#301 – United Kingdom: Conservative Party

CODING SHEET: Dominant Faction/Coalition Change

Country #: _3_

Party #: _0_ _1_   (British Conservatives)

Change # (for party): _1_

YEAR OF CHANGE: 19 _77_ (missing: 99)

> [The exact year of this change is certainly debatable, though it
> presumably took place sometime between 1975 -- when Thatcher was
> elected party leader -- and 1979 -- when the party entered
> government. Though Panebianco (p 251) seems to imply that the
> rightwing tendency of the party was victorious in forcing
> organizational changes prior to Thatcher's selection in '75,
> Crewe and Searing (1988, p 371-72) make clear that Thatcher was
> selected in spite of her ideological leanings, more so than
> because of them, thereby casting doubt on the impression that the
> rightwing was already in control in that time. (Crewe and
> Searing (p 371) paraphrase Wapshott and Brock as saying "in the
> early 1970s a march to the Right was favored neither by
> Conservative party workers, Conservative MPs, nor Conservative
> peers." They (p 371) also quote King as saying Thatcher "was
> elected leader of the Conservative party in February, 1975, not
> because she held [Thatcherite] views, but largely despite the
> fact that she held them.")
>
> Panebianco notes that the dominant coalition had lost its
> "traditional cohesion" by the time Thatcher's government was
> having difficulties after the 1979 election victory, brought on
> by "increasing party factionalism." He gives the clear
> impression that this resulted in part from "the victory of the
> rightist tendencies."
>
> Seyd clearly gives the impression that the increased factionalism
> was in place even earlier than 1979:
>
>> It is rather unusual to observe Conservatives involved in
>> intense intra-party disupte, but in 1978 press stories of
>> party bureaucrats' responsibilities being amended, ..., and
>> of policy documents being "leaked" were not mere instances
>> of sensational political journalism, but rather were a
>> reflection of serious internal party division usually more

common in the Labour party. (in Layton-Henry, ed., 1980, p 231)

It would seem, then, that the leader-dominated, relatively factionless situation of the earlier years was now replaced, due in part to changes in the way leaders were to be selected (beginning with Thatcher), by a situation of greater factionalism and development of a new dominant coalition, with the rightwing tendency (at least initially) in the dominant position. Though it is difficult to assign an exact date on which this change occurred, it seems reasonable to place it in the period of 1977-78.

In a book published in 1980, Seyd noted that

> ... the present dominance of economic liberalism in the party is a reflection of the mood of the electorate rather than the influence of the Selsdon Group or the Centre for Policy Studies. Examination of the electorate's attitudes reveals some popular reaction against certain basic tenets of social democracy, such as state intervention and public expenditure, to which the Conservative party has found it convenient to respond (and stimulate further) whilst in opposition. (underline added, p 242)

Hence, though **factions** may not have been directly responsible for the changed situation, the "liberal" factions may have benefited from a broader shift in the rightward direction within the party. In any case, whatever shift occurred, it apparently happened whilst in opposition, prior to the 1979 election.

Though we have no way of exactly pinpointing when the critical change in makeup of the dominant coalition occurred, we feel confident that we are not far off in placing the change in 1977. This allows two years for Thatcher to consolidate her forces behind her, and gives time for the resulting internal squabbling to begin by 1978-79.]

Month of change: _99_ (missing: 99)

A>   Extent of dominant faction/coalition change

    ___ complete change (100%)
    ___ substantial/major change (involving 1/2 or more of
        coalition)
    _x_ minor change (involving less than 1/2 of coalition)

[According to Norton (1992, p 35), less than 20% of the parliamentary group were "Thatcherites," per se, in 1987-89. (Crewe and Searing, p 371, say Thatcherites have made up between 10% and 25% of the parliamentary group.) However, there has been

a much larger group (more than half) who will support any leader, "as long as the leader provides competent and successful leadership." Our assumption is that the latter group followed Thatcher and her 20%, making the latter minority the dominant tendency within the coalition.]

B>   <u>Nature</u> of factionalism affected

     _x_ primarily ideological/issue
     ___ primarily strategic/tactical
     ___ primarily leadership/personality

     [See Crewe and Searing.]

C>   <u>Factions or Tendencies</u> involved?

     ___ factions
     _x_ tendencies

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

     ___ yes
     _x_ no

E>   <u>Intensity</u> 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
     _x_ Weak

     [The Conservative party, unlike Labour, is generally said to be characterized by tendencies (or very weak factions), rather than by strong factionalism. (See, e.g., Richard Rose, 1964; Norton, 1992; Seyd, 1972)]

[We assume that this is the only change in dominant coalition through 1990, especially since Major is generally thought to represent the same tendency as Thatcher.]

#302 - United Kingdom: Labour Party

CODING SHEET: Dominant Faction/Coalition Change

Country #: _3_

Party #: 0 2 (U.K. Labour)

Change # (for party): _1_

YEAR OF CHANGE: 19 73 (missing: 99)

> [This discussion draws heavily from Pimlott (1980: 176-179) and Coates (1975: Ch. 7).]
>
> [Clearly, the rightwing of the party was dominant at the beginning of our coding period. This situation continued for the next few decades, though with the selection of Wilson as Gaitskell's replacement as leader in 1963, there began to be some indicators of growing importance for the Labour Left. First, Wilson himself was identified with the left, though he successfully marketed himself as a moderate, and governed that way from 1964-70. Second, during Wilson's government, leftists were becoming more numerous within the cabinet and in the NEC in particular (see Pimlott). Third, in 1969, a rightwing proposal on limitation of strikes had to be withdrawn in the face of leftwing opposition (though Pimlott notes that this involved a watershed alliance of leftists and non-leftist trade unionists) (Pimlott, 177).
>
> We choose 1973 as the date of leftist/unionist ascendance as dominant coalition because it was at the 1973 party conference that a clearly leftist program was finally adopted. According to Coates (210): "after the [1970] election, conference reaffirmed its right to control M.P.s, reversed Labour Government policy on the Common Market, and began the shift leftwards that culminated in the 1973 conference's acceptance of Labour's Programme, arguably the most radical socialist document to be endorsed by a Labour conference since For Socialism and Peace in 1934." Though this leaves open the question of exactly when the change in dominant coalition occurred -- i.e., within the 1970 - 1973 period -- we opt for being conservative in this coding. In

other words, we are <u>certain</u> that the change took place by 1973; any earlier date would be questionable.]

[It should be noted that we are being more conservative in the dating of the change here than we were in endnote #39 to Harmel, Heo, Tan and Janda (1995). Though the story of the change process is essentially the same in both places, we no longer feel comfortable in suggesting that the change of control had taken place by the 1963-65 period.]

Month of change: _10_ (missing: 99)

A>   <u>Extent</u> of dominant faction/coalition change

      ___ complete change (100%)
      _x_ substantial/major change (involving 1/2 or more of
            coalition)
      ___ minor change (involving less than 1/2 of coalition)

      [This coding is based on our understanding that it was the
      forming of an alliance of the Labour left with the trade
      unionists which brought about the rise to dominant coalition
      status within the party. Presumably, the trade unionist
      component constituted a significant proportion of the
      overall coalition.]

B>   <u>Nature</u> of factionalism affected

      _x_ primarily ideological/issue
      ___ primarily strategic/tactical
      ___ primarily leadership/personality

C>   <u>Factions or Tendencies</u> involved?

      _x_ factions
      ___ tendencies

      [According to Pimlott, 1980, page 179, "the left-right
      battle has been increasingly formalized" in two factions
      with the creation of the Manifesto Group in 1974.]

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

      ___ yes

_x_ no

[Wilson remained party leader until 1976.]

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
      _x_ Moderate
      ___ Weak

      [As of 1963, when Wilson was elected in a context of Labour
      right dominance, the intensity was not very strong. After
      Wilson's selection and the selection of more left-wingers
      for other party offices, the rightwing became increasingly
      concerned (see Pimlott). On the other hand, the Labour left
      also grew increasingly unhappy with Wilson's willingness to
      lead as a moderate when the party was in power. Relevant
      also here, though, is the fact that creation of the
      Manifesto Group did not occur until 1974. It seems that
      "moderate" is the best (and certainly the safest) way to
      describe the rivalry just prior to 1973.]

[Coded by Harmel and Tan, 3-05-95.]
[We code this as the only change for Labour during the 1950-1990
period, since this situation clearly continued through Kinnock.]

#303 – United Kingdom: Liberal Party

CODING SHEET: Dominant Faction/Coalition Change

Country #: _3_

Party #: _0_ _3_ (U.K. Liberals)

Change # (for party): _1_

YEAR OF CHANGE: 19 _72_ (missing: 99)

> [Though either 1972 or 1973 could be candidates for the year of
> the change (i.e. inclusion of the Young Liberal faction as a
> dominant player in the dominant coalition), we chose 1972 since
> that was the year a Young Radical was elected president (though,
> admittedly, not Leader) of the party. Most of the dramatic
> change apparently took place during the "1972-3 revival," and the
> group was clearly very influential by the time of adoption of the
> radical manifesto at the 1973 conference.]

Month of change: _99_ (missing: 99)

> [Though we know the exact date of the election of the new
> president, we do not feel comfortable assigning such a precise
> date to process that clearly took longer than a month.]

A>   Extent of dominant faction/coalition change

> ___ complete change (100%)
> ___ substantial/major change (involving 1/2 or more of
>   coalition)
> _x_ minor change (involving less than 1/2 of coalition)

> [Though the younger, more radical faction was able to elect some
> of its own to positions of leadership in the party, it is also
> clear that they didn't make a dent in the composition of the
> parliamentary group. (see Supplementary Notes, based heavily on
> Cook (1976).)]

B>   Nature of factionalism affected

> _x_ primarily ideological/issue
> ___ primarily strategic/tactical
> ___ primarily leadership/personality

[Though there can be little doubt (at least, based on Cook) that the faction's initial dramatic impact was in the area of introducing new strategy in the form of "community politics," it is not so clear that there was much organized opposition to that change particular change within the party. The "factionalism" that was ultimately affected within the party was on the ideological dimension, with the young radicals being markedly more leftist in orientation than the older leadership (see, e.g., Cook, 1976, 148)]

C>   Factions or Tendencies involved?

_x_ factions
___ tendencies

[It may be the case, though, that the only organized faction involved was the new one, i.e. the Young Liberals (aka the "Radical Bulletin," Cook, 1976, p 151), who clearly constituted an organized faction rather than just a tendency.]

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

___ yes
_x_ no

[Thorpe was party leader both before and after, though a new "president" of the Radical ilk did obviously coincide.]

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.]

_x__ Strong
___ Moderate
___ Weak

[Cook (1976, p 148) refers to "virtual civil war" occurring within the party in 1970.]