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Teune, H.

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## Political Developments and the American Local System of Government

by Henry Teune

The western democracies, especially the United States, experienced considerable destabilization in the late 1960's and especially in the 1970's. Terms such as 'distemper of democracy', 'crises', 'fractured societies', and 'disarticulated systems' became part of the vocabulary of political analysts. Why these changes occurred and where the western democracies are going in the coming decades is more obscured than clarified by references to specific historical events, such as Vietnam, Watergate, the depression of 1975, and the stagflation of 1974. The general nature of these recent changes suggests that they are part of some longer term and more global developmental processes.

The conservative solutions are various efforts to restore the political parties, the authority of government, the freedom of the private economic sector. The arguments of the left are based on anticipation of a shift to a more humane society through the curtailment of the corporations. The forces for destabilization, however, neither have been as bad as projected by the Tri-lateral Commission nor have the hopes that were toasted in Europe in the summer of 1977 for fresh victories of the left, been realized.<sup>1</sup> Neither collapse nor new societies; the problems continue.

### General perspectives

To understand change, which is indicated by very 'weak' signals, it is especially important to know the theoretical perspectives of those doing the analysis. Statements by the analysts themselves, however, have to be taken with scepticism. It is difficult to know the framework of one's own analysis. Nonetheless, certain general points may be helpful for what follows.

First, western democracies must be seen as developing systems. Western societies have been a dynamic force for world change for a long time, and there is no reason for believing that they simply will collapse or fade away, certainly not in a very long short run. Furthermore, at the moment there is no obvious competitor capable of influencing the development of a global political economy.

Second, the general intellectual malaise concerning western democracies is

in part a consequence of rising expectations, some of which can never be fulfilled, such as stable growth. In the 1880's when the United States was in the decade of its first hundred years as a political system, there were similar doubts about its future, also in part a result of new hopes and perceived reversals. Labor strife was spreading, strikes were frequent and violent, the economy had suffered a series of setbacks, and the overdevelopment of 'dry' agriculture in the west, the prairie states, had led to considerable political instability from the populist movement, which challenged the very legitimacy of the American political system.

Third, contrary to what seems to be almost a standard interpretation that western countries must confront a crisis of magnitude, indeed collapse, before there can be change, intelligent policies are possible. The next few years happen to be ones of serious uncertainty. The end of this decade looks better for a variety of reasons. The short term challenges come primarily from the international political system which at the moment has lost the anchor of consistent policy. Between now and the middle of the 1980's the Soviet Union will have strategic advantages, which because of the modernization of China and planned changes in the west probably cannot be regained for the rest of this century. The unpredictability of the international system has also been increased by the imminent changes in Soviet leadership and perceived losses of control of the United States over its peripheries. In addition some of the Third World states have 'hardened', making their economies less open to the west and some have become unstable, making accessibility even more difficult. These problems are manageable.

Fourth, a new world order will require adjustments in the western democracies. This new world order in negative terms is a consequence of the decline in the capacity of the United States to keep order in world regions but more importantly to keep them open to the industrial countries to access their resources at constant or declining prices.

Fifth, there has been a psychological and value change in the populations of the western democracies. Whether social science has been able to measure these value changes or not in their languages of research, some of the directions of these changes are clear. Non-material values are coming to the fore. There is a new kind of 'western man', although it is difficult to express prototypically as the 'gentleman', the 'business man', or the 'man of God' of earlier periods.

What will be done is to describe some changes in the world system, then to address changes that are currently taking place in the western democracies. A case then will be made that these changes are contributing to a transformation of local politics. Here the discussion will focus on changes in the American

system of local government, especially the governance of cities.

The point of departure will be that for the last hundred years or so developmental processes in the west have weakened the local political system and by so doing provided enormous benefits for individuals but that today one of the new developments taking place in the western democracies and in particular the United States is a revitalization of local politics. These changes pose risks for the effectiveness of democratic welfare states and their value of equality as well as perplexing theoretical questions about their future. This of course is not the only developmental change taking place, however significant it may be. Others include changing relationships between large corporations and the government as well as the erosion of traditional political parties and the interest group constellations on which they were built. One consequence of the latter has been the proliferation of small, morally oriented political groups that engage in intense forms of political behavior outside of the traditional institutions of political bargaining and accommodation. These groups neither can be suppressed nor ignored. Their number is likely to increase, perhaps rapidly so. The response must be to incorporate them into the political structures. One strategy for doing so is to increase the political space of western democracies, which in the context of this discussion of local government and politics, means decentralization and the establishment of more and more diverse local governments.

### The world order and its transformation in the 1970's

The industrialized states after World War II began a process of transformation from territorial to modern states. The former is based on the principle of control of territory through direct and indirect administration. The modern state is based on organization and communication and does not require territorial administrative control. Indeed, it is possible to achieve more control through organizational structures than through the difficult processes of administration, most clearly manifest in the colonies of empire or 'co-prosperity spheres'. The reasons are developmental, technical, and political, which, of course, are intertwined.<sup>2</sup>

The difference between the international system of 1947-70 and today can be seen in the explicit policy of the United States after Soviet assertion of control in Eastern Europe. That policy was expressed in the Truman-Acheson 'doctrine' as elaborated by others. Although never fully in accord with reality and often a source of serious misperception, this policy must be understood in terms of historical necessities as well as in those of impulses of altruism and dominance, both critical ingredients of political behavior.<sup>3</sup> First, the problem of Soviet territorial expansion would be handled, or contained, by the United

States with its superior strategic power. Second, with regard to the needs for resources and markets for the industrialized countries the United States would: a) guarantee open sea lanes for trade and commerce; b) organize the dollar as a medium of economic exchange; and c) at the very least, keep the American market open for exports and imports. In turn, countries should disavow attempts to control territories of others and should give up colonies, a principle on which there was equivocation, and when there was, disaster followed, especially in the cases of Algeria and Vietnam but also in the 1956 Suez venture. New states would be formed. They were expected to be unstable in part because of their economic backwardness but also because of traditional antagonisms and relative unequal power in particular regions. Hence, the United States would attempt to stabilize various world regions by providing economic aid and by intervention, both political and military, if violence seemed probable. Such uses of force were in some cases successful, such as in Lebanon in the 1950's and in others catastrophic, such as in Vietnam. Taken together this was a decentralized world order where the market and trade would provide a growing basis for world order, even without the Soviet Union.

This description is the political framework that bounded the international system designed by the United States, however charitably or hostilely interpreted. But it was related to certain historical and developmental realities, including that as a world center the United States had enormous vitality in production and surplus resources for international activities. In another language it was the world capitalistic center. And one of the underlying assumptions of this world system was that countries had to be open to economic penetration, even if not political control, a separation that in fact is difficult to make. Another assumption was that it had to grow, to expand at least at a rate that exceeded the costs of control.

The logic of the territorial political system is that of increasing control over its own territory and the expansion of control on its peripheries. Its organizational thrust is political and administrative and the mechanism is military.<sup>4</sup> The logic of the modern state is expansion of control through organization, penetration of organizations everywhere, especially economic ones, and their integration into a world wide network of relationships. Both types of systems must grow or be ascendant, and the growth must compound. But compounded growth cannot continue indefinitely without some kind of change in the structure of the system. For example, in the context of an administrative hierarchy (and a world center, however loosely, behaves as a high point in a hierarchy) for an equivalent in network density, adding any two or more units to be controlled at the lowest level necessitates adding one layer in the hierarchical structure. Even if a constant rate of information loss across levels in a

hierarchy is assumed, say 20%, it can be shown that extending or adding units to be controlled decreases information, and, consequently, relative control capacity throughout the system, requiring even greater investments in control activity to stay even.<sup>5</sup>

Incorporating the non-socialist world into a vast market has attendant increasing costs which can be offset if what is yielded from that control exceeds the cost. The returns from expansion, in this case for the United States and the other open industrialized countries, must be not only at a rate higher than the costs of control but also at an increasing higher rate in order to cover relatively greater control costs as the structure of the system attenuates. There are not only limits to empire but also limits to organizational penetration from a world center.

The extraction of resources in the long run also becomes increasingly more costly. The natural and mineral resources from initial efforts of exploitation will be cheaper than later ones. Initial choices of places to access resources will be compared to more alternatives. As the alternatives diminish, the other alternatives, less inviting initially, will look more attractive. Thus, the 'old law' that the greater the alternatives the less any one of them is valued. Or concretely, in this argument, oil exploration that is just beginning in the Third World will be increasingly more expensive as the number of alternative sites get used up. It is not quite this way because of initial investment costs. In addition, of course, the empirical reality is that soon the resources diminish and eventually they run out. In the long run different technologies are required based on different kinds of resources and with different kinds of organizational means for their exploitation.

The liberal creed of the west with regard to the economic development of the world was that all would benefit in this process, although the new and poorer countries more slowly. Thus what was required was foreign aid. This policy in its specific form was popularized by American academics in the early 1960's, especially those on the east coast.<sup>6</sup> The political consequences of a world economy were to be emerging, stable states that would develop into democratic political systems. The twin goals of American foreign policy were international stability and the extension of democratic governance through economic development, so well articulated by President Kennedy. Academics specified the 'economic requisites' of democracy.<sup>7</sup> The problem with all of this was that such assertions were theoretically flawed and empirically not well founded.

As is so often the case, by the end of the 1960's and throughout the 1970's the consequences of policy were different from what was expected. Countries where there were economic successes, measurable economic development and the inclusion of more people into the system of benefits of growth, became

either undemocratic or unstable. The United States continued to embrace these countries despite their democratic failures. Whether or not it was imperative to do so for national security is only part of the reason; there was also a moral obligation to countries, such as South Korea. A more important political consequence of economic development was a 'hardening' of these countries and their rejection of the 'west'. Whether nationalistic or not, there were efforts to assert state control and to tax penetration from the west both economically and politically. Some countries, of course, became unstable, not a good climate for investment; others struggled for economic growth in the world system and to do so strengthened domestic control through non-democratic means.

The convergence of economic and political forces thus made difficult the assumptions of the international order established after World War II. This is not to say that trade, investment, extraction of resources did not continue at high levels. By 1970 the amounts were great and still increasing. But then the world system and the welfare states required more for their growth. The stagflation, inflation, and recession of the 1970's must be explained to a considerable extent by these world wide developments. Also, the military growth of the Soviet Union undermined the ability of the United States to guarantee to check its territorial expansion through strategic superiority. Military parity was recognized in Helsinki in 1975. The Soviet Union still has not developed the organizational capacity of the modern state and relies on its military in international affairs, particularly with countries directly adjoining it.

Although the international system has perhaps overly focused here in terms of policies of the United States, it clearly was until the 1970's the central component of the international system. The primary basis of its role was economic growth at home and abroad. Slow growth, indeed two periods of net economic losses in the United States in less than 10 years, in a period when more growth is needed will lead to the political 'dis-articulation' of policies among countries and to closure to protect against volatility in the international system, a fact which Japanese social scientists are presently over sensitive to in drawing parallels between the 1930's and the 1970's, both decades of contraction, closure, political controversy. They, of course, have the most to lose as they have made the strongest commitment to the liberal ideology of a world capitalistic system. In fact, their resources made such a commitment a historical necessity.<sup>8</sup>

These macro developmental patterns are configured by decisions that need not have been taken or the lack of certain decisions. But the developmental processes are largely perturbed by these decisions; their course not significantly altered. The losses of the United States in Vietnam accelerated the decline of the post 1945 world order. The resources lost were large but

not significant. The losses from the drop in production, negative growth, in 1975 were greater than at least the official estimates of the direct costs of the war (about 150 thousand million dollars). The domestic political losses were greater if not estimatable. Internationally there might have been a net political gain in that it was an opportunity for the United States to abandon its foreign policy, which it did in the Nixon-Kissinger policy of a great power system, labeled *detente*. The critical question now is whether *detente* could have worked. It was rapidly mismanaged into oblivion. The question now is whether the United States and the Soviet Union will regress and begin to behave like territorial political systems with its language of regions, bases, oceans, and borders and to contest for territorial control.

### The state system of western industrialized countries

The next level of attention concerns changes in the industrialized democracies, first, how they were impacted by changes in the world system, and, second, how those changes impacted local government and politics. In this section changes at the national level will be addressed; in the next, the focus will be on American local politics with some parallels drawn from European countries and Japan.

What happened internally in these countries after 1945 is specifically different and only in a general sense similar.

First, they all grew economically and dramatically so. In general those whose political interest structure either was destroyed or shaken because of the war, grew faster (France, Germany, Japan) than those that emerged with their pre-war interest structure intact (England and the United States).<sup>9</sup> For most countries this was a reversal of the failures of their economic systems to grow in the 1930's (except, of course, for Germany and Japan which chose to strengthen their governments to grow).

Second, these growing economies generated the resources for the expansion of national governments, particularly bureaucracies, and provided them with the organizational means for increased control. The computer was decisive in this, as decisive as Max Weber's explanation of bureaucracy in the nineteenth century being dependent on a monetarized economy. What the national government acquired was a capacity to deal directly with individuals and thousands of local governments rather than indirectly through intermediate organizations, including local governments.

Third, for reasons that will be only touched on here, governments, national governments, were able to put into place massive welfare programs to improve the lot of the poor. The specific policies in countries differed, but there was distribution to the bottom income groups from the new economic sur-

pluses and re-distribution from the top income groups to the bottom ones, even in the United States.<sup>10</sup> What was achieved, despite complaints, especially in the United States that not enough was done or that it was an illusion to buy political quiescence of the poor, was remarkable. Almost all people became affluent, and, more importantly, they became immune from the vagaries of economic fluctuations, including real deprivations in nutrition. The 'Great Society', despite its costs, flaws, and enemies worked.

Fourth, the successes of national governments in delivering welfare and services must be evaluated 'on the whole'. They did have unexpected political consequences. In the United States rather than political quiescence there were strong political demands by the relatively deprived for more and by the middle class for participation in the system of welfare, something which is probably true also in Europe.<sup>11</sup> Also for the United States where politics is traditionally based locally, a new system of governance emerged. To have an economic system that continuously generates economic surpluses, more than before, it is necessary to have economies of increasing scale. In effect local economies were destroyed. In the early 1960's there were still local economies, including locally produced and consumed agricultural goods. This, in one decade, almost disappeared in most areas of the United States with the growth of national markets for almost everything. To deliver welfare and other governmental services, it is necessary to penetrate downward to where the individual lives and works.<sup>12</sup> The national government must attend to programs, bypassing the local governments. This was done in the United States through various new 'federalisms', such as 'picket fence' federalism, a vertical structure of federal, state, and local officials dealing directly with a particular program, often uncoordinated with other programs, each with a line from Washington to the individual.<sup>13</sup> The development of a national economy and national programs targeted to individuals converged to undermine local governance.

These programs stimulated expectations. Politicization of matters of every day life increased. This was variously described in the 1970's as the 'distemper of democracy', meaning that more people want or expect government to solve more problems but do not trust it to act effectively or in their interest, or the 'new politics', meaning that moral issues are made political, such as the role of women, abortion, sexual preferences, and life styles. At the end of the 1960's in the United States there were urban riots by blacks, the very decade of their 'second' emancipation in the Civil Rights Act (1965) and an increase in their real income of about 100% as compared to 60% for the country as a whole. As is the case in all systems undergoing rapid change, individuals, especially the middle class or those freed from economic pressures, became normatively aggressive, willing to use government to impose their preferences or values

but vehemently denying control by government over them. These new kinds of political demands led to irregular or non-institutionalized forms of political activity of writing letters, organizing political groups, protesting programs, designing political symbols for the media. At the same time regular political participation continued to decline.<sup>14</sup> Voting turn-out dropped as well as identification with political parties, especially among the youth. Indeed, voting in the 1978 Congressional election was the lowest in over a century.<sup>15</sup>

Individuals also changed with these changes in the political system. The old politics was based on jobs and houses, both of which attach to place which can be a point of social and political control. The new politics attaches to organizations and 'movements' which give individuals autonomy. Released from the control of economic necessity and uncertainty, one can consider one's dignity. Individuals are becoming free from previous determinants of their political behavior, such as income, region, religion, and ethnic affiliation.<sup>16</sup> The gradual loosening of the hold of these socio-economic determinants in part explains the weakening of the political parties which were organized on the basis of locality, occupation, religion, and ethnicity. The process of 'individualization' is accelerated by expanding education of the population, although the quality of that education in the United States has been steadily declining since the middle of the 1960's for reasons that social scientists have not yet isolated. The modern state required technological and organizational capacities of large numbers of people and the universities, not without troubles, provided them in unprecedented numbers. Whatever their short comings, the American graduate schools fulfilled their missions to educate a cadre for a massive research and development infra-structure and to staff colleges and universities so that almost everyone could receive higher education close to their homes. And as all institutions, they over did it somewhat.

The convergence of economic development of scale and political developments in increased governmental control at the national level fractured the old order of local governments. Some of that had taken place earlier. Add to this that complex social systems also make individuals more complex and less amenable to categorization for control. Politics became nationalized, but the national government, as all hierarchies, faced with growing complexity, could not respond to a mosaic of different demands no matter how just and intense. The old fear that democracy eventually produces either fascism or anarchy is again heard in intellectual circles.

The international system was decisive for the rapid expansion of the economics of the western industrial countries after the last war. This growth required access to cheap resources relative to their actual and political costs. Indeed, the real cost of oil declined after the war until the 'crisis' of 1973 which could not be dealt with politically as the oil crisis in Iran was 25 years

earlier. Growth was also helped by a division of labor among the industrialized countries. Most of their trade was with each other, and is today, rather than with Third World countries. Whether individuals, regions, or countries, equals interact more with each other than with unequals, and, thus, the more developed countries with the more developed.

Successes in economic growth and the expansion of government for its distribution altered the structure of the old political order in the industrialized countries (which took form in the United States after 1870) and contributed to the politicization of social and economic relationships. The international system changed, leading to declines in the rate of growth, and, as important, to volatility and uncertainty. Just as the demands for increased performance of governments on a wider range of human affairs was mounting, governments weakened relatively and their control escaped to an unstable international system. Despite arguments over the immediate past, the international system and the dominant countries measured in historical terms were relatively stable. Perhaps it was the most stable period in centuries. Diminishing effectiveness of governments due to political and economic developments, both national and international, led to profound changes in governance.

### The local political system in the United States

The history of local government in the United States is marked by periods of major transformations. Only some aspects of this history will be mentioned. The most dramatic of the various changes was the rapid growth of the industrial cities in the latter part of the nineteenth century, particularly after 1880. The economic base of these cities was coal-steam power, which has as its constraint that power rapidly diminishes with distance.<sup>17</sup> The steam cools and the conveyor belt strains. What such power requires is concentration of the population with manufacturing in the center, immediately ringed by the working class, as was described by the early Chicago school of human ecologists.<sup>18</sup> Productivity in these cities is estimated to have been about five times greater than otherwise located industry which was by about 1850 nationally at the level of the German states.<sup>19</sup> By the 1880's the application of science to industry, in particular the development of electric power, both made the large industrial city possible and eventually undermined it as a center of production and national development. Reinforced steel from chemistry provided for larger buildings and electrical power helped to transform the cities from 'walking' cities to accessible centers. But electricity as a power source for production does not significantly depreciate in value with distance. Just as coal-steam was a strong force for population concentration, electricity, and it so happened the combustion engine, was a force for dispersion. By the 1920's

the great industrial cities which had generated resources in sufficient abundance to pay for the urban infrastructure of roads, water, parks, and museums ceased to expand and the processes of decentralization of industry and suburbanization began. Economic depression in the 1930's, of course, aborted these processes as did World War II with its requirements of full utilization of industry regardless of efficiency.

As indicated, the immediate post war period was one of expanding bureaucracy both private and public. As has been the case after each war in the twentieth century the size of the national bureaucracy, inflated because of war, decreases somewhat but not to pre-war levels. State and local government expanded, however, even more rapidly than the federal. The cities became the centers for this development in the 1950's, acting as decision-making centers in their office buildings, banks, and communication headquarters. The 1960's was the decade of the third generation computer with its interchangeable languages. Information which can be standardized, also can be decentralized. Inventory sales, and research can be dispersed and linked together through a computer network. To escape the ever increasing costs of density, especially that associated with the older cities, economic organizations left the urban centers for smaller places or seized other cities for new development, such as Houston and Denver.

By 1960 the public sector began expanding more rapidly than the private. Government took leases on the office buildings and used them to deliver services to those remaining in the cities. One estimate arrived at by a Philadelphia bank about four years ago was that about 25% of the population of the city was living on various kinds of governmental payments. Another estimate of a few years ago was that New York city tendered welfare to a population about equal to the total population of Baltimore.

The short lived renaissance of the cities in the 1950's was due to the pre-computer 'technology' of administration; the small renaissance of the 1970's came from the emergence of small enclaves of diverse and high quality consumption in theatre, restaurants, and shops for particular regions. These enclaves are surrounded by decay. The United States differs from European countries in this regard because of the localism of property markets and the absence of effective institutions for turning over land use. In recent years the federal government has become the largest owner of homes, mostly abandoned.

What is also of interest for the future of cities is a weak signal of change picked up by demographers in the early 1970's. For the first time in the twentieth century those areas outside of the metropolitan areas experiences a net gain in population, including some from migration from the metropolitan areas.<sup>20</sup>

An additional reason for the relative decline of cities as manufacturing and administrative centers is the internationalization of development, discussed in the first section of this paper. Economic and technological developments are now world wide. The national city that aggregated diversity through a complex system of access was no longer sufficiently diverse for the new international system. New developments are international. New technology and wealth were no longer a matter of New York and its hinterlands; it was New York in an international system. Interactions within the major urban centers thus became part of an international network, more tied to Brussels, London, Paris than to the population residing in or adjoining the city. Cities in the industrial countries developed a dual economy, not unlike that of the Third World countries, where housing, services, facilities had one price for those participating in the international economy and another set of prices for the 'older' economy available to the local participation who do not participate in the international economy. London was among the last of the larger cities to join in, and when it did, the new economy exploded in short order, making it by 1980 one of the most expansive cities in the world. What is happening is the emergence of a new urban form whose outlines are still a matter of speculation. The new urban form will not have the shape of the traditional city but rather an international network of access to complexity, which the cities provided successfully for national industrial development in the nineteenth century.

In the middle of the 1960's different research projects in the United States, at first called 'community' studies, later simply research on cities, proliferated. What distinguished these studies from earlier ones was that they were based on national samples of cities rather than in depth research on one or two cities. Their breadth, and also intellectual shortcomings, were aided by improved governmental statistics. The samples did not include the large cities, such as New York, Chicago, Detroit or Philadelphia, whose uniqueness attracted their own research communities. From these studies certain descriptive conclusions appear in retrospect. And what is of interest is the nexus of factors that, from what is known now, should have been considered the political economy of urbanism and development. The relationships found can be considered the traditional political order of American cities after World War II, which has broken and to some extent is being replaced. The findings provide a baseline for studying and interpreting change.

First, there was a fairly consistent national pattern of political leadership and influence *outside* of the formal governmental structures. The debate in political science in the 1960's was whether that structure of influence was pluralistic or homogeneous.<sup>21</sup> Whatever the conclusion of those arguments, viewed comparatively the United States manifested a nationally homogeneous

pattern. For example, in a study of 61 cities informants were asked about the relative influence of 15 'traditional local groups' on five issue areas.<sup>22</sup> Four clusters of groups were found. The most influential was a business cluster composed of the chamber of Commerce, bankers, retail merchants, and industrial leaders. A second major cluster, ranking behind the first in over-all influence, was a non-business political group composed of church leaders, newspapers, the bar association (lawyers), unions, and ethnic groups. A third cluster was local governmental administrative heads and city and county employees. Finally, there were the partisan political groups, the Democratic and Republican parties. What can be seen from this is the dominance of informal, non-governmental political power with the governmental bureaucrats having relatively more influence than the political parties. What was significant was the fact that the governmental groups were more influential in those issue areas where at that time the federal government was just beginning to address urban renewal and air pollution. Since then, 1965-66, federal programs in the cities rapidly expanded.

Second, in 30 of the 61 cities the values of the local leaders were examined and on no single value of seven studied – localism, conflict avoidance, honesty, selflessness, equality, participation and economic development – did the leaders in any city (about 30 in each) differ significantly (statistically) from those in any other.<sup>23</sup> In other words, one could not distinguish any city from any other on the basis of differences in these values of local leadership; or in still others, there was considerable value homogeneity in the political leadership of urban America, excluding, of course, the largest cities.

Third, economically heterogeneous cities, more disparities in the income of the population, were able to do more (be more 'active', as measured by indicators of resource mobilization and popular involvement of the citizens in structures of participation) if the local leadership had more direct linkages to groups within the city (16 such groups were used to ask about leadership linkages). In contrast more economically homogeneous cities were able to do more if their formal governmental structures were more centralized (as measured by several indicators of central, mostly the mayor's, power).<sup>24</sup> What this finding suggests is that to some extent, and to a limit unknown, governmental organization can mobilize resources and participation. The theoretical problem with vertical linkages, governmental officials and the population directly rather than through the intermediary groups, is that it represents almost the defining characteristic of populism, which, according to American political theory or myth, accelerates political expectations and demands.

Fourth, cities that had 'encompassing' governmental structures, that is a government that directly administered services rather than having them under separate agencies (independent boards) or provided by private contractors,

were more innovative (started more new programs) and had higher levels of political participation of the traditional kind, voting.<sup>25</sup> This was found for about 600 cities and the critical factor was when the city was established. Those that were incorporated about 1830 or earlier had more 'encompassing' governments, a period during which there was relatively more political consensus.

Fifth, cities that had leaders with values in favor of economic re-distribution and consistent Democratic party voting, which tends to support welfare programs, spent more for programs that are likely to distribute wealth. In other words, the greater the agreement among leaders and between them and the politically active population for re-distribution leads to more distribution. This finding suggests that a general 'consensus' on broad policies can at least provide the basis for adopting such policies.<sup>26</sup>

Sixth, as could be expected, among the 30 cities those that were wealthier tended to do more. Resources matter. But so does organization. In those cities that were poorer, if the political party organizations were perceived by the leaders as strong, the city in fact did more (were more 'active').

In general these points show that political organization of cities, including a structure of 'agreement', mattered for collective action. Most of the variables that tended to be related to collective measures of performance were structural. The problem with the governance of cities is that there is evidence, although not as yet very systematic, that these structures have weakened or fractured.

Since these studies (the middle of the 1960's) several events, even dramatic ones have happened, the most notable being the urban riots. Those riots in part were a consequence of the beginnings of improvements brought about by the Great Society programs which reached down to city neighbourhoods. Federal programs in the cities increased rapidly, from about 5% of all governmental expenditures in the larger cities in 1965 and exponentially increasing to over 70% of all governmental expenditures by 1978 (estimated without New York).<sup>27</sup> More dramatically, of course, were strikes by public unions, something that was infrequent after World War II and almost unheard of for teachers, whose strike activity spread after 1967. Then less noticeable were the pension claims of those who began to retire from public service (the uniformed workers, police and fire, claiming benefits equal to the military of 50% of salary after 20 years and 75% after 30 years of service). The costs of these retired employees is simply added, for most cities, to their current budget, again straining the budgets of governments with a declining economic base. More dramatically was the bankruptcy of New York and the subsequent downgrading of tax free municipal bonds which were sold at rates prior to 1975 of about 5-7% interest, a figure that could, of course, not hold with in-

creasing inflation. Gone were the days of providing services without increased taxes that would scare off middle class residents and industries and without cutting services that would mobilize the now politicized minorities. This financial squeeze forced the mayors to transfer their problems to Washington and what followed was the emergence of a new set of vertical political relationships through the layers of national, state, and local government, including independent agencies, that today characterizes local government in the United States.

This vertical organizational thrust should have broken the horizontal relationships among the political groups that constituted the local political order, often kept together under the umbrella of the political parties. It also should have increased the power of governmental employees, the local bureaucracy, relative to business, labor, church, and party leaders.

This reach downward by government also stimulated an organizational response in the neighbourhoods of the cities. What is being observed in the United States, particularly beginning in the 1970's as well as in other countries (Japan, Norway, Italy) is an exponential growth of neighbourhood organizations with strong political demands, however temporary.<sup>28</sup> The city as a corporate unit at least in the United States was penetrated from above and pulled from below. The political structure of the city weakened, inviting political demands freed from the constraint of organization and institution. In 1876, the first hundred years of the United States, Philadelphia had a celebration that brought the city together with the country and world; in 1976, the celebrations were based in neighbourhoods with parties and parades. Nothing could be agreed on for the whole city, and the resources were simply passed around. The evidence from Italy is that the neighbourhood councils are more concerned with immediate payoffs of sports and games than with longer term projects.<sup>29</sup> The benefits of large scale systems seem at least in the short run to get lost in the smallness of local communities.

What was anticipated and worked for by political scientists in the 1950's did not happen. In the 1940's and 1950's the vision of the future of urban America was one of strong, centralized metropolitan governments that fitted the realities of regional economies. The 1400 or so governments of New York would be consolidated at least in important areas. To this end political scientists and others designed metropolitan governments and advocated their adoption. They were pushing against three organizational constraints. First, the metropolitan areas themselves were not separable entities but rather some of their parts were being integrated into national and international economies. For example, one of the most important problems that leaders identified in 1965 was unemployment in the cities. It was also the problem area they felt they could do the least about. Second, the areas optimal for the delivery of

services varies by the type of service and changes in service delivery technologies. Rather than integrating areas and functions into a single metropolitan government in order to achieve certain optimalities more rather than fewer local governments were established in special authorities despite a dramatic drop in the number of independent school districts. By 1980 there were about 90,000 local governments. Third, the rising demand for political participation required units smaller than the large city which are as complex in their operations and as remote as the national government. Participation, involving as it does some kind of face to face contact is based on trust. Thus, neighbourhood units grew under the banner of urban decentralization and participation in North America, western Europe, and Japan. The political development of governments of increasing scale created a political climate opposed to big government. Government increasingly was distrusted and people began to demand greater control over their own destinies with, of course, no expectation that government would diminish its services.

Another important, but generally unexpected, change was the increased price of energy. Declining costs of energy are a force for centralization and scale, knitting together diversity. Higher energy costs, of course, make alternative sources of energy more attractive, much in the same way that one of the initially rejected sources of minerals becomes attractive when those first chosen are depleted and become more costly. The physical and political ecology of space, rather than eroding as a determinant because of cheaper central supplies of energy begins to emerge again to shape economic and political behavior. As oil becomes more expensive the previously less desirable alternatives become more attractive. These are configured regionally – wind, sun, vegetation, water. Marginal differences in these sources, mixed in some way, compound over time into big differences. Regional rather than a national policy toward energy evolves, as is now occurring in the west and north-west United States. These regional policies are likely to aggregate into a 'rational' national policy. For the first time in the twentieth century the processes of regional economic, social, and political homogenization may be reversed, again straining national bureaucratic control and its tendencies to equality and uniformity.

### The future of local politics: the next decades

During the 1970's most of the industrialized countries either changed their system of local government or put such changes on their political agenda (France). In very general terms attempts were made to consolidate in some eastern European countries (Poland, 1975; the Soviet Union, 1975; Yugoslavia, 1974-76) and to decentralize and devolve functions in western industrial-

ized countries (Denmark, England, Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden, as well as others). In the United States, of course, there are no set national policies for local governments, but revolution can take place while retaining the same form. Such general, world wide patterns of change constitute responses to general developmental trends rather than imitation.

Because of these changes and those mentioned earlier, the international and local systems have become more theoretically interesting for political science. Attention, which since World War II has focused on the national level and its growing ascendancy, now has shifted to changes at different levels that are only beginning to be understood. And these changes in the international and local system have, or appear to have, de-stabilized national politics.

The creation of industrial economies of great scale has also led to their transformation. The ingredients for the traditional industrial economy were labor, capital, and land, all locatable in physical space; those for the new, energy, technology, and organization, all much less tied to physical space. The territorial state organizationally was successful in exploiting natural resources within its borders and sometimes and to some extent beyond them; the modern state with its corporations, banks, and communication networks has been able to mobilize resources on an international scale. The critical question is whether or not the integration the strong states provided, can be replaced by the international political economy with component states that are decentralizing. In other words, can the general benefits of the national governments and an international economy of scale be retained with relatively weakened states? The states, as the cities in the United States, are being penetrated from above and pulled from below.

The recent theoretical debates over 'state formation' or the origins of the state continue to be inconclusive. One division among the participants is whether the state was the servant of the corporate interests or the corporate interests the servant of the state. The theoretical arguments are no satisfactory if only because it is not clear what is to be explained. Theoretically explaining the formation of the state also requires explaining its demise or at least being able to know the conditions of yet another transformation. To begin to do so it is necessary to identify the old and the new, in this case the old and the new corporations, which are generally the decisive actors in the capitalistic states.

The old are those industries that grew up some time ago, such as steel, ship building, and textiles. Most of them today are in an economic position of asking for direct governmental subsidies to offset their losses in the international economy. In these sectors labour and management collude, threatening political action. The new corporate structures that operate in, indeed grew up in, the international economy are not in a position to benefit from state control. And the new is a considerable force for change, not necessarily any more

benign than those of the latter part of the nineteenth century. The sales of the 50 largest corporations in the middle of the 1970's, for example, were one half a thousand million dollars (500 billion), ranking them in size just behind the American and Soviet economies.<sup>30</sup> Most of these have to move around national governments, not with them. Most of them, such as the oil companies, cannot mobilize strong political influence in any one country. The industries that developed by using scientific knowledge rather than 'folk' technology – petro-chemical vs. local, electrical power vs. steam, electronic communication vs. printing, and now nuclear power vs. electrical power – all must aggregate technology on an international scale through complex organization that transcends the state with its insistence on ultimate subservience. Any new development anywhere rapidly impacts their production and distribution. These 'industries' are the significant components of the new international political economy, which in many respects is as rudimentary and predatory as nineteenth century national capitalism. The older industries are wedded to the state and seek protection from the new.

If these developments continue, is it possible to maintain the benefits of the state – predictable income and services at high levels? Will the state become the captive of the old order rather than be the force for new developments? For most of the twentieth century it was the political organization for new developments, whatever the answer to the arguments about whether it was controlled by the corporate interests. It acted to tame vast areas of the world for economic exploitation and educated and incorporated huge populations into a modern economy. What is likely is a more 'modest' state with substantial levels of absolute control but with declining relative control. With regard to what is going on in the world, the states will have less of a decisive role. National policies, for example, to curtail inflation will fail in the face of international factors. The danger to all organizations that are in a state of relative decline is that they will assert more control. And as the discrepancy between what is asserted to be controlled and what is actually controlled by the democratic states increases so will the 'distemper of democracy', reducing even more the legitimacy of the state.

The second question is how local governments will fit into both the new international economy and the economic regions evolving in response to the ecology of energy. The evidence on what is happening is neither systematic nor interpretable. But some research on selected cities as 'world cities' (Philadelphia and Columbus, Ohio in the United States as well as cities in other countries) is underway to document the international 'relations' of the cities, its organizations and people.<sup>31</sup> Direct and indirect international or 'transnational' contact are considerable and expanding. As importantly, people are becoming aware of them and, indeed, some school textbooks are presenting

these findings as 'your city and the world'. Relationships among cities have become formalized in a manner different from the past. They now involve people and institutions as well as the city itself.

The internationalization of cities both at the macro-level in the new international economy as well as of individuals and groups within them should fragment the city as an encompassing organization. The cities should become less governable because of a new economy less tied to place, the penetration of national governmental bureaucracies, and the internationalization of economic relationships counterpointed by the emergence of regional economies. And just as the industrial city acted as the cutting edge of a new industrial economy in the nineteenth century so it should be displaced in the future. This is not to say that the city as form will soon disappear. In the United States at least, a country that has undergone substantial changes with a diverse culture and without a unifying religion, the political structures have stood as the repositories of symbols of continuity rather than change – the oldest Constitution, fulfilling the promises of the Declaration of Independence, restoring freedoms, returning to constitutional government. Townships still remain as a shadow of an agricultural past.

The new regions are already taking shape. For most of its history the regional divisions of the United States divided north from south, created in part by a mixture of agricultural ecology and transportation technology. The important borders were with Canada and Mexico and, of course, the Mason-Dixon line of the Confederacy. Differences were intensified by political boundaries (the Mason-Dixon line from 1860-65). Today the split that is emerging is separating the west from the east and a different north and south. The regions of the northwest, northeast, southeast, and southwest are based on differences in water, sunlight, access to coal and oil, and type of vegetation, all of which are related to energy. The fight over federal subsidies for water are intensifying and there are new conflicts over taxing state oil revenues, supporting research on solar energy, and investing in the development of gasahol. The northwest already is defining a regional energy policy that incorporates political preferences concerning the environment with abundant water and Canadian oil and gas. This in part explains the initiatives of Alberta for political autonomy. Western coal and shale oil has made Denver a regional capital for the exploitation of resources and technology that new energy sources require. Up to now the state governments have been sufficiently flexible to respond to regional interests, often in opposition to national policy. One of the impediments to more regional integration in the United States has been their competitive position in a market. What is appearing as a basis of cooperation among them is a different competitor for control, the national government. The metropolitan government movement of the 1950's may see a new triumph

in regional political forms, larger than those of a metropolitan area. Political interests have already organized Congressional delegations along regional lines.

Urban decentralization, the creation of new political space by the multiplication of local units, at present seems weak and uncertain, much like the weak and mysterious governmental forms of American cities between 1800 and 1830. These new political units are a response to new political demands and can absorb what 'normal' political science calls 'irregular' political behavior, resulting in part from a change in values. What matters more than mass changes in values, however, are those among various strategically placed groups. Some studies of such groups indicate pronounced intergenerational differences.<sup>32</sup>

The key to the stability of political systems is their legitimacy and legitimacy turns on the concept of justice and its definition by elites. Without detailing the arguments and evidence changes in concepts of justice and their impact on the legitimacy of political systems will be briefly related to current trends in decentralization.

Four general changes in the concept of 'just', justifying the political systems of secular states during the past two centuries can be described. First there was justice in terms of inclusion, taking individuals into account by formally attaching them to the political system as individuals, including giving them unique names and registering them in the state. This involved the concept of citizenship with political rights and gradual incorporation into a mass electoral system that eventually became the dominant basis for the right to govern. Second, there was distributive justice, the sharing of citizens in the benefits of an industrialized economy. This involved the politics of welfare and legitimated the emergence of the welfare state in the first half of the twentieth century. Welfare was no longer seen as charitable correctives to certain economic failures but the right of citizens and the basis for the legitimacy of the state. Third, and most recently, after the establishment of the welfare state and during spreading uncertainties about its effectiveness and justice, there was participatory justice, the right of individuals to determine their own lives. This involved the extension of democratic principles to the work place as well as to local communities, two general institutional trends in the western democracies. This is the politics of the middle class with its moral concerns. Such politics are underway, and, of course, are fragmenting bureaucratic control, which requires consensus, or authority to impose policy and implement it consistently over time.

The dilemma of participatory justice is that in order for democratic participation to have any meaning the decisions must be effective, that is have some chance of being realized. As the evidence indicates, however, in order

for there to be participation there must be something to decide. But effective decisions require removing them from the political agenda during a period of time for their implementation. New participants, exercising their democratic rights, are likely to undo what was decided by another group at a previous time. The process becomes neither effective nor democratic. Also, by increasing the number of political units, small and intense groups have more targets for political victories. Successes by some will invite attempts by others.

Looking ahead, another kind of justice will emerge, substantive justice, perhaps an older form. The question will be whether the political system meets 'my definition' of a just society. Individually defined justice is the only basis for secular democracies. This raises the old fear of democracy leading to anarchy. One solution, perhaps a necessary one, to this problem of individually defined justice is to tolerate everyone defining their own just political system by multiplying local political units and allowing individuals to choose among them. These local units would do more than simply offer marginal differences in housing and life styles. They would be places where individuals could be satisfied that they were living in a just system where relationships among people are good and right.

An optimistic view of democratic political development in the coming decades would include: 1) that the advantages of identity with a large political community (nation) can be retained; 2) that the gains of the welfare state, however adjusted, can maintain security for individuals; 3) that whatever their new and evolving structures, political participation can provide a sense of responsibility and belongingness; and 4) that it is possible to design local political systems where individuals by freely choosing among them can find one that approximates their definition of justice rather than being forced to live within a political consensus (for example, on abortion) that violates their moral principles.

The problem with these 'stages' of democratic political development is that the transitions are so difficult and uncertain. But then attaining universal suffrage was not easy and often violently contested. The establishment of the welfare state and the incorporation of labor as a legitimate political actor were accompanied by deep conflict and violence. Recently, the eruption of political demands for participation have created political divisions, broken friendships, and destroyed customs of civility. Those scars are still carried and the issue not resolved. The next issue for democratic political development, the just polity, can be expected to have as many divisions and troubles. To ease those future conflicts it is possible now to begin the process of decentralization by creating more and different rather than fewer and more similar local governments.

Such steps have both costs and risks, not the least of which is greater de-

stabilization through further fragmentation with consequent political inaction. The historic problem of governing societies with conflicts emanating from differences in interests and values remains. The solutions are few. For Marx the long term solution was the elimination of conflict through the destruction of its class basis. For Lenin the solution to conflicts within the political system was to contain those between the legislative and executive functions in a single political body, the soviet, and to subordinate local interests to national ones, the principle of democratic centralism. For American political theorists, such as James Madison, the solution was the immobilization of any interests to avoid tyranny by fragmenting the political system, even at the cost of political inaction and of being inconsistent by creating political parties to overcome the fragmentation.

What has been argued here is that diversification of interests and a shift to moral concerns, especially among the large middle classes in the industrialized democracies, is too great for national governments to absorb. The alternative to responding to these interests and values is to suppress or ignore them, at the peril of political violence. By expanding the number and variety of local governments it might be possible to retain both the benefits of the welfare state and the advantages of an international economy of scale, and to provide for the satisfaction from living in a just political community, which, for better or worse, democratic countries are committed to let each individual define. In any event, democratic policies must respond to interests and values, not suppress them. The problem is to create appropriate institutions for doing so.

For over a hundred years local governments and communities have been seen as representing the old order with its restrictions and inequalities; in contrast the national government stood for freedom and equality. It is possible that in the near future local government, in new form, may be seen as the force for new developments and the national governments as the protector of the old, the suppressor of freedom, and the enemy of justice.

## Notes

1. Loss of control was publicly acknowledged in 1975 with this quasi-official body's publication. M. Crozier, et al., *The Crises of Democracy*. (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

2. A debate has taken shape concerning the world system as a 'state-centric' system. For an assertion that the state is still important see S. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978). The interesting point about this is that something that always was assumed to be decisive – the state – now has to be argued for.

3. Of course, the ingredients of foreign policy also include traditions, special interests, bureaucratic imperatives, among other things.

4. T. J. Lowi argues that the American political system was shaped by territorial

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expansion. See his *American Government: Incomplete Conquest*. (Hinsdale, ILL: Dryden Press, 1976).

5. These arguments are elaborated in H. Teune, 'Information, Control and Territorial Political Systems' in *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 14 (Spring, 1979).

6. The major political statement on this approach was M. Milkian and D. Blackmer, *The Emerging Nations: Their Growth and United States Foreign Policy*. (Boston: Little Brown, 1961). This book was based on an earlier work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the 1950's and the economic base of political development of W. Rostow, *Stages of Economic Growth* (Cambridge: University Press, 1960).

7. See S. M. Lipset, *Political Man*. (New York: Doubleday, 1960).

8. The fears of the Japanese about the closing of the world system took shape in the late 1970's with obsessive comparisons about world trade patterns in the 1930's and the 1970's.

9. Arguments along these lines are made by M. Olsen. See his forthcoming, *The Political Economy of Economic Growth*.

10. See, The World Bank, *World Development Report, 1980*. (The World Bank: Washington, D.C., 1980).

11. Broadly speaking, welfare programs were intended to equalize the costs of industrialization by various kinds of subsidies to those left out of the benefits of industrialization and urbanization. After World War II, the 'middle classe' became the beneficiaries of these programs. Evidence to the effect is in J. Pechman and B. Okner, *Who Bears the Tax Burden*. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974).

12. Although the evidence is argumentative, theoretically, centralization should be biased in favor of equality. For some comparative evidence, see J. Echols (ed.), 'The Comparative Analysis of Societal Inequalities', in *Comparative Political Studies* (Special Issue) 13, January, 1981.

13. This is the structure described by Deil Wright, *Federal Grants-in-Aid: Perspectives and Alternatives*. (American Enterprise, 1968).

14. For some evidence on irregular political participation in the United States, see R. Brody, 'The Puzzle of Political Participation in America' in A. King (ed.), *The New American Political System*. (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1978).

15. For a review of voting turnout in the U.S., see W. Burnham, 'The Appearance and Disappearance of the American Voter', paper prepared for the Conference of the Future of the American Political System. (Philadelphia, 1979). These findings will be published in forthcoming papers.

16. This is one general implication in a paper by R. Lane, 'Human Development and American Political Institution', Conference on the Future of the American Political System. Philadelphia, 1979. Professor Lane has made similar arguments in other papers.

17. This is elaborated with similar implications in H. Teune, 'Nationalization of Local Politics and the Governance of Cities in the U.S.', *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 1, 1980.

18. For example, R. Park and E. Burgess, *The City*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925).

19. See R. Higgs, *The Transformation of the American Economy: 1865-1914*

(New York: Wiley, 1971) and D. North, *The Economic Growth of the United States: 1790-1860*. (New York: Norton, 1966).

20. G. de Jong and R. Sell, 'Population Redistribution, Migration, and Residential Preferences', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 429, January 1977.

21. This is the 'Hunter-Dahl' debate. See R. Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1961).

22. See T. N. Clark, *Community Structure and Decision Making*. (San Francisco: Chandler, 1968) and J. Williams, 'Determinants of Government Administrative Capacity'. (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, 1970).

23. See International Studies of Values and Politics, *Values and the Active Community*. (New York: The Free Press, 1971).

24. See Williams, *op. cit.*

25. R. Liebert, *Disintegration and Political Action: The Changing Functions of City Government in America*. (New York: Academic Press, 1978).

26. E. Zimmerman, 'Interests and Control in Community Decision-Making' (Chicago: University of Chicago: Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, 1978).

27. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 'The Federal Role in the Federal System: The Dynamics of Growth'. (Washington, D.C., 1980).

28. This growth is beginning to be documented. In countries where their role is formalized by law, such as Italy, there are accurate counts. In countries where neighbourhood organizations have a more confirmed role, such as the United States and Japan, surveys are necessary and many of them disappear after a few months.

29. See B. Deste and G. Regonni, 'Urban Policy and Political Legitimization: The Case of Italian Neighbourhood Councils', *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 1, 1980.

30. There are various ways of calculating this. In 1970, the 40 largest companies had sales in excess of 220 thousand-million dollars. Japan, the world's third largest-economy, had a GNP of just under 200 thousand-million dollars. See W. Woodruff, *America's Impact on the World*. (New York: Wiley, 1975), p. 252.

31. There are numerous studies of international cities. Chadwick Alger pioneered these studies in Columbus, Ohio. The results are now being introduced into the educational materials.

32. As always, the interpretation of survey data is argumentative, but see for example, R. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

## Onderzoek

### Dutch party delegates

Background characteristics, attitudes towards the European Community and towards Dutch politics, of delegates from CDA, D'66, PvdA, and VVD

by Bert P. Middel and Wijbrandt H. van Schuur

### Introduction

In 1977, an international project was started to compare characteristics of party delegates of the major political parties of the countries within the European Community, under the chairmanship of Dr. Karlheinz Reif. The Dutch part of this project was carried out by a working group directed by Prof. Isaac Lipschits, and including Prof. Frans N. Stokman, Mr Ruud Koole, and the present authors.

As this was one of a series of projects to evaluate the first direct elections to the European Parliament, a number of questions regarding the European Community and the first direct elections to the European Parliament were also asked.

The people surveyed were those members of the major Dutch political parties who were present at their annual party congress and were allowed to vote there, and they were approached with a questionnaire.

The congresses were held on 11 February 1978, (PvdA, Dutch Labour Party), 10-11 March 1978 (VVD, Dutch right-wing Liberal Party), 22 April 1978 (D'66, Dutch left-wing Liberal Party), and 20 January 1979 (CDA, a Federation of two Dutch Protestant and one Dutch Roman Catholic parties).

Response rates for the different parties were:

|      |     | Actual nos |
|------|-----|------------|
| PvdA | 61% | 367        |
| VVD  | 61% | 167        |
| D'66 | 51% | 366        |
| CDA  | 32% | 338        |

This paper is divided as follows:

First, a description is given of the four parties analysed, followed by a description of the role of their congresses, and some background characteristics of their delegates.