

# Looking In on Congress From the House Gallery

## WHAT THE HOUSE IS LIKE

By CONGRESSMAN GUY U. HARDY

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When I was a boy I heard a story of three blind men who were taken to "see" an elephant. They were led up to the animal and each felt the first part he came in contact with and went away. In describing it afterward one of the blind men said that an elephant was like a rope, he having felt the tail; another said it was more like a palm leaf fan, he having felt its ear; and the third said it did not resemble either but was a big flat object something like a stone wall covered with a leathery skin with some hair on it. Each was speaking from his own point of view and telling only of what he had seen—or rather felt.

It is that way with many things in life. We see only a very small part, yet having seen that, we think that we are competent to judge, describe and criticize.

An hour or two in the gallery would certainly give one a very lopsided view of congress. Yet many come, look on for a few moments and go away to tell of congress as they have seen it, a good deal as the blind men told of the elephant and with fully as much accuracy.

If you were a casual caller in the gallery you might find the house full of members, or only half full, or even with only a few dozen present. You might find it doing routine business and as quiet and placid as a summer calm; or excited to fever heat by a partisan discussion between party leaders, or in a storm of agitation over a question of personal privilege or the exercise of personal rights. The house has its varying moods, as human beings have. Sometimes it works along doing business rapidly and as smoothly as clock work. And sometimes everything seems to be on edge and everybody on his nerves, when one could hardly get an amendment through to dot an "i" or cross a "t" without a fight and a roll call.

**Cannot Always Be on the Floor.**  
Members need not sit on the floor all the time. They have much to do besides. Much of the business of congress is transacted in the committees. The major committees are composed of from 21 to 35 members each. Some of the committee meetings are as important and formal as the meeting of a state senate and with about equal membership. Committees are frequently meeting while the house is in session. There is also much office work to be done and members take advantage of every lull in proceedings to catch up with their office work. There is always departmental work to be taken care of, but members as a rule do not go down town in the afternoon when the house is in session. Most members stay within reach of the roll call signals.

Whether your member is on the floor or not, you may depend upon it that he knows pretty well what is going on and can easily be reached when his presence is required.

The greatest safeguard is thrown about legislation to keep anyone from putting something over. Much is done by unanimous consent when a single member can object and stop or stay proceedings. A member may at any time question the presence of a quorum and if the speaker does not find a quorum present by actual count the roll is called. Signal bells ring in the corridors, restaurant and house office building so that members may appear and answer to their names. Whenever a member is fearful that something will be done which he doesn't want done except by consideration of the whole house, he can raise the question of a quorum and a quorum must be secured before business is further considered.

A quorum in the house consists of a majority of its membership. There are 435 members when all are alive and there are no vacancies—although there are often two or three vacancies on account of death or resignation. So it usually requires 217 or 218 members to make a quorum. When the house is doing business as the committee of the whole 100 members make a quorum.

**Reasons for Demanding a Quorum.**  
The point of no quorum is raised often because a member wants a full attendance when the question before the house is considered. It is raised sometimes because some one present wants a good audience for an important speech. It is raised occasionally merely in order to delay the game and is resorted to by the minority to use up the time and postpone or defeat legislation that cannot be defeated by a majority vote. It is frequently used when a filibuster is in progress, and sometimes the roll is called six or eight times a day. As it requires 35 or 40 minutes to call the roll it can be seen how a few roll calls will block the business of the day.

Occasionally the point of no quorum will be raised out of spite. A member may desire some time to speak and

those in charge of the time may feel that they have none at their disposal or for some reason do not wish to yield the gentleman time. The gentleman with a grievance may conclude that he will block the business of the house for a time by causing a roll call. I have seen a member state frankly on the floor that if he cannot get the time desired he will feel it his duty to raise the question of a quorum. Some times the gentleman in control of the time will give in and yield the time desired, and sometimes he will call the other gentleman's bluff. These incidents do not occur very often.

Once in a while a little filibuster is resorted to by the minority or by an obstreperous member who wants to force consideration of some special matter. Then the roll calls come thick and fast. One day the committee on rules tried to get a rule adopted, giving four hours for debate on a certain bill. The minority took a notion to block the game and it took a day and a half of roll calls to get the rule passed.

Some bills are passed by the majority of those present without a roll call. But any member can always demand a quorum and if a quorum is not present a roll call on the bill automatically follows. And even if a quorum is present, twenty per cent of those present can always demand and secure a roll call on any proposition.

**Too Much Talking, of Course.**  
There is much unnecessary talking in the house. Nobody realizes that so much as those who have to be present and listen to much of it. The same thing is true wherever men and women congregate—especially where they meet to consider matters of public concern. As a reporter I have sat up past midnight listening to rambling, unnecessary talk over some trivial matter at a small town council meeting where only eight or nine members had to agree on a policy.

Some freedom must be given to those who want to talk. Some opportunity must be given for all sides to be heard. It requires consideration and explanation and talk sometimes to get many minds to look at the subject in the same way.

There is too much unnecessary talk in the house, but I do not see how it could be eliminated. Who is to say what talk may be made and what talk shall not be made? Who is so wise that he may be set up as a censor? It is not so hard in the house as in the senate. In the senate there is no limit on debate. In the house debate is always limited, usually to one or two hours, occasionally to four hours, and perhaps twice in recent years to 12 hours on very important measures. Congress is often criticized for being slow in doing business. Of course it is slow. It is made up of human beings of many minds. They come from all parts of a great country stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The representatives represent peoples and communities as diversified and as far apart in thoughts and interests as they are in distance. It requires time for these representatives of these various minds and interests to weigh and consider and amend and whip into shape and finally agree upon proposed legislation that is to be written for a hundred and ten millions of people and may run for all time. It necessarily takes time for a majority of 435 members to be brought to see things alike.

This is one of the necessary results of a republican form of government. It is not so in an autocracy. It is not so in Russia. There you get quick action. By a decree from the autocrat the lands are confiscated. By a decree anything can be done quickly. But by parliamentary procedure it takes time for just and due consideration.  
But after all congress is not so slow as compared with other governing bodies in a republic. Consider your own city council, your own board of county commissioners, your own state legislature. Who has not tried for years and years to get a certain street light placed, a street crossing fixed up, a city street cut through, a city park established, the city streets paved, a country road defined or a bridge built or this or that law amended, changed, repealed or passed? Let that individual who has never seen these long delays in getting worthy propositions put through the governing body at home, where every member knows the conditions like a book, throw the first rock at congress.

**Requirements for Members.**  
The Constitution provides that a representative must have attained the age of twenty-five, have been a citizen of the United States for seven years and shall be an inhabitant of the state in which he is elected. There is no law specifying that a representative must be a resident of the district he represents, although it is very unusual for a district to elect a representative residing in another district. It is done occasionally in New York City. A senator must be thirty years of age, at least nine years a citizen of the country and an inhabitant of the state electing him.

### COUNTY COURT BILLS- CONTINUED

Co.	7.59
Feenbaugh Machinery Co.	600.00
Tillamook Iron Works	58.05
Russel Grader Mfg. Co.	8.55
Jack Selby	5.00
Pacific Banker	4.07
John A. Carroll	68.07
Tom Lyster	.75
Bill Miller	9.30
John Weber	2.75
Pacific Bridge Co.	60.75
Ethel Holden	6.65
Peder Erickson	11.23
Ros Chilcott	57.63
Dye & Yyster	219.47
F. L. Sappington	5.00
Jess Earl	7.00
Tom Lyster	56.25
Vernon Holden	8.30
H. S. Brimhall, express	7.37
Kilham Stationery & Printing Co.	13.92
Coast Power Co.	16.20
Lamars Drug Store	3.00
W. S. Coates	16.95
W. E. Anderson	17.95
Southern Pacific Co.	37.76
Rose J. Wilkes	16.66
Frank Tone	65.60
K. C. Chance	15.95
W. H. Chance	47.85
Wesley Tippen	9.57
Fred Biggs	23.93
J. P. Mattoon	3.19
Joe Blaser	.70
Willard Johnson	1.59
Chas. Sellinger	1.59
Val Teater	107.73
Russ Johnson	1.59
G. C. Smith	115.72
Fred Edwards	58.87
L. A. Whitcomb	109.79
E. J. Shelling	31.88
L. Ellionn	15.96
R. Woolfe	18.20
Ros Beckwith	18.20
Al Devine	23.70
E. J. Greenwood	7.19
Tillamook Transfer Co.	45.82
Williams & Williams	153.03
Williams & Williams	269.40
F. C. Feldschau	1005.32
Union Oil Co.	30.24
Yellow Fir Lbr. Co.	135.43
Standard Oil Co.	64.40
Howard-Cooper Corporation	2860.17
R. P. Zachmann	34.36
Standard Oil Co.	407.85
Howard-Cooper Corporation	2117.60
John Blum	25.00
Chas. F. Pankow	118.15
Pacific Tel. & Tel. Co.	4.10
Tillamook Garage	8.83
Sunset Garage	243.96
Tillamook Herald	3.33
W. C. Cheney	9.75
A. F. Coates Lbr Co.	858.51
King-Crenshaw Hdw. Co.	85.15
A. T. Dolan	223.10
Alex McNair Co.	60.37
Barrick Transfer Co.	1.00
Gilbert & Co.	4.72
Ade Lane	37.05
Lamb-Schrader Co.	271.00
Peder Erickson	2.45
Williams & Williams	226.93
J. O. Dailey	1500.00
Steinbach Iron Works	239.39
Oregon State Highway Commission	160.00
Kelly Springfield Motor Truck Co.	103.54

### ROAD WARRANTS

SEPTEMBER TERM	
ROAD DISTRICT No. 3	
State Industrial Accident Commission	341.35
H. A. Dike	6.38
John L. Redberg	1800.00
Ole Redberg	2780.00
W. A. Penner	600.00
F. A. Dodd	41.71
F. A. Dodd	8.17
W. A. Montgomery	44.66
W. W. Todd	23.94
H. D. Westerfield	27.91
W. V. Montgomery	39.07
W. V. Montgomery	9.99
Chester Jensen	60.61
O. Huggett	19.14
C. M. Huggett	10.78
R. I. Grundell	223.97
P. C. Meyer	135.29
J. F. Grundell	142.43
Lois Henry	46.25
Dan Fletcher	1000.00
Frank S. Carver	100.00
Oscar O. Carver	1100.00
Hommer Arstall	1.25
Lelia D. Doty	11.40
W. Winters	38.27
Al Boon	75.24
Irwin-Hodson Co.	13.00
S. D. Moon	3.50
Wm. Withrow	5.00
F. S. Foster	121.68
John A. Coughran	54.08
H. Parks	3.00
Oscar Taggart	10.80
John Mathers, Agent	2.76
Hugh Arstall	1.25
G. W. Olson	107.05
Kilham Stationery & Printing Co.	7.59
Edward R. Bacon Co.	18.03
Oregon State Highway Comm.	118.48
Feenbaugh Machinery Co.	2.57
Hawthorne Dock Co.	102.60
George Oliver	65.00
D. W. Benfield	1.50
Farrest Ayer	151.13
Feenbaugh Machinery Co.	600.00
Tillamook Sheet Metal Works	23.50
Tillamook Iron Works	2.00
Arrow Garage	28.80
Hubert Smith	.55
Russel Grader Mfg. Co.	8.55
Jack Selby	5.00
Pacific Banker	4.08
John A. Carroll	68.06
Dunn & Baker	22.94
H. S. Brimhall, express	21.56
Kilham Stationery & Printing Co.	13.92
Southern Pacific Co.	1063.90
Loys Carver	86.27
J. M. Traxler	5.00
George Blinkensopp	6.38
L. Maloney	3.19
Harold Scherzinger	18.33
Earl Porter	7.17
George Jensen	48.64
J. E. Cochran	104.39
C. H. Maynard	116.02
J. R. Bidgood	65.99
W. C. Stewart	153.68
Lloyd Newbill	159.97
Elton Greenwood	74.16
Herbert Porter	156.37
R. O. Reigle	45.65
A. R. Reigle	70.97
J. K. Elliott	50.23
Forrest Elliott	51.83
Carl Commons	92.57
Alfred Parson	22.33
H. E. Erweiler	4.78
W. W. Telford	12.76
H. W. Vogel	3.19
R. Earl	25.52
S. A. Earl	31.90
Herman Smith	22.33

Jim Earl	9.57
Glen Cochran	9.57
John Rock	39.54
C. M. Churchill	124.71
Wm. Thomas	124.33
John Shafer	84.04
Webb Maginnis	92.77
Wm. Mitchell	60.80
Monroe Switzer	31.69
C. E. Cobb	77.87
Alex Reuser	25.11
Guy Schoppert	57.42
P. O. Light	25.51
P. O. Light	38.28
Wm. Savage	59.01
A. Parsons	48.64
H. Harrington	61.40
Harvey Hollett	44.66
L. C. Palmer	4.81
L. C. Palmer	18.91
Willard Long	53.63
J. M. Stephens	17.54
Tom Bedortha	22.72
Lee Maloney	22.33
D. A. Hilliker	32.93
Henry Burke	63.18
Oscar Bennett	112.27
G. A. Fuller	279.46
Del Long	122.28
A. C. Sout	119.95
Frank Redberg	67.03
Ole Redberg	82.22
Jody Etzwiler	31.90
John Rock	46.73
W. E. Fitch	90.26
O. L. Churchill	41.66
Edward Creecy	105.74
Jim Beggs	59.80
Jim Lamson	63.34
Ed Douglas	60.12
Floyd Light	31.49
D. A. Hilliker	129.45
C. B. Davis	6.98
Bob Call	27.11
M. B. Lucas	41.47
Glen Cochran	49.63
John Wallace	70.56
J. F. Reed	142.00
W. M. Derrick	7.50
W. M. Derrick	130.89
L. L. Wood	94.36
L. G. Ross	49.43
Alfred Christofferson	23.92
Jim Earl	57.73
Herman Smith	45.24
Walter Churchill	86.22
Lloyd Kellow	141.09
F. A. Lockyear	14.35
Elno Lightfoot	1.39
Harley Earl	27.30
Sol Earl	27.11
E. E. Nelson	87.77
Mark Bloom	66.99
Marion Wiggins	65.78
L. J. Edwards	69.80
L. G. Ross	46.73
John Gustin	63.80
H. L. Jensen	55.82
Earl Blackburn	19.14
Jim Rogers	33.15
G. T. Bailey	32.35
W. M. Derrick	3.98
I. J. Green	103.74
Roy Saling	22.68
John M. Stephens	3.19
P. H. Hettick	11.16
H. H. Woods	38.28
H. Lockyear	6.38

A. Headinger	61.11	Gus Belleque	73.11
L. Carver	44.02	O. W. Steele	3.11
R. L. Gardner	59.20	Geo. Blinkensopp	19.11
Ernest Belleque	66.99		(Continued on page 4)

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