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THE DAILY WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

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Authors of "Washington Merry-Go-Round"  
and "More Merry-Go-Round".

TAMMANY BOSS MAY PLAY DECISIVE ROLE  
IN SPEAKERSHIP CONTEST WITH BROTHER  
OF ROOSEVELT'S EX-PARTNER IN FIGHT;  
NEW PRESIDENT TO DROP BIG SECRETARIAT

WASHINGTON—John F. Curry, Tammany boss, may play a decisive role in the Speakership contest that faces the Democrats in the new Congress that is sworn in next March 4 and which is expected to be called into special session by President-elect Roosevelt soon thereafter.

With Democratic representation in the House from Manhattan now augmented, as a result of the sweeping Democratic victory in the election, Curry will be in a powerful position to act in the Speakership fight. Last session, Curry broke all Tammany precedent and took an active behind-the-scenes part in clearing the way for Vice-President-elect Garner's uncontested election to the Speakership.

Representative John J. O'Connor, Tammany Democrat, threatened to absent himself from the House if he was not made Democratic floor leader. With the party lineup close, O'Connor's defection, and that of some of his friends, might have cost the Democrats control of the chamber. The southern and western Democrats were opposed to O'Connor as floor leader, but feared his bolting if they turned him down.

In this dilemma Speaker Garner turned to Curry, whom he did not personally know then. Curry responded promptly. He not only whipped O'Connor into line, but saw to it that all the other Tammany members were present when the House organized. As a result of this cooperation Garner and Curry became very friendly, and the latter visited the House leader several times during the course of the session.

With Garner headed for the Vice-Presidency next year and the Speakership again open, O'Connor has boosted his ambitions and has announced himself a candidate for the office. He claims the backing of the large Tammany delegation and many of the other eastern Democrats. Some of his friends are also claiming that his candidacy finds favor in the eyes of President-elect Roosevelt.

This allegation seems based on the fact that O'Connor is the brother of Basil O'Connor, a New York lawyer, who was Roosevelt's partner when he practiced law. The President-elect and Mrs. Roosevelt are close personal friends of the Basil O'Connors and the latter accompanied them when they made their mid-western and southern campaign trip. Early in the campaign a party that the Basil O'Connors gave at their Long Island home for the Roosevelts created political comment when Al Smith refused to attend.

What Curry will do in the organization contest this time is not known as yet. That Tammany will demand important place in the Democratic House setup in the next Congress is certain. Curry and Garner met privately last week in Washington when the Tammany chieftain came to the Capital to visit several of his children attending school here and to spend a few days on the golf and race courses.

They are known to have discussed the question of organization. As far as the short session is concerned there will be no important changes in Democratic leadership in the House. Vice-President-elect Garner will be re-elected Speaker, and Representative Rainey majority floor leader.

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President-elect Roosevelt contemplates a sharp trimming of the White House secretariat that has grown up during the Hoover regime. There will be only one man on his executive secretarial staff who will draw the full secretarial salary. That man will be Louis Howe, his personal secretary since the days when the President-elect was Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration and his most intimate adviser and confidant.

Howe will have the rank and title of Secretary to the President. He will not, however, be the "front office man". His work will be of a confidential nature. He will occupy the office now used by Lawrence C. Richey, President Hoover's confidential assistant. Howe's work with Roosevelt has always been of a background nature and his position in the new administration will be unchanged.

The "front office man" in the Roosevelt administration will bear the title and draw the pay of an executive clerk. The Secretary of the President receives \$10,000 a year, at present a 10 per cent deduction being made under the provisions of the economy act passed by the last Congress. An executive clerk draws from \$5,000 to \$7,500, depending on what the President wants to pay.

The choice for "front office man" in the Roosevelt government lies between Marvin R. McIntyre, an old newspaper friend of the President-elect's who was his press liaison assistant during the campaign, and Charles Hand, an old New York World star reporter, who served for a time as secretary to former Mayor Walker of New York. Hand was Vice-President-elect Garner's press assistant during the campaign, and when former Governor Alfred E. Smith went on his New England speaking tour he was sent with him. He is widely popular with the newspaper men.

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