
DOMINANT FACTION

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¹For Denmark, there was not sufficient information available in English to support data production for the Center Democratic Party or the Left Socialist Party, both of which were included in some other parts of the Party Change data set.

Factionalism

Introduction

Alexander Tan and Robert Harmel

As noted by Pfeffer and Salancik, "organizations are coalitions of varying interests. Participants can, and frequently do have incompatible preferences and goals" (1990, p 148). By inference, political parties -- as organizations -- contain various sets of organizational actors with varying interests and goals. Sartori (1976) asserts that "whatever the organizational -- formal and informal -- arrangement, a party is an aggregate of individuals forming constellations of rival groups" (1976, p 72). In fact, a political party -- according to Sartori -- could be conceived of as a loose confederation of sub-parties (1976, p 72). As noted in Panebianco (1988) and elsewhere, it is often the case that those in control of decision-making within a given party constitute a *coalition* of such sub-parties rather than one sub-party alone.

The sub-parties that compose the political party can come in at least two forms. Rose (1964) identifies *factions* and *tendencies* as sub-units within political parties. Rose defines a faction as a "self-consciously organized body, with a measure of cohesion and discipline" (1964, p 36). In an earlier work, Zariski defined a faction as "any intra-party combination, clique, or grouping whose members share a sense of common identity and common purpose and are organized to act collectively -- as a distinct bloc within -- to achieve their goals" (1960, p 33).

Key to Zariski's definition of a faction is that members share an identity, purpose, or issue and that they operate as a bloc. In this sense, a faction is an organization of political competition -- a conflict group (Nicholas, 1965). As organizations of political competition, factions by definition present competing demands on the host organization, thus resulting in a conflictual relationship between factions. Since compliance with some demands means noncompliance with others, an in-group and an out-group are created within the host organization. Since a faction is organized to achieve its organizational goals, the existence of dissatisfied groups creates within the party pressure for internal conflicts (Nyomarkay 1965; Pfeffer and Salancik 1990; Ignazi 1992). And conflicts arising due to competing demands can result in change within the organization.

Much of the same can be said for tendencies, which lack the "organization" of factions but which share the foundation in conflicting demands. For us, a tendency is a group of individuals who share certain

attitudes and -- consequently -- behaviors, and which is distinguished from other members of the host institution by those attitudes and behaviors. A tendency, thus defined, is not required to have either the faction's organization (e.g., leaders, meetings, membership requirements) or the discipline which requires organization. As members of a group, however, the individuals who form the tendency are aware of sharing their attitudes and perhaps their behaviors with others, at least some of whom they can identify.² So, in spite of the lack of organization and the greater fluidity of the tendency, as contrasted from the faction, a change of dominant tendency (or dominant set of similar tendencies) -- like a change of dominant faction (or coalition of factions) -- can result in organizational and even identity changes within the party.

Specifically with regard to organizational change, Panebianco (1988; see also Ignazi 1992) has noted how party change can be associated with changes in the internal power relationships within a political party. As a consequence of the modifications with the internal power relationships, organizational changes be effected to reflect the changes in power distribution. "[C]ertain rules of the game -- namely, rules of internal competition -- are changed (and sometimes ratified by statutory revisions), because the new leaders must support their newly acquired control of the party with organizational innovations" (Panebianco 1988, p 244).

With this background, it should be clear why the principle investigators in the Party Change Project felt it wise -- if not necessary -- to attempt to identify changes in dominant faction/coalition/tendency within each political party. In the remaining pages, we discuss the procedures followed toward accomplishing that objective, and then present the resulting data for the parties of Denmark, Germany, the U.K. and U.S. from 1950 through 1990.

References

Ignazi, Piero. 1992. "Party Change: The Case of the PCI Transformation into PDS." Paper presented at the Workshop on Democracies and the Organization of Political Parties, European Consortium for Political and Social Research, Limerick, Ireland.

Nicholas, Ralph W. 1965. "Factions: A Comparative Analysis." In Political Systems and the Distribution of Power, Michael Banton, ed. London: Tavistock Publications.

²It should be noted that this definition deviates from Rose's: "a stable set of attitudes rather than a stable group of politicians" (1964, p. 36). The focus of our definition is upon politicians rather than merely upon attitudes, and for us the difference between faction and tendency has more to do with organization than with the focus.

Nyomarkay, Joseph L. 1965. "Factionalism in the Nationalist Socialist German Workers' Party, 1925-1926: The Myth and Reality of the 'Northern Faction'." *Political Science Quarterly* 80:22-47.

Panebianco, Angelo. 1988. Political Parties: Organisation and Power. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pfeffer, Jeffrey, and Gerald Salancik. 1990. "The Design and Management of Externally Controlled Organizations." In Organization Theory: Selected Readings, D.S. Pugh, ed. London: Penguin.

Rose, Richard. 1964. Politics in England. Boston: Little, Brown.

Sartori, Giovanni. 1976. Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zariski, Raphael. 1960. "Party Factions and Comparative Politics: Some Preliminary Observations." *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 4:27-51.

DATA PRODUCTION PROCEDURES: Changes in Dominant Grouping

Identification of factions and tendencies depended, in the first instance, upon coverage in secondary literature. Though, for obvious reasons, it was easier to identify organized factions than the more fluid tendencies, it was still possible to identify some of the latter from the secondary literature (e.g., within the British Conservatives). [Initially, we attempted to complete a document called "Initial Coding Schema for Factionalism" for each party. That form was designed for factions, though, and not tendencies, and as a result it became apparent that the form was not well suited for the latter. Information collected in that format is included here in the section labelled "Supplementary Information."]

Some guidance in identifying changes in dominant faction/tendency came from prior knowledge of changes in leadership within a party. Though only some leadership changes are coincident with changes in dominant tendency, all (or nearly all) changes in dominant tendency should result in leadership changes. Hence, part of the process was to identify which leadership changes were associated with changes in faction/tendency.

Once the relevant tendencies/factions were identified for each party, and when changes in dominant tendency/faction had been pinpointed, it was then our objective to code the year of the change plus information on the extent, intensity and nature of the factionalism/division involved, on whether factions or tendencies were involved, and on coincidence of dominant faction/tendency change with leadership change. This proved possible for the parties of Germany, the U.K. and the U.S., but not for Denmark, where factions do not exist and the tendencies tend to be even more informal and fluid than in the other three countries. Even in Denmark, though, it was possible to associate important shifts of power among the tendencies with particular leadership changes. (Note that a simplified coding sheet was developed and used for the Danish parties.) [Though we had originally hoped to code even more detailed information for each faction/tendency change within each party for all four countries, that proved impossible given the nature of the extant secondary literature.]

After initial coding by Alexander Tan and Robert Harmel, based on information collected from Tan from secondary literature, the codes and supporting detail were checked by country experts in Germany and Denmark. Both Thomas Poguntke (for Germany) and Lars Bille (for Denmark) provided many suggestions for additions and revision to the initial documents. All of those recommendations were considered carefully, and most were integrated into the final data.

CODING SHEET: Changes in Dominant Grouping

CODING SHEET: Dominant Faction/Coalition Change

Country #: ___

Party #: __ __

Change # (for party): __

YEAR OF CHANGE: 19 ____ (missing: 99)

Month of change: ____ (missing: 99)

A> Extent of dominant faction/coalition change

___ complete change (100%)

___ substantial/major change (involving 1/2 or more of coalition)

___ minor change (involving less than 1/2 of coalition)

B> Nature of factionalism affected

___ primarily ideological/issue

___ primarily strategic/tactical

___ primarily leadership/personality

C> Factions or Tendencies involved?

___ factions

___ tendencies

D> Coincides (or predates by few months) change of party's primary leader?

___ yes

___ no

E> Intensity of factional/coalition rivalries (i.e. between -- not within -- dominant faction/coalition) [Code the situation that existed just prior to the change. Take both (a) the distance between the factions and (b) the competitiveness (i.e. relative sizes) into account.]

___ Strong

___ Moderate

___ Weak