

## **Donnald K. Anderson**

### **Whip Call**

Description of Whip calls during the 1950s and 1960s.

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When I started as a Page, if the leadership wanted to put out a Whip call to Members, which they did very rarely in those days, to say that a certain vote was anticipated, it was leadership-critical, Democratic Members—or in the case of the other side, Republican Members—were expected to vote in a particular way when that vote occurred...we would drop everything in the cloakroom and each one of the five or six cloakroom Pages would get into a phone booth, we would get a Capitol operator...remember I said that those were all manual telephones in those days, where you actually got an operator when you picked up a phone, not a dial tone. And we would say, "We need to put out a Whip call." And that operator would stick with us. Each of us had a segment of the Democratic membership in front of us, the alphabetical list, we broke it up into five or six different parts. And, you know, we'd start off with "I need to be connected with Congressman Joseph Adabo's office." And she would manually place that call. And then we would read from our little script, that "At 3:00 or thereabouts, a vote will occur on the Jones Amendment to HR 1234. It is a leadership 'aye.' The leadership is expecting the Congressman to vote yes when that vote occurs. And be sure that he gets that information. Yes." Then we'd click the receiver and the operator would come back, and we'd go to the next name on the list. That's how we put out a Whip call.