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Paper presented at a conference in UBC, Vancouver to mark Ken Carty's retirement

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Courting, but not always serving: Perverted Burkeanism and the puzzle of Irish Parliamentary Cohesion¹

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Why is it that in some political systems legislators frequently vote against their own parties, while in others such behaviour is very rare? Our starting point in addressing this topic is the work of legislative studies scholars who have theorized about the relationship between electoral system design and levels of cohesion in parliamentary parties (Bowler et al. 1999). The most comprehensive recent account of this subject is John Carey's notion of 'competing principals' (2009: 17). Carey's approach is built upon the contention that all legislators in representative democracies are faced with a 'structure of accountability' (p. 14), which he discusses in terms of principals and agents. The accountability of an agent (in this case, a legislator) to a given principal (for instance, their party leadership or the voters in their constituency) is determined by the capacity of the principal to monitor the agent's behaviour and to consequently provide either rewards or sanctions for their actions.

Carey argues that, where institutional design is such that 'voters have the ability to reward and punish individual legislators directly' (2009: 17), the structure of accountability will be one where legislators are accountable to two separate principals: voters and party leaders. These competing principals can 'pull' legislators in opposite directions. For instance, when legislation is being considered that involves the removal of a resource from a legislator's district, voters in that district may insist that 'their' legislator would oppose such legislation. However, the same legislator's party leader may have a strong preference for the legislator to support the bill because that measure may be necessary to implement a party's national-

level policy, or it may have been agreed to gain concessions from a coalition partner in other areas. In such situations, legislators are forced to choose between the desires of their competing principals when deciding how to vote.

Electoral system design has a significant role to play in determining the nature of the accountability structures encountered by legislators. At one extreme are closed-list electoral systems in which the party leaders (or their proxies, party selection conventions) determine the electoral fate of parliamentary candidates by deciding on their ranking on the party list. Under such systems, individual legislators are far more accountable to their party leaders than to the electorate. More open electoral systems lead to a situation where, because they need to garner individualized support from voters, 'legislators have reason to cultivate reputations distinct from their copartisans' (Carey 2009: 133; also Ames 1995; Hix 2004). One straightforward way to cultivate a distinct (and positive) local reputation is to vote against the (locally unpopular) party line. Carey's empirical examination of legislators' voting behaviour produces strong evidence to support the contention that open electoral systems encourage higher degrees of what he refers to as 'legislative individualism' (2009: 160), in which legislators are more inclined to break with party ranks; this is manifested particularly in Carey's observation that legislatures elected by open list systems have lower roll call cohesion scores than legislatures elected by closed list systems.

The Irish electoral system of single transferable vote (STV) proportional representation (PR) is about as open as an electoral system can be (Farrell and McAllister 2006). The incentives for personal vote chasing by legislators and parliamentary candidates that Carey and Shugart (1995; Shugart 2001) theorize as characteristic of open systems are at their most intense under STV: where each candidates compete for personal votes (i.e., the candidate, not the party, is the object of electoral choice). As well as competing for individualised support with all other candidates in their district, many Irish politicians face competition from fellow party members. Finally, under STV the mantra common to all PR systems that 'every vote counts' is taken to another level, and it is every *preference* that counts. It is hard to conceive of any other electoral system that could produce greater potential

for legislators to be pulled in opposing directions by competing principals: under STV the voter looms large in the life of a legislator, and, if anything, the party leadership might be expected to come as a poor second. Furthermore, evidence from the Irish National Election Study indicates that the candidate looms large in the calculus of the voter – 58.7% of Irish voters in the 2002 national election study cited the candidate as the most important factor in their first preference vote decision, and 46% reported that they would vote for the same candidate, if that candidate stood for a different party (Marsh, 2007). Such a system appears to offer few incentives for party loyalty in legislative behaviour.

The Irish case, therefore, might be seen as providing the most likely case for testing Carey's competing principals theory: the quintessentially 'open' electoral system of STV should produce ideal conditions for 'legislative individualism'. Simply put, TDs (MPs) should be especially prone to breaking party ranks. And yet the evidence of Irish legislative individualism fails to provide much support for this intuition. Quite the converse, indeed, as the leading authority on the parliamentary behaviour of TDs has noted: 'if anything parliamentary party cohesion is even higher in Ireland than the European average. It is extremely rare for deputies not to vote with the party; the norm is that every TD votes in accordance with the party line on every issue' (Gallagher: 2010: 202).

This leaves us with a paradox to explain. Despite having one of the most open and least party-controlled electoral systems in the world, Ireland's political class is among the most disciplined in Europe. In addressing this paradox we begin with an analysis of the extent of party rebellions in recent Irish history up to the contemporary period, confirming just how few cases there have been and providing some contextual details on the few cases that are to be found. We then examine the manner in which legislative discipline is enforced by parties. We find that this is achieved via an uncompromising party whip system, with defection from the whip on a single vote typically leading to resignation/expulsion from the parliamentary party. We examine the effects of whip resignation/loss on the political careers and electoral fates of those few Irish politicians who defied the party line, finding the costs to them pretty low overall.

We then look at a recent survey of TDs in order to examine the how they maintain a balance between their ‘competing principals’ in terms of their conception of their representative role. We find that TDs are highly constituency-oriented in their view of the representative role, and that there appears to be a latent potential for a considerably higher degree of legislative individualism than we have observed in Ireland.

All of this leaves us with the puzzle unresolved: if the punishments for defection are not as politically harmful as they might be, and the capacity for high levels of legislative individualism is reflected in the attitudes of TDs, why are there so few instances of legislative defection? The chapter concludes with some answers to the puzzle.

1. The Irish Tradition of Parliamentary Party Discipline

Party discipline in Irish political parties has its roots in the strict discipline that Charles Stewart Parnell introduced in the Irish Parliamentary Party in the British House of Commons in 1885; probably one of the first instances of disciplined parliamentary parties in the world (Farrell 1973). Party discipline quickly became established as a practice of party-affiliated TDs’ behaviour following Irish independence in the 1920s (O’Halpin 1997). Discipline is enforced with high penalties for those who do not follow the party line, with the ultimate sanction being expulsion from the parliamentary party.

Just as in the UK House of Commons, the party officers charged with enforcing party discipline are known as the party whips (MacCárthaigh 2005: 147-150). However, unlike the British case where parties are prepared, on quite a number of occasions, to make allowances for rebellious MPs for the sake of wider party unity (Cowley and Stuart, 2003), in Ireland the rule is pretty simple and straightforward – rebellion (usually) means whip removal. There are very few cases of a TD who votes against the party being allowed to hold onto the party whip; indeed, the total number of cases in recent years are virtually in single figures, and these cases have typically taken place in exceptional political circumstances. The

data reported in Table 1 cover the entire population of instances of Irish parliamentary party rebellion over the past thirty years.

[Table 1 about here]

There are just 54 individuals who lost the whip (or resigned it voluntarily) due to breaking with the party line in the entire period studied – representing a meagre 3.3% of the total number of TDs elected in that period.² There is an even split between voluntary resignation and expulsion from the parliamentary party. Overall, 63% of TDs who lost or resigned the whip were government deputies, while 37% were in opposition. This pattern is arguably what one would expect in a political system characterized by executive dominance – the voting behaviour of members of governing parties is far more consequential for voters, and hence subject to greater scrutiny, than the voting behaviour of opposition legislators.

Slightly more than half of our rebels, 54%, were not readmitted to their original party. However, many TDs resigned the party whip and joined another party or formed a new party. There are 12 cases in our data where those who lost the party whip went on to join or form a new party. After this number is discounted, we can see that only 17 TDs, just under 32% of all those who lost or resigned their party whip, were not subsequently readmitted to any parliamentary party. As such, re-admission to the parliamentary party is not a given following expulsion or resignation. Moreover, TDs are required to re-apply for entry to the parliamentary party. The party does not formally approach them to re-enter the fold.

What these trends show is that Irish legislators are loyal followers of their parliamentary party leaderships, that voting cohesion is very high, and that the few cases of rebellion that occur are dealt with swiftly and summarily. Furthermore, the political system appears to be remarkably adept at avoiding situations where TDs resign/lose the party whip due to a ‘local’ issue. It may be the case that TDs are kept in line in parliament simply through parties’ tendency to remove the whip from all defectors. However, for this to be a credible explanation, we have to see what happened to those TDs who lost the whip in terms of their subsequent political careers.

2. What are the consequences of losing the whip?

What is the electoral fate of TDs that have lost the party whip? We focus here on the electoral performances of those 41 TDs who lost the whip and contested a subsequent election. We do so by calculating each TD's average share of the constituency vote in all elections before and after they lost the whip. We then subtract their pre-loss average from their post-loss average. Negative scores here indicate that TDs won fewer votes in elections after losing the whip than they had before, while positive scores indicate the opposite. In Table 2, the differences between post-loss and pre-loss electoral performance are presented, and sub-categories where these differences were substantial are reported.

[Table 2 about here]

The results suggest that whip loss is not generally related to *any* discernible change in overall electoral performance. In fact, the average difference between pre and post whip loss vote shares is just 0.86% of the constituency vote. We also performed a paired t-test and found that there is no statistically significant difference between the two vote shares (p-value = 0.1862).

When we disaggregate our data, we can see that the circumstances of the whip loss matter. Table 2 shows that the support of one of the larger parties, and particularly of Fine Gael, can be crucial in determining one's chances of electoral success. Also members of the larger parties, members of governing parties, and members not re-admitted to the party all fare somewhat worse at the polls after having lost the whip than they did before.

The reasons for which deputies lost the whip also appear to have a bearing on the electoral consequences of whip loss – the most striking trend here is where a TD has lost the whip on a question of moral policy, they suffer the worst electoral fate of all categories – on average, these TDs lose over six percentage points of vote share.

Generally, the electoral consequences of losing the party whip would seem to be minimal. But what about the subsequent career paths of those TDs who lost the party whip? Party leaderships control the career progress of TDs far more than they

control the behaviour of the electorate, therefore we may anticipate that the real sanction of whip loss will be the subsequent inability of TDs to win promotion, whether that be appointment to ministerial office, following a political career in the European Union or compensated for loss of a Dáil seat by appointment/election to the Seanad. Promotional paths are fully or partly controlled by party leaderships, and we would therefore expect them to be closed-off to TDs who have lost the whip.

In Table 3, we look at the percentages of our group of rebel TDs who did not receive *any* such promotions having lost the whip. The figures here make for interesting reading for any TD contemplating rebellion. Of our 54 cases, 20 (37%) went on to have subsequent careers beyond the backbenches – a figure that implies that the loss of the party whip meant the end of political career advancement for the remaining 34 (63%).

[Table 3 about here]

Again, disaggregated data indicate that some types of whip losses are more consequential than others. Of the TDs who defected from the party whip when their party was in government, 75% did not enjoy career advancement, whereas this figure drops substantially for TDs who lost the whip while their party was in opposition. Interestingly, party norms seem to play a role here. As was the case with electoral consequences, rebels from larger parties didn't do well in terms of career advancement, while members of the smaller parties did. The only other striking, though unsurprising, trend from Table 3 concerns the seven TDs who lost the whip for ethical difficulties. None of these TDs enjoyed any subsequent career advancement.

To summarise, there are mixed messages about the consequences that TDs may experience if they dare to vote against the party whip. Generally, they do not suffer electorally, though the reason they resigned the whip or the party background from which they come appear to have a bearing on how they fare electorally after the event. Overall, it would appear that the electorate neither rewards nor punishes dissent from their TDs. We can say one thing – loss of the whip is not rewarded by party leaderships in terms of the furthering of TDs' careers – especially if one is a member of government or of one of the larger parties. However, 37% of rebel TDs

enjoyed subsequent promotion, indicating that legislative rebellion is not (necessarily) terminal for one's political career. As such, we cannot rely solely on the 'tough consequences' justification to explain the low incidence of parliamentary rebellion in Ireland. We therefore turn to the views that TDs themselves take of their role in the Dáil.

3. Split personalities?

A recent survey of TDs in the 2007-2011 Dáil affords us an opportunity to examine possible explanations for the paradoxically high levels of parliamentary party voting discipline in Ireland.³ Questions in the survey sought to assess the tensions between constituency-based and party-based or national representative roles. Table 4 reports the results of an item on the survey that required TDs to produce a set of transitive rankings of the various groups that they might represent. The 'all voters in the constituency' option dramatically outperforms any of the others, receiving more than four times as many first preference rankings as the next highest placed option, which was also a constituency-based conception of representation. TDs' 'competing principal', i.e., the party, was de-emphasized: party representation was the second lowest-rated representative role in the survey.

[Table 4 about here]

Given the strong constituency orientation expressed in these data by TDs, the extent of observed legislative discipline in Ireland is rather remarkable. To investigate this further, a question in the survey posed respondents with the following dilemma: 'How should a TD vote in parliament if there is a conflict of opinion between the party's supporters in the constituency and the party?' This survey question asks respondents to imagine a situation of competing principals. In such a case, voting with the party line is likely to be a result of party discipline, enforced by the party leadership. The information captured by TDs' responses to this question gives us an idea of the extent to which TDs choose the norms of 'party loyalty' or 'legislative individualism' in interpreting how to respond to the conflicting demands of their competing principals (for more, see Bowler and Farrell 1999).

The results indicate a large majority of TDs feel that the party line should be followed: out of 70 TDs who responded to this item, 56 (or 80%) indicated that the TD should vote according to the ‘party’s opinion’: in the subsequent discussion, these respondents will be referred to as *party loyalists*. 14 TDs (20%) responded that the TD should vote in line with the ‘constituency voters’ opinion’. We refer to these respondents as *legislative individualists*. While the legislative individualists are a minority grouping – their size is far greater than we would anticipate given the remarkably low levels of actual party indiscipline involved (which equated to less than 4% of all TDs losing the whip in the period studied here); this seems to suggest a considerable latent capacity for legislative indiscipline among Irish parliamentarians.

Interestingly, an analysis of the two groups’ perceptions of the TD’s representative role revealed that there is little difference in how the two groups perceive those roles. One might logically expect that legislative individualist TDs would be far more constituency-oriented generally than party loyalists, however this is not the case. We did find some interesting differences between the groups in terms of the type of competition that they face in their constituency, their personal attributes, and their political careers. Table 5 presents the scores of each group in areas where they were found to differ from each other.

Intraparty pressures and electoral success both appear to help us to explain why some TDs purport to be legislative individualists. We measured, for each respondent, the number of co-partisans against whom they competed in their constituency in the 2007 general election, and found that legislative individualists faced more opponents from their own party than, on average, the party loyalists. We also measured the electoral marginality of each respondent (the percentage of constituency quota received in first preference votes by the TD in the 2007 election). As we can see in Table 5, legislative individualists were typically more marginal than their party loyalist colleagues, which suggest that those in marginal seats probably face stronger incentives to be responsive to their constituents. This finding, along with that on intra-party competition, suggests that the nature of the constituency-

level electoral competition faced by TDs has a bearing on their inclinations with regard to which principal they should prefer.

[Table 5 about here]

In terms of TDs' characteristics, we found that the party loyalist group contains considerably more experienced TDs (with an average of 5.4 years more experience) than the legislative individualists. We would expect that those who have not profited from party appointments have fewer incentives to be party loyalists. To do this, we created two measures. The first ascertained if they held a position in the government, and the second measured if the TD did not hold any official position ('backbencher') such as committee chair or party leader. The difference between the two groups here is statistically significant: unsurprisingly there are more 'backbenchers' among the legislative individualists. This tallies with what we would expect: TDs that do not owe offices they hold to the party leadership are likely to be more responsive to their constituents, something that is underlined by the fact that all ministerial office holders surveyed did not consider themselves legislative individualists.⁴

4. Separate Worlds?

If the problem of legislative discipline can be cast in principal-agent terms, as Carey (2009) suggests, then two possible solutions to the puzzle of Irish party discipline can be suggested. The first is that the agent (in this case, an individual TD) is able to respond to the competing demands of the party principal in the Dáil and to the constituency principal at home through obfuscation and shirking. That is, she tells one principal one thing, and the other something else, and assumes that nobody will check whether the two stories actually tally. This, however, is implausible. Not only is Ireland a small country in which, most famously, everybody knows everybody else and the parish pump dominates, thereby making it unlikely that two competing stories could survive for long; but there is also an increasing amount of very effective media scrutiny, and a large set of fairly rapacious political reporters who would quickly expose any attempt by TDs to deliberately pull the wool

over the eyes of their party leader or their constituents. As such, obfuscation or deceit on the part of the TD is unlikely to work – at least beyond the short term.

The second and more plausible solution, and one that also might be used to question Carey's initial assumptions, is that while there are two principals and just one agent, the two principals are not in fact in competition. Rather, they exist in separate spheres, in which the terms of reference of the one are disconnected from those of the other. If the evaluations of candidates as individuals are largely divorced from their voting behaviour in parliament then it becomes possible for the TD to satisfy both principals simultaneously. It is simply up to her, as agent, to find the time and organisational resources to respond to each.

An argument for separate spheres has obvious traction in the Irish case (Carty 1981). On the one hand, there is clearly a national sphere, in which parties as national organisations compete with one another at election time, publishing (albeit not always in the past) lengthy election manifestos and programmes for government, engaging in party leaders' debates on television and the radio, and promoting a national policy message and a national policy appeal. The differences between the parties competing at this level are not very pronounced, of course, and the policies of the mainstream parties usually come very close to one another in broad terms while differing in details or precise priorities. On the other hand, there is also competition in the local or constituency sphere, which is the second sphere that concerns us. Here also the competition revolves around valence issues, and even when policy differences between the parties or the candidates do become important, these are more likely to revolve around local concerns rather than around anything that might connect to the national sphere of competition. This is particularly so when the competition is between candidates of the same party, since this will be depoliticized by definition.

In both of these spheres, and for the purposes of both principals, the TD is of course an agent. But since the spheres rarely connect – at least in policy terms – there need be no competition or trade-off between them. To work loyally as an agent for the constituency, the TD must look after local representative needs and facilitate relations between local citizens and the state authorities. She must also seek to win public funding for local projects, and to ensure that public benefits

accrue to the constituency. Most of this work is particularistic and apolitical, in which, to recall the title of the classic study of localism by the late Basil Chubb (1963), the TD spends her local agency time ‘going about persecuting civil servants.’ Irish legislators face a huge volume of demands to act as brokers between citizen and state, and according to Gallagher and Komito (2009), some 21% of the voting age population in Ireland have reported personally contacting a sitting TD between 1997 and 2002. Marsh (2007: 509) points out that responsiveness to such demands is essential to the electoral fortunes of individual TDs. He found that the selection of first choice candidates among Irish voters is dominated by evaluations of the candidate’s individual attributes, that is, their reputation for being personally helpful to voters and active workers in the local area. Individual policy stances taken by candidates, however, are of only marginal significance to voters.

Table 6 reports the responses of TDs to two questions on their division of working time between ‘constituency-based’, ‘parliament-based’ and ‘other’ work. Their responses illustrate that, in terms of the way that they divide up their working week, the average Irish parliamentarian is about as far away as one can get from the ideals of (Dublin-born) Edmund Burke. While Burke argued to his constituents that: ‘I could hardly serve you as I have done, and court you too’ (Bromwich 2000: 217) Irish TDs in the 2007-2011 Dáil appear to prioritize localised courtship over national-level political activity. Their self-reported estimates of how they divide their working time indicate that TDs spend considerably more time, on average, attending to constituency matters than to parliamentary work. In many ways this is not surprising and is consistent with the evidence as described above.

[Table 6 about here]

To work loyally as an agent for the party principal, on the other hand, the TD must accept party discipline and obey the whips when instructed to go one way or another in the voting lobbies. But precisely because the two spheres are separated, the TD can be expected to face few if any problems in reconciling these roles. Since the policy choices faced in the Dáil lobbies usually pertain to national policies and will not impinge on local preferences, and since the local electorates have not been mobilised around national policies, any mandate received by the local TD is unlikely to have any relevance for these choices.

Following this reasoning, and assuming that the two worlds do not connect, it is then unsurprising that we see such high levels of cohesion and discipline in the Dáil: the existence of a detached local sphere ensures that the TD in the Dáil is unconstrained by a local constituency mandate. In effect, such a mandate does not exist, and the TD is effectively free to do exactly as she wishes within the national sphere, provided that they put in long hours on the ground in their constituencies. This also means that there is nothing to prevent the TD following the party line and thereby gaining advancement. Rather than having two principals in the same sphere, which would be a problem, she has instead one principal in each of two spheres. Given enough time and energy, the TD as agent can happily serve both.

That said, there are two points at which the worlds do connect. The first is when national policy has obviously unfavourable local repercussions, as, for example, when a party commits itself to reducing or reorganising the resources available to the health sector at the national level, and when this spills down to a local hospital closure or to the transfer of hospital services to another district. In these circumstances, principals clearly clash, and those TDs who have strong incentives to be attentive to their constituencies (and particularly those who have not been preferred in terms of ministerial/frontbench appointment by their party) may defect. The second point at which the spheres may collide is at the candidate nomination stage, when the party leadership exercises its right to determine the number of party candidates to run in the constituency, and when this decision may work against the personal interest of a sitting or aspirant TD (see also Marsh 2000). In this case, however, the clash is not between competing principals, since the voters are largely uninvolved at this stage, but between the national principal and the agent who fears for the survival of her agency.

5. Conclusions

Irish politicians are at one and the same time excessively voter-oriented and excessively loyal to their party leaderships. Unlike their counterparts in other systems where district-related issues can matter, there are very, very few instances in which Irish legislators rebel, and the few cases that do occur are dealt with

ruthlessly by the party leaderships. Ireland therefore offers an important exception to the competing principals' theory proposed by John Carey (2009), while also offering an important corrective to those party elites who steer clear of the STV electoral system on the grounds that it would make their lives (as political leaders) impossible. Indeed, in terms of party discipline and cohesion, Irish party leaders may have had it more easy than most.

However, this does not come without a cost. As long as the Irish TD takes as a major point of reference the local constituency, and as long as she continues to emphasise her role as a broker between individual citizens and the state apparatus, the party leaders in the Dáil will continue to have a relatively free hand in determining policy. This will certainly make their lives easier, but it comes at the huge cost of creating a substantial deficit in accountability and oversight, two of the functions that the legislature as a whole is expected to perform. Irish TDs are notoriously active and busy representatives, accessible to their constituents, and known personally to many of their voters. But precisely because their energies are channelled in this direction, they are often passive as legislators and deferential as both backbenchers and oppositions. Within the Dáil, in other words, there is little sense of accountability or control, and there are very few real checks on executive autonomy (MacCárthaigh 2005).

The result is that despite the existence of a relatively proportional electoral system, and despite an institutional structure that is remarkably consensual in design, the practice of government in Ireland has become pronouncedly majoritarian, leading to the development of an executive, unchecked by parliament, that has been allowed to fall far too easily under the influence of special interests and lobbyists. It is clearly much too far-fetched to suggest that the recent economic crisis was the result of the localism and clientelism amplified by the STV electoral system, or that electoral reform would thereby be the panacea for Ireland's present difficulties. On the other hand, by encouraging the Irish TD to focus on representation at the local level while remaining deferential to the leadership in the Dáil, the electoral system has helped to undermine any real sense of parliamentary accountability, and has thereby enabled the government to have a freer hand than

was or is desirable. As the present economic crisis takes its toll, it might be argued that effective local representation has come with a heavy national cost.

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Notes: Where a TD was readmitted after losing the whip and then lost the whip on a later occasion, this is counted as two separate instances. 'Other' party category includes the Workers' Party and the Progressive Democrats (both now defunct).
Source: Irish Times Historical Archive

Table 2: Percentage difference between pre-whip loss and post-whip loss electoral performance

	% difference in share of vote post whip loss	<i>N</i>
All cases	-0.86	41
<i>Party</i>		
Fianna Fáil	-1.84*	15
Fine Gael	-4.72*	7
<i>Government</i>		
Government	-1.65*	24
<i>Readmitted?</i>		
Not Readmitted	-1.89*	20
<i>Reason for Loss</i>		
Moral Policy	-6.35***	5
Internal Candidate Selection Dispute	-7.32**	2
Criticism of Party Leader	+4.36	2
* p-value <.1, **p-value <.05, ***p-value <.01		
Source: Irish Times Historical Archive		

Table 3: Percentage of TDs who received no subsequent promotion having lost the whip

	%No subsequent career	N
All cases	63%	54
<i>Government</i>		
Government	76%	34
Opposition	40%	20
<i>Party</i>		
FG	90%	10
FF	71%	24
Lab	50%	12
Other	25%	8
<i>Readmitted?</i>		
Readmitted	64%	25
Not Readmitted	62%	29
<i>Type of Whip Loss</i>		
Imposed	63%	27
Resigned	63%	27
<i>Reason for Loss</i>		
Ethical Difficulties	100%	7
Moral Policy	67%	6
Local Policy	67%	6
New Party	54%	13
Candidate Selection Dispute	50%	4
Criticism of Party Leader	25%	4
National Policy	23%	13
<i>Source: Irish Times Historical Archive</i>		

Table 4: Aggregate rankings of groups that TDs should 'primarily represent' by TDs

Group	Average rank of importance	Number of number '1' rankings	Number of responses
All voters in the constituency	1.56	49	71
All those in the constituency who voted for the TD	2.77	11	62
All those in the constituency who voted for the TD's party	3.36	3	60
All voters in the country	3.37	10	64
All those in the country who voted for the TD's party	4.03	2	60
Members of a particular social group	4.89	3	59

Question wording: 'There are different opinions about which people a TD should primarily represent. What is your opinion? Please rank all of the options below in importance: mark the most important as 1, the next most important as 2 and so on from 1 to 6'. Note that some TDs gave multiple '1' rankings, which were counted in this analysis.

Source: TD survey 2010

Table 5: Group averages and results of statistical tests for differences across groups comparing party loyalists to constituency loyalists

Variable	Average for Party Loyalists	Average for Legislative Individualists	Statistically Significant Difference?^a
Constituency/Electoral Factors			
Intraparty Competition	1.1	1.5	Yes, with 90% confidence
Electoral Marginality	82.2%	70.8%	Yes – with 95% confidence
TDs' Characteristics			
Experience (number of years in Dáil)	14.3	8.9	Yes – with 95% confidence
% Male	78.6% (44/56)	92.3% (12/13) ^b	No
TDs' Career Status			
% Position – Backbencher	28.6% (16/56)	92.3% (12/13)	Yes – with 99% confidence
% Position - Executive	14.2% (8/56)	0% (0/13)	No

- a. The significance test employed varies according to the nature of the variable being investigated. For continuous variables, t-tests were employed to test the hypothesis of a statistically significant difference between the two groups: experience, and electoral success were analyzed using this approach. Ordinal variables were analyzed using the two-sample Wilcoxon rank-sum (Mann-Whitney) test: intraparty competition, and education were analyzed using this technique. The categorical variables (% Male, % Position – Executive, % Position – Backbencher) were analyzed using chi-squared and Fisher exact tests.
- b. While 14 respondents gave the 'constituency loyalist' response to the TD's dilemma question, one of these tore the identifying number from their survey, and therefore we were unable to ascertain their gender, party etc. Therefore for these variables, the individualist group has an *n* of 13.

Source: TD survey 2010

Table 6. TDs' Responses when asked to estimate the % of their working week dedicated to constituency, parliamentary, and 'other' activities.

	AVERAGE % OF WORKLOAD SPENT DEALING WITH ACTIVITY	TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Constituency-based work	53%	74
Parliament-based work	38%	74
Other activities	9%	74
<i>Source: TD survey 2010</i>		

Endnotes

¹ The authors' names are in alphabetical order. The data referred to in this paper are from the Joint Committee on the Constitution's survey of Dáil deputies: we are grateful to the secretariat of the Joint Committee for granting us access to the data.

² We allow each TD from each Dáil to be the basis of the analysis (not including the Ceann Comhairle, or speaker of the Dáil). There are 10 Dálai in the period covered by our analysis, leading to the following sets of TD numbers: 21st Dáil (1977) 147 (we include from 1st January 1981), 22nd Dáil (1981) 165, 23rd Dáil (Feb 1982) 165, 24th Dáil (Nov 1982) 165, 25th Dáil (1987), 165, 26th Dáil (1989) 165, 27th Dáil (1992) 165, 28th Dáil (1997) 165, 29th Dáil (2002) 165, 30th Dáil (2007) 165. That gives us a total of 1632 TDs. Then, we take account of by-elections throughout this period, of which there have been 23, leaving us with a grand total of 1655 TDs in the period under examination. This gives a percentage of $54/1655 = 3.26$ percent.

³ The survey of members of the Dáil that was carried out as part of the Joint Committee on the Constitution's review of the Irish electoral system, which took place between September 2009 and July 2010. The survey was designed primarily to bring quantitative evidence to bear on the issue of the working practices of TDs, and their opinions on the STV electoral system (Joint Committee on the Constitution 2010). The survey was implemented between October 2009-January 2010. The response rate was 45.4 percent; with 75 of the 165 members contacted responding to at least some of the questions posed. A confidentiality agreement with the Committee means that party breakdowns of responses cannot be provided.

⁴ It is worth noting that there were no statistically significant differences between the parties in terms of portions of constituency and party loyalists (this question was not asked of Independent TDs).