

## Constitutional Systems and Parliamentary Government

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### Constitutions as Political Structures

One of the first things that an interested student of comparative politics will find as he or she peruses the literature in the discipline is the heavy emphasis that is placed on the state or the nation as the unit of analysis. This is not to say that all comparative research takes place on this level; certainly a good deal of research has focused upon individuals, or policy, or developing and developed societies, and so on, but the state is a common subject of study.

Many characteristics of the state can be taken as the focus for a comparative study. Constitutionalism is one of these characteristics. It may be useful to think of constitutions as "power maps"<sup>1</sup> for political systems. That is, it is often the constitution of a nation that tells us the political environment within which government operates, and that describes the manner in which power is distributed among the many actors in the political environment. We look to the constitution for an explanation of who has the power to do what, what the limitations on power are in a given state, and what the relationships are between and among the many political actors we may find in a given state. While these may change over time for a specific individual in a position of authority, or may change over time as *different* individuals occupy positions of authority, they are significant "markers" for the political regime. Although it is true that in some political systems the constitution is not of much help in understanding how the regime operates on a day-to-day basis, in most of today's nation-states the constitution does provide us with

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<sup>1</sup> This is substantially taken from my book Comparative Politics: An Institutional and Cross-National Approach (5<sup>th</sup> ed., Prentice Hall, 2007), chapters 2, 4, and 5.

information that will contribute to our understanding of the operation of politics. The idea of a constitution as a fundamental expression of the power relationships in a political regime dates back to the time of the Greek and Roman republics; constitutions were the focus for comparison in Aristotle's major studies of political systems.

### Written and Unwritten Constitutions

Studies of constitutional governments often rely on the structure or form of those written documents that we call constitutions. Yet, government with a written constitution is not the same thing as a constitutional government. A written constitution is essentially a basic expression of the ideas and organization of a government that is formally presented in one document. Some constitutions are quite short--the U.S. Constitution, for example-- while others are much longer, such as the constitution of India, the (now nonexistent) constitution of the former Soviet Union, or the constitution of Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> Some written constitutions are contained in one document, such as the Swiss Constitution, while others are found in several documents, such as the Canadian Constitution, which includes a "Constitution Act" as well as several other pieces of legislation and historical documents.

On the other hand, constitutional government can best be described as limited government. That is, there are certain things that the government may not do, whether it wants to or not; there are certain parameters beyond which the government may not go. The First Amendment to the American Constitution is a clear example of this principle, stating in part that "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech..." (italics added). This is an explicit limitation upon the powers of government to act in a specific field of interest.

The fact of the matter is that we can find governments without written constitutions that can properly be called constitutional regimes, and conversely we can find governments that do have written constitutions that do not properly fit within the behavioral parameters we have set for a regime to be called a constitutional government. Several examples may help to make this clear. [WRITTEN CONSTITUTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT SLIDE]

The British government does not possess a document called "The Royal Constitution," or some such name, that serves as the basic and central document for the political structures of the British political system. British political history points to a number of different documents that are part of the body of what is referred to as British constitutional law. These documents include the Magna Carta (1215), the Bill of Rights (1689), the Act of Settlement (1701), and certain other special acts of the British Parliament. On the other hand, scholars agree that Britain does possess a constitutional government. There are limits beyond which the British government may not go. Yet Britain does not have a single, written document that can be called a written constitution.

Although the Soviet Union had until its demise in 1991 a relatively new (1977) constitution that was highly detailed and specific,<sup>4</sup> many argued that the Soviet regime should not have been called a constitutional government, because there were, until the very final days of the regime (and it could be argued that even at that time this was a doubtful proposition) no effective limitations on governmental power. Rights were conditional: Article 39 of the Constitution stated that "the exercise of rights and liberties of citizens must not injure the interests of society and the state";<sup>5</sup> Article 47 stated that "USSR citizens, in accordance with the goals of communist construction, are guaranteed freedom of scientific, technical, and artistic creation...";<sup>6</sup> Article 51 stated that "in accordance with the goals of communist construction, USSR

citizens have the right to unite in public organizations..."<sup>7</sup> These few examples, which were typical of the document as a whole, show that expressions of rights did exist; however, they were always conditional, with the clear implication-- that was shown to be the case in practice-- that if the government believed that the "goals of communist construction" were not being served, the rights in question might be lost.

There is one other, more subtle, distinction between these types of regimes that should be made explicit here. One type of constitution gives rights, and the other recognizes rights. This is not merely a semantic difference. The Soviet Constitution in stating that the government gave citizens certain rights, implied that the government also had the power to take away these rights. If rights come from the state, the state can certainly take them away. In the (unwritten) British - Constitution, or the (written) U.S. Constitution, rights are not given; they are recognized, by limiting what the government can do. The Constitution of the United States does not state that "citizens are given the right to free speech," although some people assume that it does. What is written in the Constitution is that "Congress shall make no law...abridging freedom of speech, or of the press..."; these rights and freedoms appear to already exist and belong to the people, and the Constitution recognizes this fact by forbidding the Congress to limit them. This is quite different from what was the case in the USSR.

While this is no longer the case in terms of the Soviet Constitution, this same pattern of "giving" rights rather than "recognizing" rights can sometimes be seen in newly developing nations, and has led to the same tensions in those settings that existed in the Soviet Union.

However, even the existence of a written constitution in a constitutional culture of limited governmental power ("constitutional government") does not absolutely guarantee either limited or unlimited individual rights. Freedom of speech is not absolute in either the United States or

Britain, to take two examples; in both systems there is substantial judicial precedent documenting instances in which government can, in fact, restrict individuals' speech.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond this, even if we are examining a polity with a clear history of distinct constitutional protection of individual rights, short-term forces may occasionally motivate a polity to abrogate those rights: Japanese-Americans who lived in California shortly after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor were denied substantial "due process," lost their homes and most of their possessions, and were sent to "relocation camps" for the duration of the World War II. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled at that time that this action on the part of the U.S. Government was permissible because of the emergency situation posed by the war.<sup>9</sup>

When we discuss constitutional governments, then, we are really not talking about whether there exists a single, specific document; rather, we are interested in a kind of **political behavior, political culture, political tradition, or political history**. The British Constitution is really a collection of documents and traditions, bound together in an abstract way. The U.S. Constitution is a single document, with subsequent judicial interpretation and expansion. The forms may vary, but the behavioral results are the same: Limits are imposed upon what governments may do.<sup>10</sup>

### What Do Constitutions Do?

"Constitutions are codes of rules which aspire to regulate the allocation of functions, powers, and duties among the various agencies and officers of government, and define the relationship between these and the public."<sup>11</sup> Do constitutions make a difference? We have just argued that having a written constitution may not guarantee the behavior of a regime; does

having any constitution matter? Today, more and more political scientists are putting less emphasis on a constitution as a significant structure in a political system. They argue that too often constitutions-- whether written or unwritten--are not true reflections of the manner in which a political system operates, and therefore the constitution is of little use or value.<sup>0</sup>

Furthermore, in many instances, constitutions omit discussions of political structures of the regime that are crucial to the operation of that regime. For example, political parties are nowhere mentioned in the (written) U.S. Constitution, yet it is difficult to conceive of government operating in the United States without political parties. To take another example, the (written) Canadian Constitution fails to mention the prime minister as a significant actor in the political system at all,<sup>13</sup> yet there is no doubt that this is the single most important office in the Canadian political arena. The (written) constitution of the former Soviet Union guaranteed certain rights, but practice indicated that these guarantees were hollow, indeed. Given all of this, why is it that constitutions seem to be universally accepted as necessary to a political system? If a political structure is so pervasive, it must perform a very important function for the political systems in which it is found.

Several functions can be attributed to those political structures that we call constitutions, whether they are written or unwritten, whether they are followed or not, wherever they may be found. First, they serve as an **expression of ideology and philosophy**. Very often this kind of expression is found in a preamble to the constitution in question. For example, the preamble to the Canada's Constitution Act of 1867 indicated that Canada would have a constitution "similar in principle" to that of Britain. This "similar in principle" clause was seen by scholars as incorporating--all by itself--all of the hundreds of years of British constitutional tradition into the Canadian political realm, and accordingly was regarded as being quite significant.<sup>14</sup>

Second, constitutions serve as an expression of the **basic laws of the regime**. These laws play a central role in the regime and are often so special that they can be modified or replaced only through extraordinary amendment procedures; sometimes they cannot be amended at all, for example the clause in the German constitution guaranteeing human rights). Whereas an ordinary law can usually be passed with a "simple majority" approval of the legislature--a majority of those present and voting at the time-- basic laws of the regime expressed in the constitution usually require special majorities of the legislature (two-thirds or three quarters, for example) for approval. These special laws usually focus upon the rights of citizens -- rights concerning language, speech, religion, assembly, the press, property, and so on.

Third, constitutions provide **organizational frameworks for governments**. Although they may not actually contain diagrams to explain how the various parts of the government interact with or relate to each other, these relationships are often explained in the text of the document. It is common for constitutions to contain several sections, and to devote a section each to the legislative branch of government, the executive branch of government, the judicial branch of government, and so on. Constitutions will discuss power relationships among the actors in the political system, covering the legislative process, the role of the executive in policy formation, checks and balances among the actors. They may include discussion of impeachment of the executive and dissolution of the legislature, and perhaps discussion of succession as well.

Fourth, constitutions usually say something about **the levels of government** of the political system. They discuss how many levels of government there will be, and whether nations will be federal, confederal, or unitary. They often will describe what powers fall within the jurisdiction of the national government, and what powers do not belong to the national government.

Finally, constitutions usually **have an amendment** clause. No matter how careful and insightful the authors of a constitution try to be, they usually recognize that they cannot foretell the future with a sufficiently high degree of accuracy. Accordingly, constitutions invariably need to be amended or altered at some point down the road. A constitution must contain directions for its own modifications; failure to do so might mean that when change becomes necessary, the entire system could collapse for want of a mechanism of change.

Constitutions, then, whether written or unwritten, play an important role in the regimes in which they are found. Some constitutions will be more important in one of the functions described above than in others. For example, the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran may be more important as an expression of ideology (and theology) than as a real organizational diagram of the government.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the American Constitution is more important as an expression of governmental organization and as a guideline for the power relationships of the regime than as an expression of the philosophy of the regime; the latter is usually said to be better expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Federalist Papers than in the Constitution.

### The **Separation of Powers**

The notion that **centralized power is dangerous** -- that power must be a check on power -- reached maturity in the eighteenth century, and its first full-scale application was to be found in the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. There, delegates to the federal convention continuously cited "the celebrated **Montesquieu,**" **John Locke,** Thomas Hobbes, and others,<sup>37</sup> in support of the idea that **political power, in order to be safe, had to be divided.** The



legislature needed to have a check on the executive, the executive on the legislature, and so on. Many of the **ideas of John Locke** were adopted and found in The Federalist (especially Number 47), among other places, and expressed the philosophy that the executive force had to be kept separate from the legislative force. **[SLIDE ON LOCKE'S SECOND TREATISE]**.<sup>38</sup>

Constitutions express the power relationships among the many actors in political regimes. The American Constitution is explicit about the degree to which the president can take control of the work of the legislature (literally, he cannot), and the degree to which the Congress can take control of the work of the president (literally, it cannot). The situation, however, is one that can rapidly devolve into a stalemate: The President can veto work of the Congress, and Congress can refuse to pass legislative requests of the president, but neither can force the other to do anything. In other regimes the lines are much less clearly drawn. For example, in France the president can, under certain circumstances simply issue decrees that have the force of legislation.

Hindsight tells us that the explicit lines that were drawn by the Founding Fathers to separate the executive and legislative branches of government were not absolutely necessary to ensure democratic government. There are other power relationships that are used elsewhere that have proven to be just as democratic and just as stable.

In fact, although the idea that centralized power was inherently dangerous was popular at the time of the foundation of the American republic, today many countries (some of them European) have had fairly successful experiences with centralized power structures. Thus the notion that centralized power must be a bad thing is not, in and of itself, one that is universally shared today.

Constitutions can be examined on two levels. On one hand, we can look at a constitution on a "piece" level, and examine it section by section to see what structures and behaviors it prescribes for a given political system. Further, we can speculate about the implications of these structures and behaviors for political life in that system. On the other hand, we can look at a constitution from the level of the political system, and ask the same question: What does the constitution do?

Ivo Duchacek has performed just such an analysis, and his work offers some answers to the question "What does the Constitution do?" The answer that his study suggests is that a constitution helps a political system in the function of "system maintenance," or survival of the system, by helping the system to respond to the various demands and supports that are directed to it in the form of inputs. The constitution and the corresponding constitutional framework of powers help to process demands and supports and help to convert them into outputs, which subsequently are reintroduced as inputs. Demands and supports are processed more smoothly because of (1) commitment to responsiveness, (2) specific institutions for rule-making, enforcement, and adjudicating, and (3) commitment to goals, all of which are found in a constitution.<sup>40</sup>

### The Executive Roles

What does an executive do in a political system? In his classic study of the American presidency, Clinton Rossiter listed ten distinct, identifiable roles that the president is expected to play in the American political arena:

1. Chief of State
2. Chief Executive
3. Commander-in-Chief
4. Chief Diplomat
6. Chief of Party
7. Voice of the People
8. Protector of Peace
9. Manager of Prosperity

## 5. Chief Legislator

## 10. World Leader<sup>2</sup>

When we look at this list of duties that the president must perform, we must marvel that anyone is able to handle the demands of the office. Indeed, this was one of the major themes of Rossiter's study. Wouldn't a political system be more efficiently run if it hired a crew of executives to handle all of these jobs, one job to a person? Actually, the concept of a multiple executive is not new at all, and in a number of different contexts in the history of political systems the multiple executive has been tried. At the Federal Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, where the American Constitution was created, the idea of a multiple executive was suggested. It was rejected, however, because history had shown that it might tend to (1) cause divisiveness when a difficult decision needed to be made, and (2) obscure responsibility, or culpability, in that blame for a bad decision might be difficult to attribute to a single individual.<sup>3</sup>

In point of fact, Rossiter's list of ten roles for the president may be more detailed than is necessary. Political history has shown that we really only need to separate the executive role into two components: a symbolic role, and a political role.<sup>4</sup> In the symbolic role, the executive represents the dignity of the state. The executive lays wreaths on tombs, attends funerals, makes national proclamations, and generally serves a ceremonial function. In the political role, the chief executive "manages the national business," and makes the hard political decisions that need to be made. In this context the chief executive can be seen to be chief of the executive branch of government, the ultimate decision maker in a huge pyramid of decision-makers, the owner of the desk where "the buck stops."<sup>5</sup>

There are, generally speaking, four approaches to the executive institution that are found in political systems around the world, two of which we shall examine at this time. This is not to suggest that all political systems correspond precisely to one or the other of these four models;

rather, it suggests that virtually all political systems are modeled after one or the other of the four general plans.

One general type of political executive can be referred to as the presidential model of executive, and the other type of political executive can be referred to as the "Westminster" parliamentary-cabinet form of executive. Later in this text we will add discussion of the French parliamentary-cabinet model and the collective executive model (although the model that was developed in the former Soviet Union has become virtually extinct within the last few years); these are variations on the two models we shall discuss here. As we did with our discussion of legislatures, we will preface our descriptions of executives by saying that what we are about to describe will vary in specific detail from country to country.

### The Presidential Executive

The type of political executive with which American students are most familiar is the presidential executive. American students are often surprised to learn, however, that the presidential model of executive behavior is in a minority once we look beyond the borders of the United States. Developed in the United States, the model has been copied by a number of political systems, primarily in Central and South America, but also in Africa and Asia.

The presidential model centralizes both political power and symbolic authority in one individual, the president. The president is the individual presiding at ceremonial functions, and it is the president who symbolizes the nation in the eyes of the rest of the world. The president is the head of state. Foreign diplomats present their credentials to him. (Although a number of countries have had women presidents, we will use the masculine pronoun here.) He presents the

State of the Union message to the Congress each year. He throws out the first baseball to open the baseball season.<sup>6</sup>

Presidential systems do not separate the symbolic and the business functions of the office, although such suggestions have been made in the past. For example, some have suggested that since the American government has the institution of the vice presidency, which has few constitutional duties and the primary significance of which is not in what it is but in what it might become,<sup>7</sup> a good use of the vice president might be to assign to him the ceremonial duties of office and leave the president to important decision-making duties. The problem is that vice presidents do not jump at the idea of spending all of their time at funerals and ceremonies. Moreover, the public does not accept the idea either; the vice president is, after all, the second officer of American government, not the first, and the public wants to see the president.<sup>8</sup>

The strength of the presidency is in its independence. In the American presidential system, which is the model for presidential systems elsewhere, the chief executive is elected independently from the legislature. Presidential elections in the United States are held every four years, no more frequently, and no less frequently. It is the fixed term of the president and the corresponding security in office that contribute to the president's base of power.<sup>9</sup>

The president is independently elected on the basis of popular election. The American political system has an additional structure inserted between the populace and the president, the electoral college, which officially elects the president. The genesis of the electoral college is based upon the Founding Fathers' distrust of the popular will. The Founders were suspicious of popular opinion, and they felt that by having voters choose electors, who would subsequently cast ballots for the presidency, their concern could be resolved.<sup>10</sup> Recent American political history -- including the quite extraordinary presidential election of 2000 -- has shown the

electoral college to be an anachronistic institution, and efforts are regularly undertaken to do away with the institution and to have the president directly elected by the public. Most other presidential systems do not have the American electoral college structure, but instead have voters cast their votes directly for the presidential candidates campaigning for office.

Figure Here: **Presidential Systems' Bases of Power**

The fact that the American public votes in several different electoral contests -- once for the president and vice president, and once for the House of Representatives (all seats in the House of Representatives come up for reelection every two years), and, where a contest is held, once for the Senate (Senate seats have six-year terms and are staggered so that both seats in any given state are not up for election at the same time) -- is quite significant for a number of reasons. First, it gives the president an independent power base. Short of the process of impeachment, which history had shown until the term of President Bill Clinton could be instituted only for high crimes and treason and not simply for reasons of political opposition,<sup>11</sup> the president does not depend upon either the legislature or public opinion for continuation of his four-year term. Once he is in office, this individual remains in office until the term is completed. This allows the president to take actions that may be unpopular with both the public and the legislature in the short term, but which the president feels, nonetheless, are the right actions to take.

A second significant point is that this relationship works in the other direction, too. That is, American legislators are chosen by the people, not by the president; as long as they keep their constituencies happy they can act independently of the president, and there is virtually nothing that the president can do to them.<sup>12</sup> As already indicated, members of the House of

Representatives are elected for two-year terms, and although the president may threaten not to campaign for them in the next election (or even may threaten to campaign against them) if they don't do what he wants, the president cannot directly affect the duration of their time in office. He cannot "fire" them. Senators are elected to six-year terms, and they, in a similar manner, are secure in their office.<sup>13</sup> A president might be angry when a senator from his party fails to support the president's legislation in the Senate, but there is little the president can do to directly punish a recalcitrant senator, short of threatening to withhold future support.<sup>14</sup>

A third significant point to note is that this structural independence of the branches of government (depicted in Figure) can have negative consequences. By virtue of the fact that both the executive and legislative branches of government have secure tenure in office, they can frustrate each other, but that is all they can do. The president can veto acts of Congress, but Congress can override the presidential veto. (The president of the United States does not have an "absolute" veto that is impossible to override, although presidents in some other systems do possess such absolute vetoes.) Congress can refuse to pass a legislative request of the president, but the president can try to accomplish his goals through executive decrees, executive agreements, and similar unilateral executive actions.

It is important to recall that the president is not part of the legislative branch of government, and cannot, literally, take part in the legislative process. Only senators can introduce bills in the Senate, and only representatives can introduce bills in the House. If the president is unable to find a legislative "sponsor" for a bill (something that, realistically, is unimaginable!), he is would be unable to introduce new legislation. The situation can thus deteriorate to a point of immobilism; each actor has enough power to frustrate and block the

other, but not enough to achieve its own objectives, which means that it is possible that nothing will be accomplished.

This situation is most evident in the United States when the executive and legislative branches of government are controlled by the two major political parties. When Richard Nixon (a Republican) was president he faced a Senate and House controlled by Democrats; the relationship between the two branches of government was frequently tense, with presidential vetoes and legislative defeats of presidential proposals flying back and forth.<sup>15</sup> This situation was repeated during the term of (Republican) Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. For some of that time, Congress was partly controlled by Democrats (a Republican-controlled Senate and a Democratic-controlled House), and for some of that time it was fully controlled by a Democratic majority in both houses. This situation continued through the Presidency of George H. W. Bush. Although Nixon, Reagan, and Bush were able to get the support of some Southern (and other more conservative) Democrats, as a general rule, much tension existed between the two branches. The same general situation existed with (Democrat) Bill Clinton facing Republican majorities in both Houses of Congress through most of the 1990's.

Indeed, following the extraordinarily close presidential election of 2000, after which (Republican) President George W. Bush's Republican party controlled the U.S. Senate by virtue of the Republican Vice President controlling the tie-breaking vote, with exactly the same number of Democrats and Republicans in the Senate, while controlling the House of Representatives by a comfortable majority, President Bush was able to push ahead with his agenda on what was often a party-line basis, with the House of Representatives delivering comfortable majorities for Bush and the Republican's delivering hair-thin majorities. Once (Republican) James Jeffords announced that he was leaving the Republican Party and would be an Independent in the Senate,



but would vote with the Democrats, the entire legislative mood of the Congress changed. All of a sudden the Democrats controlled the Senate by a one-seat margin, the Democrats controlled all Senate committees, and the Democrats had the ability to block President Bush's legislative agenda.

Party difference is not a requirement for this kind of tension, however. The four years of Jimmy Carter (a Democratic president with a Democratic Congress) were not terribly productive, either, and often witnessed the same tension, despite the fact that both branches were controlled by Democrats. After his inauguration, Carter proposed a national energy program, which he labelled as "the moral equivalent of war." By the time the Congress acted, (over two years later), Carter's original legislative proposals bore little resemblance to the legislation produced by the Congress.<sup>16</sup>

In brief, although the executive and legislative branches of government may pull in tandem, they do not necessarily do so, and the structure of the independently selected presidency and legislative branch does enable the state of immobilism to develop.

### The Parliamentary Executive

The parliamentary executive is more complex than its presidential alternative, if for no other reason than it is in reality a multiple executive.<sup>17</sup> The ceremonial function and the decision-making function are performed by two separate individuals, whose titles vary by political system (see Table ), and to whom we can generically refer as the head of state and the chief executive, respectively.

The function of the head of state is to symbolize the state and the dignity of the political regime. The head of state will receive ambassadors, host receptions, lay wreaths at tombs, and perform many of the ceremonial tasks government requires. Heads of state, generally speaking, are chosen one of three ways. First, in a number of political systems--about a third of all parliamentary systems--the head of state is a hereditary position, one that "belongs" to a royal family. Certainly among the best-known examples of this manner of selection is the British monarchy, with a clearly delineated line of succession.

A second pattern of selection is one in which the head of state is selected by a governmental body, often the legislature. The president of Israel is elected by the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, and the president of India is elected by the combined membership of the Indian Parliament, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Finally, a third method of selection has been referred to as "self-selection," and is characteristic of political systems in which power has been seized, such as the position of Fidel Castro in Cuba, or the now-toppled position of Idi Amin as president-for-life in Uganda.<sup>18</sup>

The chief executive, on the other hand, is precisely what his or her title implies: the chief of the executive branch of government.<sup>19</sup> The chief executive is a full-time politician, devoting less time to ceremonial duties of office. Generally speaking, the chief executive in a parliamentary regime performs the same executive tasks as the chief executive in a presidential regime, but not the symbolic activities. Both executives coordinate government policy-making. Both executives are assisted by cabinets of individuals heading separate departments or ministries of government. Both executives are responsible for the day-to-day operation of government.

Table Here: Executive Titles
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In many political systems, the position of chief executive is totally without legal basis, but instead is founded upon years of political custom and tradition -- which we have already noted can be just as important as written constitutional measures. In other systems the position is legally entrenched and described in great detail in constitutional documents.<sup>20</sup> The manner in which the office of the chief executive in parliamentary systems was created is significant in that it tells us a great deal about both the position of the chief executive and the manner in which that position relates to the position of the head of state.

### Constitutional Monarchy

Over nearly the last three centuries, the relationship between the king and the Parliament has evolved to a point that not even William and Mary would recognize it. De jure, under law, most powers of the British government (and in a parallel fashion parliamentary governments, generally) are still exercised in the name of the king or queen, but today they are invariably exercised "on the advice" of the chief executive.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the king relied more and more on his cabinet, a group of advisors, for guidance. In the early eighteenth century the role of the cabinet was only that of providing advice; the king still could do as he pleased. As ideas of democratic and republican government grew over the next two centuries, the power relationship changed so that the king and queen were now obligated, although not legally required, to accept the advice of their cabinets. The cabinet by now was primarily chosen from that house of Parliament elected by the public, the House of Commons. Now the cabinet was in reality governing in the name of the king or queen, and without consulting him or her.

Among the most striking characteristics of parliamentary government today, wherever we find it, is the duality of its executive leadership that we referred to earlier. The monarch is the official (de jure) head of state, but the active (de facto) head of government is the prime minister. Appointments are made, acts of Parliament or the legislature are proclaimed, and all government is carried on in the name of the monarch, although it is the prime minister and his or her cabinet who make all of the selections for appointments, who author or sponsor legislative proposals, and who make the administrative decisions that keep government running.

The legal bases for the prime minister and cabinet are rare, as we noted earlier, and in many political systems both the prime minister and cabinet are constitutionally nonexistent institutions. In the case of Great Britain (and many Commonwealth nations), the legal claim to power of the cabinet rests in the fact that, ever since the seventeenth century the monarch has had a Privy Council to advise him or her--a kind of present-day cabinet. Today, although the Privy Council is no longer active, cabinet members are first made members of the Privy Council, and then are appointed to the cabinet. The cabinet meets as a "subcommittee" of the (inactive) Privy Council, and acts in the name of the Privy Council, a body that does have constitutional and legal status. Discussing the relationship between the Canadian cabinet and the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, R. MacGregor Dawson noted:

Those appointed to the Privy Council remain members for life, and hence will include not only ministers from the present Cabinet, but also all surviving ministers of past Cabinets as well. The Privy Council would therefore, if active, be a large and politically cumbersome body with members continually at cross-purposes with one another; but it has saved itself from this embarrassment by the simple device of holding no meetings.

The Cabinet, lacking any legal status of its own, masquerades as the Privy Council when it desires to assume formal power; it speaks and acts in the name of the entire Council.<sup>23</sup>

### The Selection of the Chief Executive

Although the British monarch may have felt free to choose whomever he or she wanted as advisors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such is no longer the case today. The process by which the head of state in a parliamentary political system selects the chief executive is another one of those patterns of behavior that may legally (de jure) be entirely up to the head of state, but practically and politically (de facto) the head of state usually has little or no choice in the matter at all.

In the general model of government found in most parliamentary nations, unlike their presidential counterparts, there is no special election for the chief executive.<sup>24</sup> The chief executive is elected as a member of the legislature, just as all of the other members of the legislature are elected. Elections for the legislature are held on a regular basis, which varies with the political system. In Britain, the term of the House of Commons is limited to five years. (Keep in mind, of course, that the upper house, the House of Lords, is appointed, not elected, and hence has nothing to do with the selection of the executive.)

After the elections for legislative seats have taken place (a process that I'll come back to in a few minutes), it is the duty of the head of state to "invite" someone to create a Government. (It should be noted at this point that the term "Government" with a capital G has a specific meaning in this volume, namely the prime minister and the cabinet; "government" with a lowercase g refers to the general structures of the political system.) Although the head of state in

most systems is technically free to select whomever he or she wants for the Government, in practice and custom (de facto) heads of state are required to invite the leader of the largest political party in the legislature--a recognition of the will of the people--as indicated in Figure 5.2.<sup>25</sup>

Figure Here: The Selection of the Parliamentary Chief Executive

Once the head of state designates an individual to create a Government, that individual will subsequently advise the head of state as to whom to appoint to the cabinet. After the new Government (the new prime minister and the new cabinet) has been assembled, in most political systems that Government must first receive a **vote of confidence** from the legislature before it assumes power. The vote of confidence is simply a vote by a majority of the legislative house indicating its confidence in, or support for, the prime minister and his or her cabinet. (Keep in mind that the vote of confidence will typically involve only the lower house of the legislature -- the House of Commons in Britain -- and will generally not involve the upper house at all.)

In most political systems, if the Government does not receive a vote of confidence--if it receives the support of less than a majority of the legislature in a vote--it cannot take office, and another Government must be designated by the head of state. Britain represents an exception to the general rule that newly designated Governments need votes of confidence. In Britain, and many other Commonwealth nations, the designation by the head of state assumes legislative confidence (that is, the head of state wouldn't make the appointment without making sure of legislative support first), and the Government assumes power immediately, without first needing an expression of confidence from the legislature.

The institution of the vote of confidence is an indication of **legislative supremacy** in the political system. That is, the legislature "hires" the executive (although the head of state may

"nominate" him or her) or invests him or her with power. The chancellor in Germany, as well as the prime minister in Japan or India, to cite just a few examples, assumes power only after receiving a majority vote of support in their respective legislatures.

This legislative power works in the other direction, too. Just as the legislature "hires" the executive, by expressing support in one of its members forming a Government, it can "fire" the executive by expressing a lack of support or confidence in the Government. Whenever the chief executive loses the confidence of the legislature, whenever the legislature passes a resolution of no confidence (or, conversely, fails to pass a legislative expression of confidence), the chief executive is, in fact, fired. Even if the legislature expresses a lack of confidence in the chief executive only a week after that person has assumed office, he or she must resign. In some systems this resignation is a legal requirement; elsewhere it is simply a custom that has the force of law.<sup>26</sup> In some political systems a specific vote of no confidence is not even required to fire a chief executive: If the Government is defeated on any major piece of legislation, that is considered to be an expression of a lack of confidence in the Government. It should be added that in most parliamentary systems, with their strong tradition of party discipline and the ability of the prime minister to muster a majority, votes of no confidence are very rare. They do, however, happen from time to time, especially if the Government does not control a substantial legislative majority.

When the prime minister resigns, we say that the **Government has "fallen"**. A Government "falls" when either of two things happens: It loses on a question of confidence or a major piece of legislation, leading the prime minister to resign, or the prime minister resigns for some other reason. The resignation of an individual minister does not cause a Government to fall, but the resignation of the prime minister does cause the Government to fall.<sup>27</sup>

The prime minister in a parliamentary system, then, does not have the job security of a president in a presidential system. The prime minister is selected by the head of state to be chief executive precisely because he or she is the leader of the largest party in the legislature. If this individual's party controls a majority of the legislative seats, and if the prime minister can maintain that majority through party discipline, this person should be able to remain prime minister for the entire term of the legislature (and perhaps several terms of the legislature since there are usually no term limits in parliamentary systems of government). If, however, the prime minister does not control a majority, or if the prime minister is not able to retain the support of a majority of the legislature, his or her tenure might be brief.

Of course, if there is a party with a majority, the head of state will have to appoint its leader to be prime minister. (Obviously, if the head of state appointed anyone else, the majority party would make sure that the new Government failed to receive a vote of confidence.) If there is no majority party, one of three situations is possible. First, the head of state may appoint someone to head a **minority government**, one in which the prime minister does not control over 50 percent of the seats in the legislature. Minority governments tend to be short-lived. They usually obtain an initial vote of confidence through a temporary understanding among a number of parties who do not want to have to contest another election right away, and who see a minority government as the least unattractive alternative at the time. These initial understandings usually break down after a short while and result in a no-confidence vote and the fall of the Government.<sup>28</sup>

A very good example of such a government occurred in 1979 in Canada. The Conservative Party, headed by Joe Clark, won slightly less than half of the seats in the House of Commons, capturing 48.2 percent of the House Seats (136 of 282 seats) based upon 35.8 percent



of the popular vote. The two left-of-center parties, the Liberals (with 114 seats) and the (socialist) New Democratic Party (with 26 seats) combined, controlled 49.6 percent of the seats in Parliament, with a small conservative faction, the Social Credit Party, controlling about 2 percent (with 6 seats). Clark vowed to run the government "as if he had a majority," believing that the (conservative) Social Credit Party would prefer his (Conservative Party) leadership to that of the Liberal and socialist opposition, giving him a practical working arrangement of 142 seats out of 282 in any parliamentary vote, a clear (but bare) majority. The Conservative and the Social Credit Parties never entered into a formal coalition, however.

Approximately six months after the election, Clark introduced his first budget in the House of Commons, and the Social Credit Party announced that it found some of the tax measures in the budget so objectionable that it intended to abstain on the budget vote, leaving a 136-member Conservative party to face a 140-member opposition. A motion of no confidence was introduced by the opposition parties, and the Clark Government fell.

A second alternative when there is no majority party is for the head of state to appoint someone to form a coalition government. A coalition government is one in which two or more nonmajority parties pool their legislative seats to form a majority parliamentary bloc. There may well be a formal agreement drawn up among the participants in the coalition, in which they agree to team up and create a majority in the legislature to support a Government. We will discuss coalition governments shortly.

The third alternative, and one usually not taken right away, is for the head of state to not form any Government, but instead to dissolve the legislature--fire the newly elected legislators--and call for new elections in the hope that the next elections will result in one party winning a clear mandate. This usually is not taken as a first resort, but if the head of state appoints a

minority government, which falls within a short period of time, it may be clear to him or her that political stability is simply not possible with the legislature constituted in its current form. If such is the case, the head of state may dissolve the legislature and call for new elections by issuing a writ of dissolution.<sup>29</sup>

The chief executive, then, is selected by the head of state from the legislature. The chief executive retains his or her position as long as the legislature continues to express support for the Government by approving the proposals of the Government. The concept of party discipline is very important in this regard, for it is party discipline that enables the prime minister to control the legislature. There is a circular relationship at work here: The prime minister is selected to be prime minister precisely because he or she is the chosen leader of the largest party in the legislature. This person will remain prime minister as long as he or she can control a majority of the legislature. When a majority cannot be controlled, a motion of no confidence will be passed, and the prime minister will be forced (through either law or custom) to resign.

At this point it is not necessary that new elections be held. The head of state must now reassess the situation and may invite someone else (or perhaps even the same person who last failed) to try to form a new Government and receive an expression of legislative confidence. This process -- a Government being designated, receiving a vote of confidence, surviving for a period of time, receiving a vote of no confidence and falling, a new Government being designated, and so on -- can go on until the term of the legislature is completed, over and over again, until the Head of State decides that there is no point in trying again. At that point the head of state will issue a writ of dissolution, "dissolving" (firing) the legislature (much as we noted Charles I did in 1640), and will call for new elections. Thus the entire process starts again, as indicated in Figure 5.3.

It occasionally happens that a **chief executive will cause his or her own Government to fall**, for what we can describe as reasons of electoral advantage. Let us suppose that in a hypothetical political system the constitution requires that elections be held at least every five years (as is the case in Great Britain), and elections are held in January of 2007 that result in the Liberal party winning 56 of the 100 seats in the legislature, and the Conservative party winning the remaining 44 seats. The leader of the Liberal party, I. Maginary, becomes prime minister. As time goes by, Maginary's popularity, and correspondingly the popularity of his Liberal party, fluctuates up and down, depending upon economic factors, world events, and so on.

Prime Minister Maginary knows that if the present Government can keep the majority in the legislature satisfied, the constitution will require that elections be held by January 2012 (five years after the last election). In early 2010, three years into the term of the legislature but almost two years before elections must be held, Maginary's popularity is at an all-time high, as depicted in Figure 5.4. After some discussion with political advisors, the Maginary Government resigns and asks the head of state to dissolve the legislature and to call for new elections. They do this because they feel that if the elections are held now, they may win control of the legislature by an even bigger margin than they did in 2007. The head of state has no real choice in the matter: Maginary's Liberal party controls a majority in the legislature, and supports Maginary's decision to call for early elections. If the head of state were to refuse to dissolve the legislature, and tried to name some other leader (such as the leader of the opposition Conservative party) to form a Government, the Maginary-Liberal group would vote the new Government down by a 56-44 vote. The head of state, then, grants Prime Minister Maginary a dissolution and calls for new elections to be held, typically in eight to ten weeks. During the interim period, the Maginary Government continues in office as the "Acting" Government, and Maginary's title is "Acting

Prime Minister" until the next election is held and a new Prime Minister (likely Maginary) is designated by the head of state.

Figure 5.4 About Here: Government Falling as a Result of Fluctuation in Public Opinion

Although the example just presented is hypothetical, the situation it depicts happens regularly in parliamentary systems. In recent years, dissolutions of this type have taken place in Japan, France, Great Britain, Canada, Belgium, and India, among other nations.

### Coalition Governments

In political systems that have more than two major political parties it regularly is the case that no single party controls a majority in the legislature. (Clearly, in a two party system we don't have this problem. Unless there is a tie -- which is quite rare -- one of the two parties must, by definition, have more than half of the legislative seats.) Where no party has a majority, as was indicated previously, several options are available to the head of state in the creation of a Government. The most commonly utilized option is the creation of a coalition government.

Let us take a hypothetical newly elected legislature to use as an example as we discuss the process of coalition formation. Imagine a 100-seat legislature with five political parties, as described in Table 5.2.

Table Here: A Hypothetical Legislative Composition

In this instance, the head of state would most likely invite the leader of Party A to form a Government, since Leader A has the largest popular mandate. We should note, however, that in

most systems the head of state is not required to invite Leader A; the head of state can invite anyone that she feels has the best chance to form a coalition successfully. Leader A needs to find an additional 18 seats in order to form a majority of 51 to support her Government in the legislature. In this case, Leader A could go to either the leader of Party B, or the leader of Party C, to find a partner. As well, of course, Leader A could go to more than one other party, to try to form an ABC coalition, for example.

Usually, Leader A will have to promise the leader(s) of other parties involved in the coalition some reward for joining the coalition. In most instances, this reward is a cabinet position (or several cabinet positions). Sometimes the payoff is a promise that a certain piece of legislation that the prospective coalition partner has drafted will be passed as part of the Government's program.<sup>30</sup> Sometimes both types of payoff are required.

If Leader A can reach an agreement with one or more partners to form a coalition that will control a majority of the seats in the legislature, then Leader A will receive his or her vote of confidence, and the Government can be said to be installed. If, however, Leader A cannot find sufficient coalition partnership within a constitutionally mandated period of time, usually two to three weeks, then Leader A must return her "mandate" to the head of state and inform the head of state of her inability to form a coalition.

At this point, as indicated earlier, the head of state makes a decision. The head of state could dissolve the legislature and call for new elections, with the hope that in another election a party seeking seats in the next legislature might win a majority, or at least a large enough plurality to be able to form a coalition easily; or the head of state could invite some other party leader to try to form a government. In our hypothetical example, the head of state at this point might turn to Leader B to see whether that person could form a coalition.

The process then goes on and on in this fashion. At each occasion that a Government fails to retain the confidence, or support, of a majority in the legislature--that is, a motion of no confidence introduced by the opposition passes, or a motion of confidence introduced by a Government supporter fails--the head of state must decide whether another leader might be able to succeed. Elections, after all, are expensive, and usually divisive, and one doesn't want to have a national election every six months.

Coalition majority governments tend to be less stable than single-party majority governments in parliamentary systems.<sup>31</sup> In a single-party majority system, the prime minister must be concerned with party discipline keeping followers in his party in line. In a coalition system, the flow of power is more diffuse. The prime minister exercises party discipline over his party followers, and counts on the leader(s) of the partner coalition party or parties to do the same. Coalitions usually fail because of differences between party leaders -- in our example above, because Leader B has a disagreement with Leader A and pulls the support of Party B out of the AB coalition -- not because of a failure of party discipline within either Party A or Party B.<sup>32</sup>

The study of coalitions has been interesting to many in recent years because of cabinet instability in many political systems.<sup>34</sup> Coalition governments in Italy, Israel, Japan, Belgium, and related minority government problems in France, Britain, and Canada, among other nations, have stimulated an interest in many political scientists in how and why coalitions are created.<sup>35</sup>

Coalition governments often become necessary as a result of a nation's electoral system: Where proportional representation elections exist, there almost inevitably results a multiparty system in the legislature, which often means that no single party will control a majority of the seats in the legislative assembly. This necessitates, as we have indicated here, that a coalition be

formed. The motivations involved in the selection of coalition partners vary as a result of ideology and political culture.<sup>36</sup> Often economic issues provide the central concerns upon which parties coalesce.<sup>37</sup> In any event, the existence of coalitions adds a note of uncertainty and instability to a political equation in addition to whatever uncertainty or instability may have already existed.

### Presidential and Parliamentary Systems: Some Comparisons

Clearly, there are a number of major and significant differences in structure between the presidential and the parliamentary-cabinet system. A question for us to ask at this time is: What are the behavioral implications of the differences between the two systems, and how will the two systems differ in terms of policy output and day-to-day operation? Several significant dimensions of difference are mentioned here.

The first distinction has to do with the idea of responsible government. Responsible government in this context does not mean trustworthy or rational government, but instead refers to the Government's ability to deliver on its promises. Responsible government comes about in parliamentary systems through some of the structural characteristics we have already met. The idea of party discipline suggests that legislators will vote (and speak and act) in the manner that their party leader suggests. The selection of the prime minister as leader of the largest party in the legislature and the notion of the vote of confidence ensure that the prime minister will always have the support of (and therefore, because of party discipline, be able to control) a majority of the legislature. Consequently, whatever the prime minister wants will have the approval of a majority of the legislature. If the prime minister's proposals do not receive a parliamentary majority, of course, the prime minister will have to resign.

This means that when the prime minister promises the public that his or her Government will act in a certain way, that person is in a position to follow through on that promise. In addition to being the leader of the executive branch of government, the prime minister is also (by definition) the leader of the legislative branch of government.

Contrast this with the presidential system in which the notion of separation of powers and checks and balances--something that explicitly does not apply in a parliamentary system--is so important. One of the central principles of presidential government is that the legislature is free to deny requests of the president. Consequently, although a presidential candidate may run for office on the basis of his or her position on a single issue or a number of issues, in most cases the candidate cannot guarantee delivery of campaign promises. To enact policy, the legislature must be convinced that the president's policy preferences are the right ones.

Which system is "better"? It is hard to say, and the answer depends upon certain value judgments, since each system has its own strengths and weaknesses. On one hand, the parliamentary system does have a real advantage in rapid policy delivery, through the notions of party discipline and cabinet leadership. On the other hand, if good policy can be passed quickly, so can bad policy. Many in parliamentary systems bemoan the overwhelming influence of party discipline and corresponding "prime ministerial dictatorship," however, and some have even suggested that their respective systems consider conversion to the presidential model.<sup>50</sup>

The corresponding weakness/strength of the presidential system is precisely its slower, more deliberative legislative process. The argument suggested is that whereas it may (and almost always does) take longer to pass policy, groups that are in a minority in an issue area have more opportunity to protect their interests, and the policy that is ultimately passed is more likely to be a good one. Put slightly more cynically, the policy that is ultimately passed is likely to



offend as few as possible. On the other hand, a policy decision that is urgently needed may go unanswered for a long period of time while the legislature deliberates and argues with the president.

Another major area of difference between the two systems has to do with stability and tenure of office. In the presidential system, both the president and the legislature have fixed terms of office. They can be secure in their knowledge of their fixed terms in these positions, barring extraordinary occurrences (such as impeachment and conviction of the president in the United States, for example). This security permits both the president and the legislature to take either an unpopular position or an antagonistic position in relation to the other branch of government if it is believed that such a position is the proper one to take.

The parliamentary system offers no such job security. The chief executive can lose this position at any time, depending upon the mood of the legislature. A chief executive worried about keeping his or her job, then, would be less likely to take a position that is clearly disapproved of by the legislature than would a president, although an individual "out of step" with the legislature would not be likely to be chief executive in a parliamentary system. Moreover, the legislature would be less likely to rebel against executive leadership: Party discipline would tend to force party members to follow the instructions of their leader (and the leader of the majority party, of course, would be the chief executive). If the legislature became too contentious, the chief executive could request a writ of dissolution from the head of state, effectively "firing" the legislature and calling for new elections.

As we indicated earlier, it is easy to see that each of these systems has advantages and disadvantages as far as stability, policy output, protection of minority rights, ability to deliver on campaign promises, responsiveness to public opinion, and so on, are concerned.<sup>51</sup> Some of these

values are simply inverses of others: Responsiveness to majority public opinion may infringe on minority rights, for example. What is seen as an advantage to one observer may be a distinct disadvantage to another.

Both the presidential and the parliamentary models of executive structure are conducive to democratic government. Both models can be responsive to public opinion, both can provide effective leadership, and both can provide for the general welfare of the political system. The differences between the two types of systems are differences of structure and process, not ideology. As such, it is difficult to argue that one type of system is, overall, better than the other, they are simply different.

### How Legislators are Selected

There are a number of different "pathways to parliament."<sup>39</sup> Legislators may ultimately arrive in their legislative positions in any of a number of ways. Some legislators, of course, are not elected by the public at all, but are appointed by some individual or political body. Others are elected. In this section we want to examine how legislators come to play their roles.<sup>40</sup>

There are two major methods by which the public elects legislators, whether the legislators involved are in the upper house or the lower house of the legislature. One method we can refer to as "district-based" elections; the other method can be called "proportional representation" elections. Each of these methods affects the political system in which it is found.<sup>41</sup> There are a number of variations for each of these general methods (which vary on a country-by-country basis, as we shall see in the next section), but the broad principles are the same.

## Single-Member-District Voting

Among the most common forms of district based representation is the system that is referred to as a "single-member-district, plurality voting" system. In this kind of system, the entire nation is divided into a number of electoral boxes, or districts. Each district corresponds to a seat in the legislative house. Within each district, an electoral contest is held to determine the representative for that district, with the individual receiving the most votes (a plurality) being elected. Usually all of the districts in the nation hold their elections on the same day, although special elections may be held to replace a representative who has resigned or died.

The single-member-district, plurality (SMD-P) system, which exists in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Mexico, Russia, and most nations, does not usually require that any of the candidates win a majority of the vote. (A majority is defined as one vote more than 50 percent of the total votes cast.) All that is required for an individual to win is that he or she wins more than anyone else (a plurality); this is why it is sometimes called a "first past the post" system. So, in a given contest with four candidates, it would be possible for an individual to be elected with only 32 percent of the vote, if the other three candidates each received less (e.g., 25, 23, and 20 percent).

Like every other political structure we might examine, the single-member-district system has both advantages and disadvantages. A major advantage is that representatives have specific districts that are "theirs" to represent, and people know who "their" representatives are.<sup>42</sup> A major disadvantage is that the SMD-P system overrepresents majorities, hides minorities, and promotes a two-party system at the expense of third and minor parties. Three examples will help to make this clear.

In the first illustration, let us take four imaginary electoral districts, each with 100 voters, illustrated in Table 4.5. Let us suppose that in each of these districts, in which for simplicity's sake there are two political parties, Party A wins 51 votes and Party B wins 49 votes. When we total up the results in the four districts, Party A will have won 204 votes to 196 for Party B, a 51-49 percent margin; but Party A will have won 4 seats in the legislature to 0 seats for Party B, a very slight majority in popular votes turning into an overwhelming majority in legislative seats. In short, the votes for Party B will be "unrepresented," or "hidden." This is an extreme mathematical example, yet the principles it demonstrates are not at all uncommon.

Table Here. A Two-Party, Single-Member District System
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The second example, shown in Table , illustrates how in a multi-party system (in this case three parties, but the same principles would apply to four, five, or more parties) a very small margin--in this case bare pluralities in place of bare majorities-- in a number of districts can make a party appear very strong, when, in fact, that is not the case at all. Here, although the plurality party wins only 34 percent of the popular vote, that 34 percent will yield 100 percent of the seats in the legislature.

Table 4.6 Here. A Three-Party, Single-Member District System
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The third example, illustrated in Table uses the same setting as Table 4.6: four districts of 100 voters, and three parties. We can see that in the most mathematically extreme case a shift of only two votes (or one half of 1 percent, in this case!), from Party A to Party B, results in Party B winning two seats--that is, 50 percent--in the legislature where it previously had none. In other words, a shift in popular support of as little as one-half of 1 percent of the "popular vote"

has the potential to change the composition of the legislature by 50 percent. Party C is still shut out of the legislature, despite the fact that it received 33 percent of the vote, one vote out of three, and only one-half of 1 percent less than either Party A or Party B! Clearly this is the most extreme example we could design in a 100-person district, but the principles it illustrates would apply just as forcefully in an electoral district with 100,000 voters.

Table Here. A Second Three-Party, Single Member District System
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Although these examples clearly are far simpler than the reality of electoral politics, the patterns of bias that they demonstrate are real. In the British general election of June, 2001, to take one relatively recent election, the Labour Party won 40.7 percent of the popular vote, yet received 62.7 percent of the seats in the House of Commons, a “bonus” of 22 percent! On the losing side, the Conservative Party received 31.7 percent of the popular vote yet received only 25.2 percent of the seats in the House of Commons, a “loss” of 6.5 percent.. The bias most severely affected the smaller parties, however, as demonstrated in Table 4.8. The Liberal Democrats received 7.9 percent of the seats in the House of Commons in exchange for 18.3 percent of the votes (10.4 percent less than it “should” have received). The “earned less received” losses to many of the very small parties (and there were many other parties that didn’t even win a single seat) were not as great as they were for the Liberal Democrats because, as we noted above, many of the other small parties were regionally concentrated (for example, the Scottish Nationalists, Sinn Fein, or Plaid Cymru), and *where they ran candidates* they won significantly more frequently than did the Liberal Democrats.

The problem with the SMD-P system is that if a party can't get more votes than all of the other parties in a district, it might as well not run there, because it will get no representation at

all, illustrated by the British Liberal-Democrats. This happened because, although they could count on some votes from many districts, in most districts they did not have more votes than their competitors, so they ended up with no representation. One by-product of the SMD system is a two-party system, because generally speaking it is extremely hard for third parties to win seats in SMD systems, so two major parties tend to dominate the political landscape.<sup>43</sup>

Table 4.8

The British General Election of June, 2001

Party	% Votes Won	# Seats Won	% Seats	
Labour	40.7%	413	62.7	
Conservative	31.7	166	25.2	
Liberal Democrats	18.3	52	7.9	
Scottish Nationalist	1.8	5	0.8	
Plaid Cymru	0.7	4	0.6	
Ulster Unionist		0.8	6	0.9
Democratic Unionist	0.7	5	0.8	
Sinn Fein	0.7	4	0.6	
Social, Democratic, and Labour	0.6	3	0.5	
<b>Total 96.0</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>100</b>		

Source: BBC News. "Results and Constituencies UK Breakdown," [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/vote2001/results\\_constituencies/uk\\_breakdown/uk\\_full.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/vote2001/results_constituencies/uk_breakdown/uk_full.stm)

## Proportional Representation Voting

There is an alternative electoral system to the SMD system, which is called the proportional representation (PR) system. The PR system is not based upon geographical districts at all. Rather, the members of the electorate votes for the single party they prefer, not for candidates. The proportion of votes that a party receives in the election (for example, 23 percent

of the total votes cast) determines the proportion of seats it will receive in the legislature (for example, 23 percent of the legislative seats).

An example may help to clarify this. The Israeli system for electing the legislature has a "pure" PR electoral framework. At election time, voters cast their ballots for the political party they support. After the election, if the Labour party has received 25 percent of the votes, it receives 25 percent of the 120 seats (that is, 30 seats) in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. How are the individual winners determined? The process is simple. Prior to the election, all parties deposit lists of their candidates with a national election board, and these lists are made public. The parties usually submit lists of 120 names -- one for each possible seat in the Knesset -- even though they can be sure that they will not win 100 percent of the vote. After the election, if Labour has won 30 seats (25 percent of 120 seats), it simply counts down the top 30 names on its electoral list: Positions 1 through 30 are declared elected, positions 31 through 120 are not elected. This system has an added advantage: If a Member of Knesset dies during the term, or if someone resigns for some reason, a special election is not necessary; the next name on the party list enters the Knesset.<sup>44</sup>

The PR system, like the SMD system, has its advantages and disadvantages.<sup>45</sup> Its advantages center on the fact that it is highly representative. Parties in Israel need to win only 1.5 percent of the vote to win a seat in the legislature. This means that groups that are not pluralities can still be represented in the legislature. To take our example in Table 4.5, if all districts in a 100 seat legislature voted in the same 51-49 manner as the four districts we have drawn, in a PR system Party A would receive 51 seats and Party B would receive 49 seats. In a comparable SMD system, Party A would receive 100 seats, and Party B would receive none.

The disadvantage of the PR system is that PR legislatures tend to be multiparty legislatures -- since it is so easy for smaller parties to win representation -- which means that they tend to be more unstable and to contain more radical and extreme groups than SMD-two-party legislatures.<sup>46</sup> To use our example from Table 4.6, in a PR system Party A would win 34 of 100 seats in the legislature, Party B 33 seats, and Party C 33 seats. This would require the formation of a coalition government, since no single party would control a majority of the legislative seats on its own. On the other hand, we might want to argue that this is not really a disadvantage at all – in fact, it is a real advantage, since groups that exist should be represented in the legislature.

### **Variations on Electoral Models**

There are variations on both the SMD and PR models described above. One variation on the SMD-plurality requires a majority for election (SMD-M). The single-member-district, majority system invariably involves runoff elections, since, given the many political parties that might exist, few districts give a majority to a candidate on the first round of voting. Voting might be scheduled on two consecutive Sundays, (we will see later in this text that this is the case in France) with the top two vote-getters from the first round having a runoff election on the second Sunday. Generally, few districts would elect candidates on the first round (that is, have candidates that can win majority margins); the other 85 to 90 percent of the districts have runoff elections.

Another variation on the district-based model involves the number of representatives per district. In a number of legislatures we can find "multiple-member districts" (MMD), in which



the top several vote-getters are elected. In elections for the lower house in Japan (the House of Representatives), each district elects from three to five representatives, depending upon the size of the district. Voters vote for one candidate, and the top three (or four, or five, depending upon the population living in the district) vote-getters are elected. Japan utilizes an even more complex multiple-member-district scheme for its upper house, the House of Councillors. We will look at this system in more detail later in this text.

Technically, American states fall in this "multiple member" category, since each state is represented in the U.S. Senate by two senators and is, therefore, not a single-member district but rather a multiple-member district. The method of selection of U. S. Senators is the SMD method rather than the MMD method, however, since election of senators is "staggered," and only one senator is elected at a time.<sup>47</sup>

### Concluding Comments

Political parties are a very important structure in the creation of stable democratic government. They provide a linkage between the public and the government. They help the government to operate by helping the government to organize. Parties are one of the key tools of a stable democratic government.

As important as the tool itself, though, is the way the tool is used. Political parties must see themselves as a tool of a stable democratic governmental system. They cannot seek power only for its own sake, but must do so as part of a commitment to democratic government. To following the rules, even if following the rules means that they will lose control of power. The best example of this, I believe, is the 2000 election in the United States, the election that George

Bush lost. The United States has laws and procedures, though, for dealing with how to count votes, and how to determine who has “won” an election, and these can sometimes result in a person being declared the winner who has not received the most votes!

Parties are a crucial structure. Indeed, although America’s first President, George Washington, spoke in his Farewell Address about the dangers of “faction” – by which he meant political parties – it is hard to imagine American politics operating without parties today!

Thank you for your attention.

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1. Ivo Duchacek, Power Maps: Comparative Politics of Constitutions (Santa Barbara, Cal.: Clio Press, 1973). See also for a very good work that asks about the philosophical premises underlying written constitutions the recent work by Larry Alexander, Constitutionalism: Philosophical Foundations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
  2. "The Swiss Constitution of 1848 as amended in 1874 and in subsequent years is a written document like that of the U.S.A., although it is double in size to that of the American Constitution." See Vishnoo Bhagwan and Vidya Bhushan, World Constitutions (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1984), p. 321.
  4. See Robert Sharlet, The New Soviet Constitution of 1977 (Brunswick, Ohio: King's Court Communications, 1978).
  5. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
  6. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
  7. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
  8. This is a very important issue, and one that has received a great deal of attention in many societies. A 1999 volume by Karen Alonso, Schenck v. United States: Restrictions on Free Speech (Springfield, NJ: Enslow Publishing, 1999) reviews these issues in the United States. An article in the United Kingdom discussing this can be found in Salmon Rushdie, "Rushdie on Censorship," Editor and Publisher 126:13 (March 27, 1993), p. 6. A similar question in the American context is discussed in "Protecting `Free Speech'," The Christian Science Monitor 85:88 (April 2, 1993), p. 20.
  9. For discussion of this episode of American history, see Roger Daniels, Prisoners Without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993); David Takami,

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Executive Order 9066: 50 Years Before and Fifty Years After (Seattle, Wash.: Wing Luke Asian Museum, 1992); or Roger Daniels, Sandra Taylor, and Harry Kitano, eds., Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1991).

10. Two good examples of recent comparative study of constitutions are: Marian McKenna, ed., The Canadian and American Constitutions in Comparative Perspective (Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 1993), and Preston King and Andrea Bosco, eds., A Constitution for Europe: A Comparative Study of Federal Constitutions and Plans for the United States of Europe (London: Lothian Foundation Press, 1991).

11. S. E. Finer, ed., Five Constitutions (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979), p. 15.

0.12. Ibid.

13. The position of Prime Minister is mentioned in the Prime Minister's Residence Act -- establishing an Official Residence for the Prime Minister -- and the Prime Minister's Salary Act -- that authorizes the Prime Minister to receive a higher salary than other cabinet members -- but the precise method of selection, powers, and similar important descriptions of the position are not included in constitutional documents. See Robert J. Jackson and Doreen Jackson, Politics in Canada: Culture, Institutions, Behavior and Public Policy (Toronto: Prentice Hall Canada, 2001).

14. Richard Van Loon and Michael Whittington, The Canadian Political System (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976), pp. 169-170.

15. See John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani, Iran at the Crossroads (Boston: Macmillan, 2001), David Menashri, Post-Revolutionary Politics in Iran: Religion, Society and Power (London: Frank Cass, 2001), or Samih Farsoun and Mehrdad Mashayekhi, eds., Iran: Political Culture in the Islamic Republic (New York: Routledge, 1992).

37. See especially Paul Spurlin, Montesquieu in America: 1760-1801 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1940); John Loy, Montesquieu (New York: Twayne, 1968); Arthur Prescott, Drafting the Federal Constitution (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941); and Clinton Rossiter, 1787: The Grand Convention (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

38. See John Locke, Second Treatise on Civil Government (especially chap. 13, "Of the Subordination of the Powers of the Commonwealth," pp. 87-94) in Ernest Barker, Social Contract: Essays by Locke, Hume & Rousseau (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

40. Duchacek, Power Maps, p. 236.

2. Clinton Rossiter, The American Presidency (New York: Mentor, 1960), pp. 14-40 passim. A new edition of this was published by the Johns Hopkins University Press in 1987.

3. See James Madison, Notes on Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787 (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1966), passim.

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4. The first chapter in Dennis Soden's book The Environmental Presidency focuses on presidential roles and how different roles affect policy. See Dennis Soden, The Environmental Presidency (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999). For a much older treatment of this, see Joseph LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1974), pp. 190-196.

5. "The Buck Stops Here" was an unattributed quote on a sign that was kept on the desk of President Harry Truman.

6. For descriptions of the American presidency, see John Kessel, Presidents, the Presidency, and the Political Environment (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2001), John P. Burke, The Institutional Presidency: Organizing and Managing the White House from FDR to Clinton (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), David Abshire, Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency: Seventy-Six Case Studies in Presidential Leadership (Westport: Praeger, 2001), Congressional Quarterly Staff, The Presidency A to Z: A Ready Reference Encyclopedia (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1992); William Berman, From the Center to the Edge: The Politics and Policies of the Clinton Presidency (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), or Robert Shogan, The Riddle of Power: Presidential Leadership from Truman to Bush (New American Library, 1992). Classic studies of the presidency can be found in Rossiter, American Presidency, or Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power (New York: New American Library, 1964).

7. The famous quote by John Adams, the first Vice President of the United States, is as follows: "I am possessed of two separate powers, the one in esse and the other in posse. I am Vice President. In this I am nothing, but I may be everything." Rossiter, The American Presidency, p. 131. See also Robert Gilbert, Managing Crisis: Presidential Disability and the Twenty-Fifth Amendment (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000) and Barbara Feinberg, Next in Line: The American Vice Presidency (New York: Franklin Watts, 1996).

8. On the powers of the vice-president, see Marilyn Anderson, The Vice Presidency (Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2001), Rossiter, American Presidency, pp. 129-135. See also Timothy Walch, At the President's Side: The Vice Presidency in the Twentieth Century (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1997).

9. On presidential elections, see Michael Nelson, The Elections of 2000 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2001), Norman Ornstein and Thomas Mann, The Permanent Campaign and Its Future (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2000), Harvey Schantz, American Presidential Elections: Process, Policy, and Political Change (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), Myron Levine, Presidential Campaigns and Elections: Issues, Images, and Partisanship (F.E. Peacock, 1992); Herb Asher, Presidential Elections and American Politics: Voters, Candidates, and Campaigns Since 1952 (Wadsworth Publishing, 1992); or James David Barber, The Pulse of Politics: Electing Presidents in the Media Age (Transaction, 1992). An interesting approach is found in D. Grier Stephenson, Campaigns and the Court: The U.S. Supreme Court in Presidential Elections (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), a book

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that is especially interesting since it was written *before* the election the outcome of which was substantially affected by a decision of the Supreme Court.

10. Federalist Number 68 by Alexander Hamilton discusses the rationalization of this structure. See The Federalist Papers (New York: New American Library, 1961), pp. 411-415. For a recent discussion, see Judith Best, The Choice of the People? Debating the Electoral College (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996).

11. There were crimes involved in his impeachment, but there was substantial debate over whether sexual offenses and covering them up were the “high crimes and misdemeanors” suggested by the Constitution. See Leonard Kaplan and Beverly Moran, Aftermath: The Clinton Impeachment and the Presidency in the Age of Political Spectacle (New York: New York University Press, 2001), Peter Baker, The Breach: Inside the Impeachment and Trial of William Jefferson Clinton (New York: Berkley Books, 2001), Susan Schmidt and Michael Weisskopf, Truth at Any Cost: Ken Starr and the Unmaking of Bill Clinton (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), and Proceedings of the United States Senate in the Impeachment Trial of President William Jefferson Clinton (Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, 2000).

12. See the article in Facts on File titled “U.S. Senator Jeffords Leaves Republican Party, Giving Control of Senate to Democrats,” Facts On File Accession No: 2001214660 Story Date: May 24, 2001.

13. See Steven Shull and Thomas Shaw, Explaining Congressional-Presidential Relations: A Multiple Perspectives Approach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

14. See Jon Bond and Richard Fleisher, Polarized Politics: Congress and the President in a Partisan Era (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2000), Charles O. Jones, Separate But Equal Branches: Congress and the Presidency (New York: Chatham House, 1999), Mark A. Peterson, Legislating Together: The White House and Capitol Hill from Eisenhower to Reagan (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Martin L. Fausold and Alan Shank, eds., The Constitution and the American Presidency (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1991); or Louis Fisher, Constitutional Conflicts Between Congress and the President (University Press of Kansas, 1991).

15. See The Line Item Veto Act After One Year (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Budget Office, 1998). This constant tension is discussed in William Safire, Before the Fall: An Inside View of the Pre-Watergate White House (Da Capo Press, 1988), and John R. Greene, The Limits of Power: The Nixon and Ford Administrations (Indiana University Press, 1992).

16. See Charles O. Jones, The Trusteeship Presidency: Jimmy Carter and the United States Congress (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), Garland Haas, Jimmy Carter and the Politics of Frustration (McFarland and Company, 1992), or Burton I. Kaufman, The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr. (University Press of Kansas, 1993).

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17. Some good comparative works include: Richard Rose and Ezra Suleiman, eds., Presidents and Prime Ministers (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980); Arend Lijphart, Parliamentary vs. Presidential Government (New York: Oxford University press, 1992); and, with a different perspective, Michael Foley, The Rise of the British Presidency (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

18. LaPalombara, pp. 192-194. See also the data in Jean Blondel, Comparative Legislatures, pp. 144-153, column 39.

19. See Richard Rose, The Prime Minister in a Shrinking World (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), Tomohito Shinoda, Leading Japan: The Role of the Prime Minister (Westport, Ct.: Praeger, 2000), Peter Hennessy, The Prime Minister: The Office and Its Holders Since 1945 (London: Penguin, 2001), Dennis Kavanagh and Anthony Seldon, The Powers Behind the Prime Minister: The Hidden Influence of Number Ten (London: HarperCollins, 1999),

20. See, for example, The Saint Vincent Constitution Order, 1979 establishing a constitution for the new nation of St. Vincent. Sections 50 and 51 outline the Executive Power: Section 50 states that "The executive authority of Saint Vincent is vested in Her Majesty [and] ... may be exercised on behalf of Her Majesty by the Governor-General..." Section 51 notes that "(1) There shall be a Prime Minister of Saint Vincent who shall be appointed by the Governor-General. (2) Whenever the Governor-General has occasion to appoint a Prime Minister he shall appoint a Representative who appears to him likely to command the support of the majority of Representatives... (6) The Governor-General shall remove the Prime Minister from office if a resolution of no confidence in the Government is passed by the House and the Prime Minister does not within three days either resign from his office or advise the Governor-General to dissolve Parliament." Saint Vincent Constitution Order, 1979 (Kingstown, Saint Vincent: Government Printing Office, 1979), pp. 38-39.

23. R. M. Dawson, The Government of Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), pp. 184-185.

24. The election in Israel in 1996 created a unique variation on the general parliamentary model, one in which the legislature was directly elected by the people (in proportional representation voting), and the prime minister was also directly elected by the people. In addition, following the general parliamentary model, the head of state – in Israel called the President – is elected by the Knesset, the legislature. So, the Israeli system offers us a unique blend of presidential and parliamentary leadership, with other parliamentary characteristics as well, such as votes of non-confidence in the prime minister being possible, even though (s)he is directly elected by the people. See Gregory Mahler, "The Forming of the Netanyahu government: Coalition Formation in a Quasi-Parliamentary Setting," in Efraim Karsh, ed., From Rabin to Netanyahu: Israel's Troubled Agenda (London: Frank Cass, 1997), pp. 3-27.

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25. In fact, most cabinet members come from the legislative body. See Neil McNaughton, The Prime Minister and Cabinet Government (London: Hodder & Stoughton Educational, 1999). See also Blondel, Comparative Legislatures, pp. 144-153, column 40.

26. One system with a legal requirement is Barbados. See the Barbados Independence Order, 1966: [Section 66 (1)] "The Office of Prime Minister shall become vacant ... [(2)] If the House of Assembly by a resolution which has received the affirmative vote of a majority of all the members thereof resolves that the appointment of the Prime Minister ought to be revoked...", pp. 62-63.

27. Blondel, Comparative Legislatures, pp. 144-153, column 42.

28. See Kaare Strom, "Deferred Gratification and Minority Governments in Scandinavia," Legislative Studies Quarterly 11:4 (1986), pp. 583-606.

29.

Blondel, Comparative Legislatures, pp. 144-153, column 41.

30. Michael Laver and Norman Schofield, Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

31. See Ian Budge and Hans Keman, Parties and Democracy: Coalition Formation and Government Functioning in Twenty States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

32. A very good comparative study is by Lawrence C. Dodd, Coalitions in Parliamentary Government (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

34. Eric C. Browne and Mark N. Franklin, "New Directions in Coalition Research," Legislative Studies Quarterly 11 (1986), pp. 469-484. In the same issue of Legislative Studies Quarterly see also Ian Budge and Michael Laver, "Office Seeking and Political Pursuit in Coalition Theory," pp. 485-506; and Robert L. Peterson and Martine DeRidder, "Government Formation as a Policy-Making Arena," pp. 565-582.

35. A recent study of the Japanese case is by Hideo Otake, Power Shuffles and Policy Processes: Coalition Government in Japan in the 1990's (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2000). See, for further reading on coalitions, A. DeSwann, Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formations (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973); William Gamson, "A Theory of Coalition Formation," American Sociological Review 26 (1961), pp. 373-382; or Gregory Mahler and Richard Trilling, "Coalition Behavior and Cabinet Formation: The Case of Israel," Comparative Political Studies 8 (1975), pp. 200-233.

36. William Reisinger, "Situational and Motivational Assumptions in Theories of Coalition Formation," Legislative Studies Quarterly 11:4 (1986), pp. 551-564.

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37. John Robertson, "Economic Polarization and Cabinet Formation in Western Europe," Legislative Studies Quarterly 11:4 (1986), pp. 533-550.

50. See, for example, Avraham Brichtha and Yair Zalmanovitch, "The Proposals for Presidential Government in Israel: A Case Study in the Possibility of Institutional Transference," Comparative Politics 19:1 (1986), pp. 57-68.

51. Some discussion of this may be found in Jaakko Nousiainen, "Bureaucratic Tradition, Semi-Presidential Rule and Parliamentary Government: The Case of Finland," European Journal of Political Research 16:2 (1988), pp. 229-249.

39. See David Farrell, Comparing Electoral Systems (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998). The classic on this subject is Austin Ranney, Pathways to Parliament (Madison, Wi.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965). A good study of African electoral systems can be found in Timothy Sisk and Andrew Reynolds, Elections and Conflict Management in Africa (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1998).

40. A very good review essay dealing with elections is by Lyn Ragsdale, "Legislative Elections and Electoral Responsiveness," in Loewenberg, Patterson, and Jewell, Handbook, pp. 57-96. See also Andre Blais, "The Classification of Electoral Systems," European Journal of Political Research 16:1 (1988), pp. 99-110.

41. See David Canon, "Electoral Systems and the Representation of Minority Interests in Legislatures," Legislative Studies Quarterly 24:3 (1999): 331-385. See also Arend Lijphart, "The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, 1945-1985," American Political Science Review 84:2 (1990), pp. 481-496.

42. An example of this is John R. Hibbing, "Representing a Territory: Constituency Boundaries for the British House of Commons of the 1980s," Journal of Politics 48:4 (1986), pp. 992-1005.

43. For discussions of recent British general elections, see David Butler and Dennis Kavanagh, The British General Election of Nineteen Eighty-Three (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984); William Biller, et al., How Voters Change: The Nineteen Eighty-Seven British Election Campaign in Perspective (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); and David Butler and Dennis Kavanagh, The British General Election of 1992 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

44. See Gregory Mahler, The Knesset: Parliament in the Israeli Political System (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1981), especially Chapter 2. On Israeli elections, see the publication of the Israel Consulate General in New York, The Electoral System in Israel (New York: Consulate General of Israel in New York, 1996). See also Alan Arian and Michal Shamir, The Elections in Israel, 1996 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), M. Ben Mollov and Daniel Elazar, Israel at the Polls, 1999 (London: Frank Cass, 2001), Clyde Mark and Joshua Ruebner, Israel: 2001 Elections (Washington, D.C. : Congressional Research Service, 2001), and



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Gideon Doron and Michael Harris, Public Policy and Electoral Reform: The Case of Israel (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2000).

45. See David Farrell, The Political Consequences of Electoral Systems (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1996), G. Bingham Powell, Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), Jprgen Elklit, Electoral Systems for Emerging Democracies (Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997), or Robert Richie, Steven Hill, and Joshua Cohen, Whose Vote Counts? (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001). See also Andre Blais and R.K. Carty, "Does Proportional Representation Foster Voter Turnout?" European Journal of Political Research 18:2 (1990), pp. 167-181.

46. This was a major concern when the French changed from a SMD system to a PR system in 1985, but the concerns did not materialize. Andrew Knapp, "Proportional But Bipolar: France's Electoral System in 1986," West European Politics 10:1 (1987), pp. 89-114. For discussion of Australia's experience with its upper chamber, see Marian Sawer and Sarah Miskin, Representation and Institutional Change: 50 Years of Proportional Representation in the Senate (Canberra: Department of the Senate, 1999).

47. An interesting comparative study of this subject is Susan Welch and Donley Studlar, "Multi-Member Districts and the Representation of Women: Evidence from Britain and the United States," Journal of Politics 52:2 (1990), pp. 391-412.