, 1796; William Nisbet Chambers, *Political Parties in a New Nation: The American Experience, 1776-1809* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 117.

29. Cunningham, *Jeffersonian Republicans: Formation*, pp. 111-114.

30. Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 243-253; Chambers, *Political Parties*, pp. 156-157; Pennsylvania, *House Journal*, 1800-1801, pp. 100-106.

31. Walton, "Nominating Conventions," pp. 262-270; Tinckom, *Republicans and Federalists*, pp. 51-68.

32. Philadelphia *Aurora*, April 25, 1799, April 16, 1802, April 4, 1804; Philadelphia *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, April 15, 1802.

33. Philadelphia *Aurora*, April 4, 1804.

34. Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 41, 49-50, 74-75.

35. Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 86-93, 130-132, 153-156; Ellis, *Jeffersonian Crisis*, pp. 19-25. In the 1807 Senate election a Republican caucus with 40 in attendance picked Boileau as their candidate, 31-9 and, judging from the final outcome, the caucus maintained its discipline during the floor vote.

36. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Sept. 4, 7, 1807; Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 142-143.

37. Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 226, 258-259, 288.

38. William C. Armor, *Lives of the Governors of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: James K. Simon, 1872), pp. 273–360; *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774–1971* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1971), *passim*; Pennsylvania, *House and Senate Journals, 1800–1830*.
39. James A. Kehl, *Ill Feeling in the Era of Good Feeling: Western Pennsylvania Political Battles, 1815–1825* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1956), pp. 107–108; Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, pp. 56–58.
40. Leading editors like William Duane and John Binns also preferred to stay home near their presses rather than accept patronage positions at the capital.
41. Bowers, "Pennsylvania Legislature," p. 24. Average experience of legislators was studied primarily in the 1813–14 to 1829–30 period, but was also checked back to 1799–1800. Leaders like Snyder, Leib, and Boileau also found the legislature a convenient stepping stone to higher office.
42. Ostrogorski, "Rise and Fall of the Nominating Caucus," pp. 255–256; Patrick L. McLaughlin, *The Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation, 1789–1801* (Ph.D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1983), pp. 1–7; Walton, "Nominating Conventions," pp. 267, 271–274; Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 21–22.
43. The best account of county organizations is in Kehl, *Ill Feeling in the Era of Good Feeling*, especially pp. 140–157. See also Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans in Power: Party Operations, 1801–1809* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), pp. 156–166 and Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, pp. 52–56.
44. Vote analysis was done mainly for the period 1813–14 and following, although an examination of earlier years suggests similar results. It was based on a comprehensive sample of votes for both houses in the sessions of 1813–14, 1814–15, 1819–20, and 1826–27, plus an analysis of votes on key national questions in the period from 1800 to 1830. For the four sessions listed, parties averaged just 44.1 in cohesion on all issues, using the Rice index of cohesion. For more details, see Bowers, "Pennsylvania Legislature," pp. 169–172; Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 150, 182–183, 225, 248–249.
45. Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, p. 288. Snyder's bank veto came between his nomination by caucus and a second caucus meeting that prepared a campaign address.
46. Pennsylvania, *House Journal, 1807–08*, 1:178–185, 2:6–7; 1810–11, pp. 172, 183–184; 1811–12, pp. 107–108. When the Federalists were strong, in the last half of the 1790's, there were a number of partisan national issues before the legislature; Tinckom, *Federalists and Republicans*, pp. 199–213.
47. The congressional caucus was also rarely used for issues; see Young, *Washington Community*, pp. 125–127. For anti-power attitudes, see Young, pp. 55–64; Bowers, "Pennsylvania Legislature," pp. 24–25, 88–94, 104–131.
48. Higginbotham, *Keystone in the Democratic Arch*, pp. 216–217, 272–273.
49. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, pp. 77–89.
50. Philadelphia *Democratic Press*, Feb. 26, 1820; Philadelphia *Aurora*, December 27, 1815. It should be noted that the most vociferous opponent of caucuses, William Duane, was also the most steadfast defender of legislative authority in policymaking and in its relations with the governor.
51. *Harrisburg Chronicle*, Jan. 13, 1817.
52. *Lancaster Weekly Journal*, Oct. 17, 1816.
53. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Dec. 11, 1816.
54. *Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1815, Jan. 20, 1817.
55. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Jan. 1, 1817.
56. *Harrisburg Republican*, Feb. 4, 1820.
57. *Pennsylvania Intelligencer*, Nov. 15, 1823. The strongest support for the caucus after 1816 came from Martin Van Buren and the Albany Regency in New York, who saw it as the only means to preserve party discipline in an era of weak party competition. These views had little effect on Pennsylvania, though. See Robert V. Remini, *Martin Van Buren and the Making of the Democratic Party* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 10, 36, 83–84.
58. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, pp. 87–89.

59. *Harrisburg Republican*, Feb. 4, 1820; *Philadelphia Democratic Press*, Feb. 26, 1820; *Philadelphia Franklin Gazette*, March 11, 1820.
60. *Philadelphia Democratic Press*, Dec. 19, 1819; *Philadelphia Franklin Gazette*, Dec. 15, 1819. In the floor vote, the minority refused to be bound by the caucus.
61. *Philadelphia Aurora*, Dec. 12, 1818; *Pennsylvania House Journal*, 1820-21, pp. 93-94; *Senate Journal*, 1824-25, p. 272 and *passim*.
62. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, p. 110.
63. *Lancaster Weekly Journal*, May 23, 1823, quoted in Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, p. 143; see also pp. 135-147; *Philadelphia Aurora*, Feb. 26, 1823. A friend of the losing Bryan had good reason to wish the regular Republican convention had been held outside Harrisburg, "beyond the reach of *Legislative control and intrigue*." Andrew Boder to George Bryan, March 6, 1823, George Bryan Papers, HSP.
64. *Harrisburg Pennsylvania Intelligencer*, Feb. 13, 1824; Klein *Pennsylvania Politics*, p. 165; Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822-1832* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), pp. 63-66.
65. *Harrisburg Pennsylvania Reporter*, Dec. 19, 1831.
66. *Carlisle American Volunteer*, March 19, 1829.
67. Bowers, "Pennsylvania Legislature," pp. 96-97.
68. For some examples of county political organization during the caucus era, see *Easton Pennsylvania Herald*, September 20, 27, 1809; *Carlisle Cumberland Register*, August 29, 1810, October 2, 1811; *Somerset Whig*, September 1, 22, 1814; and *Downingtown American Republican*, August 16, September 13, 1814. For examples after conventions took hold, see *Carlisle Republican*, January 5, March 7, August 22, September 5, 1820, August 31, 1825, September 6, 1826; *Downingtown Independent Journal*, January 27, March 3, 1829; and *Huntingdon Gazette*, May 1, 15, 1823.
69. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics*, pp. 52-56.
70. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress*. Senators elected after 1830 also tended to take a larger role in Washington.
71. Bowers, "Pennsylvania Legislature," pp. 24, 132-182.