

FROM HOW THE GOOD GUYS FINALLY
WON BY JIMMY BRESLIN, VIKING PRESS, 1975.
THE DEATH OF HALE BOGGS IS ALWAYS
TERMED "MYSTERIOUS". THIS ACCOUNT SEEMS LIKELY.

JIMMY BRESLIN: HOW THE GOOD GUYS FINALLY WON

least, and it damaged Carey's chances. O'Neill, on the other hand, was liked by everybody and had the mantle of John McCormack still about him. O'Neill was chosen Whip.

Now, in January 1971, Tip O'Neill was the third-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives. Fine. But still a long way from the posts from which the illusion of power could be used against Richard Nixon.

In October of 1972, Hale Boggs went to Alaska to assist in the campaign of Congressman Nick Begich. Boggs went this far because Begich had voted against him in the 1970 election for Democratic Majority Leader. The theory of Hale Boggs, and any other politician who has more than a cabbage for a head, is that you immediately try to win over the man who voted against you. Go to any lengths. In this case, Anchorage, Alaska. On the night of October 15, 1972, Boggs, exhausted from a full day's tour of that part of the territory, decided he was not going to punish himself and get up at 7:00 a.m. to catch the commercial flight from Anchorage to Juneau. Begich chartered a private plane. The pilot, Don Jonz, flew down from Fairbanks on the night of the 15th. He called the weather bureau before he went to bed. "Looks like I'm not going to Juneau," he said. When he woke up in the morning, the weather was still bad. Jonz went to the airport anyway. He fueled the plane and taxied over to the terminal. His plane was a twin-engined Cessna 310. The destination, Juneau, was 560 miles to the southeast, a long, tiring flight in such a small plane. Jonz didn't expect anybody to be at the terminal. He was surprised therefore to see Begich and Russell Brown, his administrative assistant, talking forcefully to a tired, thoroughly wary Boggs. There were, Begich said, television commitments in Juneau and the dinner was a sell-out because of Boggs's appearance. Boggs shrugged

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and got into the plane. Jonz took the plane out to the runway. It was nine o'clock. He had not expected to be flying in the cold, murky weather. But it did not necessarily disturb him. At thirty-eight, Jonz had been flying in Alaska for ten years. "You gōttā be willing to cheat the devil," he told people. He wrote an article for a flying magazine which was entitled, "Ice Without Fear." He flew this time without a personal emergency locator transistor. He had left it at home, in Fairbanks. As the plane left the runway, the weary, uncomfortable Boggs looked at the cold rain streaming down the windows.

The plane was heard from once, just before it went through a mountain pass. Then never again. At nine that night Mrs. Lindy Boggs was notified in Washington that her husband was missing. She called Gary Hymel, Boggs's administrative assistant, who was home watching the Monday-night football game on television. They left for Alaska the next day. The military meanwhile put on an exhaustive search—private and military planes spent 3600 hours covering 325,000 square miles. There was nothing.

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On November 7, Tip O'Neill voted in North Cambridge, then slipped off to the airport with Leo Diehl. They flew to Washington. That night, in the Whip's office, they began taking election returns. Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr., and Gary Hymel joined them. Throughout the night, O'Neill made casual calls to friends who had won elections. He also made calls to the new Democratic Congressmen. All the new winners were flattered and some awed by receiving a call in their local headquarters from the House Democratic Whip. As the night went on, O'Neill, Boggs, and Hymel talked about the Majority Leader's position. On Wednesday morning, Tommy Boggs arranged for O'Neill to call Mrs.