



different expectations and needs for services and that higher order central plans have higher needs than do less important centres<sup>6</sup>. Not only may there be a lower demand for public goods in the suburbs, but politicians' willingness to provide those goods may be lower in the suburbs than is the case in the central city. Equally possible, of course, there may be differences on the supply side of the equation. But the central city cost of providing the same level of service as that provided in the suburb may also be higher ( because of higher wage rates, for example) in the centre than in the suburb. In the American case, however, this latter factor may be compensated for: central cities obtain more grant, which may reduce the cost of providing the service. Such a fall in price, other things being equal, may mean that the central city supplies more of the service than does its suburban counterpart.

#### **E: Other possibilities:**

In the United States at least two other possibilities arise. First, variations may occur where there are differences in functional assignment and second, they may occur where there are differing state mandates. City-suburban per capita expenditure differences are greater where public assistance and Medicaid spending passes through local budgets rather than are paid for completely by the state and registered through the state budget. This is true because recipients are likely to be disproportionately located in cities as opposed to suburbs. Welfare and Medicaid benefits are set by the state. If these pass through local budgets, city-suburban differences will be greater in high benefit states than in low benefit states, because the disproportionate % of recipients in central cities will be exacerbated by higher payments.

#### **Conclusions**

What this review of the effect on changes in grant structure and of grant per head to metropolitan areas in both the United States and Britain has revealed is a variety of effects. Some of these are more marked in the United States than in Britain, such as the tendency for central areas generally to spend more per capita than suburbs. Britain reveals the harsher consequences of the longer period of expenditure squeeze, as well as the much more politicised nature of the conflict between centre and locality. But the impact of grant change has not been uniform on all relatively deprived and relatively wealthy areas: to explain these differences we have to turn not only to differences in party control, but also to the impact of an intermediate tier of government and of varying needs for services, as well as different supply and demand conditions.



**Table 1: LONDON - CENTRAL GOVERNMENT GRANT PER HEAD, 1977-78, 1982-83 (£)**

Authority	Yr.77-78	Yr.82-83	% Change	Yr.82-83 at constant prices	% Change at constant prices
<b>Inner London</b>					
Camden	125	105.75	-15.4	55.9524	-55.238
Hackney	152	148.35	-2.4013	78.4921	-48.36
Hammersmith/Fulham	137	254.72	85.927	134.772	-1.6259
Islington	165	202.12	22.497	106.942	-35.187
Kensington/Chelsea	127	157.2	23.7795	83.1746	-34.508
Lambeth	133	245.2	84.3609	129.735	-2.4545
Lewisham	129	206.89	60.3798	109.466	-15.143
Southwark	159	251.81	58.3711	133.233	-16.206
Tower Hamlets	152	206.32	35.7368	109.164	-28.182
Wandsworth	123	202.1	64.3089	106.931	-13.064
Average Change	140.2	198.046	4.756	104.786	-24.997
<b>London Inner Suburbs</b>					
Brent	96	241.79	151.865	127.931	33.2617
Ealing	120	211.93	76.6083	112.132	-6.5564
Greenwich	106	148.35	39.9528	78.4921	-25.951
Haringay	156	286.7	83.7821	151.693	-2.7608
Hounslow	115	123.14	7.07826	65.1534	-43.345
Newham	149	321.32	115.651	170.011	14.011
Waltham Forest	119	270.17	127.034	142.947	20.1236
Westminster	70	8.02	-88.543	4.24339	-93.938
Average Change	116.375	201.428	64.1785	106.575	-13.133
<b>London Outer Suburbs</b>					
Barking	129	171.59	33.0155	90.7884	-29.621
Barnet	96	142.22	48.1458	75.2487	-21.616
Bexley	95	196.31	106.642	103.868	9.33445
Bromley	99	161.75	63.3838	85.582	-13.554
Croydon	100	162.42	62.42	85.9365	-14.063
Enfield	102	164.12	60.902	86.836	-14.867
Harrow	102	151.36	48.3922	80.0847	-21.486
Havering	102	183.01	79.4216	96.8307	-5.068
Hillingdon	86	117.09	36.1512	61.9524	-27.962
Kingston	104	148.12	42.4231	78.3704	-24.644
Merton	110	176.19	60.1727	93.2222	-15.253
Redbridge	93	181.82	95.5054	96.2011	3.442
Richmond	101	139.42	38.0396	73.7672	-23.963
Sutton	101	165.66	64.0198	87.6508	-13.217
Average Change	101.429	161.508	59.9025	85.4528	-15.395
Average All	119.335	186.993	55.279	98.9381	-17.842

Source: Derived from CIPFA Finance, General and Rating Statistics, 1977-78, 1982-83.



**Table 2: LONDON BOROUGH TAXES (RATES):1977-78,1982-83 (£)**

Authority	Yr.77-78	Yr.82-83	%Change	Yr.82-83 at constant prices	% Change at constant prices
<b>Inner London</b>					
Camden	90.78	192.4	111.941	101.799	12.1381
Hackney	65	196	201.538	103.704	59.5442
Hammersmith/Fulham	74.37	196	163.547	103.704	39.4429
Islington	75.84	176.1	132.199	93.1746	22.8568
Kensington/Chelsea	64.14	152.9	138.38	80.8995	26.1295
Lambeth	75.32	163.9	117.605	86.7196	15.1349
Lewisham	72.8	176.6	142.582	93.4392	28.3505
Southwark	78.59	197.5	151.304	104.497	32.9652
Tower Hamlets	82.33	184.63	124.256	97.6878	18.654
Wandsworth	73.81	132.5	79.515	70.1058	-5.0185
<b>Average</b>	<b>75.298</b>	<b>176.853</b>	<b>136.287</b>	<b>93.573</b>	<b>25.0197</b>
<b>London Inner suburbs</b>					
Brent	75.66	206	172.271	108.995	44.0586
Ealing	78.12	142	81.7716	75.1323	-3.8245
Greenwich	N.A.			N.A.	
Haringey	89.65	226.8	152.984	120	33.8539
Hounslow	77.7	164.63	111.879	87.1058	12.1053
Newham	84.5	200	136.686	105.82	25.2309
Waltham Forest	N.A.			N.A.	
Westminster	73.92	141.6	91.8179	74.9206	1.49097
<b>Average</b>	<b>79.9083</b>	<b>180.172</b>	<b>124.568</b>	<b>95.3289</b>	<b>14.614</b>
<b>London Outer Suburbs</b>					
Barking	82	148.67	81.3049	78.6614	-4.0715
Barnet	71.83	141	96.2968	74.6032	3.86075
Bexley	86.51	158.5	83.2158	83.8624	-3.0604
Bromley	77.38	133	71.879	70.3704	-9.0587
Croydon	N.A.				
Enfield	69.84	145.33	108.09	76.8942	10.1005
Harrow	78.02	169.33	108.09	76.8942	10.1005
Havering	81.68	150.5	84.2556	79.6296	-2.5102
Hillingdon	76.62	153.25	100.013	81.0847	5.82701
Kingston	77.5	130	67.7419	68.7831	-11.248
Merton	78	139	78.2051	73.545	-5.7116
Redbridge	72.61	134.5	85.2362	71.164	-1.9914
Richmond	76.3	126.6	65.924	66.9841	-12.21
Sutton	72.38	137.4	89.8314	72.6984	0.43992
<b>Average Change</b>	<b>76.9746</b>	<b>143.635</b>	<b>86.8651</b>	<b>75.9972</b>	<b>-1.1296</b>
<b>Average All</b>	<b>77.3936</b>	<b>166.886</b>	<b>115.907</b>	<b>88.2997</b>	<b>12.8347</b>

Source: Derived from CIPFA Finance, General and Rating Statistics, 1977-78, 1982-93.

**Table 3: LONDON BOROUGHES EXPENDITURE PER HEAD, 1977-78, 1982-83 (£)**

Authority	Yr.77-78	Yr.82-83	% Change	Yr.82-83 at constant prices	% Change at constant prices
<b>Inner London</b>					
Camden	236.8	550.55	132.496	291.226	23.0136
Hackney	173.2		N.A.		
Hammersmith/Fulham	161.6	403.11	149.449	213.286	31.9837
Islington	211.3	439.66	108.074	232.624	10.092
Kensington/Chelsea	129.6	279.02	115.293	147.63	13.9118
Lambeth	159.5	397.66	149.317	210.402	31.9136
Lewisham	152.4	341.9	124.344	180.899	18.7004
Southwark	193.4	446.66	130.951	236.328	22.1965
Tower Hamlets	214.4	362.22	68.9459	191.651	-10.611
Wandsworth	147	223.39	51.966	118.196	-19.595
Average	177.92	382.686	114.537	202.479	13.5118
<b>London</b>					
<b>Inner suburbs</b>					
Brent	270.2	598.64	121.544	316.741	17.2246
Ealing	235.4	415.88	76.6695	220.042	-6.5241
Greenwich	123		N.A.		
Haringey	271.2	667.2	146.018	353.016	30.1681
Hounslow	244.7	416.85	70.3515	220.556	-9.867
Newham	261.1	531.16	103.432	281.037	7.63579
Waltham Forest	223.4	470.03	72.8456	180.919	-8.6099
Westminster	161.7	309.01	91.1008	163.497	1.11154
Average	229.687	486.967	97.4244	247.973	4.44843
<b>London</b>					
<b>Outer suburbs</b>					
Barking	243.6	376.12	54.4007	199.005	-18.307
Barnet	189.2	340.73	80.0899	180.28	-4.7144
Bexley	208.4	354.81	70.2543	187.73	-9.9183
Bromley	189	314.73	66.5243	166.524	-11.892
Croydon	196.1	320.02	63.1922	169.323	-13.655
Enfield	197.2	352.02	78.5091	186.254	-5.5507
Harrow	199.3	351.66	76.4476	186.063	-6.6415
Havering	202.5	342.85	69.3086	181.402	-10.419
Hillingdon	231.9	373.43	61.0306	197.582	-14.799
Kingston	213.7	317.37	48.5119	167.921	-21.422
Merton	205.4	351.53	71.1441	185.995	-9.4476
Redbridge	178.2	339.54	90.5387	179.651	0.81414
Richmond	198		N.A.		
Sutton	196.5	316.45	61.0433	167.434	-14.792
Average	203.5	342.405	68.5381	181.166	-10.826
Average All	203.702	404.019	93.4999	210.539	2.37793

Source: Derived from CIPFA. Finance, General and Rating Statistics, 1977-78, 1982-83

**Table 4: METROPOLITAN GRANTS PER HEAD (£), 1977-78, 1982-83**

Authority	Deprivation score	1977-78	Year 1982-83	%change	1982-83 constant prices	%change constant prices
<b>Manchester.</b>						
Bolton	1.53	93	295.98	218.258	156.603	68.3905
Bury	0.11	61	166.59	173.098	88.1429	44.4965
Manchester	4.19	139	221.75	59.5324	117.328	-15.591
Oldham	1.69	86	226.39	163.244	119.783	39.2826
Rochdale	2.05	93	227.03	144.118	120.122	29.1631
Salford	1.96	112	215.88	92.75	114.222	1.98413
Stockport	N.A.	N.A.	138.16		73.1005	
Tameside	1.63	85	200.04	135.341	105.841	24.5191
Trafford	-0.15	85	111.47	31.1412	58.9788	-30.613
Wigan	N.A.	78	191.17	145.09	101.148	29.6771
Average		92.4444	180.329	129.175	195.527	21.2565
<b>Merseyside</b>						
Knowsley	2.67	113	217.8	92.7434	115.238	1.98062
Liverpool	3.51	132	225.6	70.9091	119.365	-9.5719
St. Helens	0.67	132	179.5	149.306	94.9735	31.9077
Sefton	0.27	89	154.4	73.4831	81.6931	-8.21
Wirral	0.33	85	164.5	93.5294	87.037	2.39651
Average		98.2	188.36	95.9941	99.6614	3.70059
<b>S. Yorkshire</b>						
Barnsley	-0.12	79	108.03	163.329	110.069	39.3276
Doncaster	0.25	85	201.94	137.576	106.847	25.7018
Rotherham	-0.18	81	207.05	155.617	109.55	35.2472
Sheffield	0.87	86	161.03	87.2442	85.2011	-0.929
Average		82.75	194.512	135.942	102.917	24.8369
<b>Tyneside</b>						
Gateshead	0.65	81	193.9	139.383	102.593	26.6575
Newcastle	1.17	93	154.04	65.6344	81.5026	-12.363
N. Tyneside	N.A.	83	187.36	125.735	99.1323	19.4365
S. Tyneside	1.63	113	241.73	113.92	127.899	13.1854
Sunderland	1.1	92	207.26	125.2831	109.661	19.1971
Average		92.4	196.858	113.991	104.158	13.2228
<b>W. Midlands</b>						
Birmingham	3.56	103	158.87	54.2427	84.0582	-18.39
Coventry	3.17	84	182.07	116.75	96.3333	14.6825
Dudley	-0.22	55	108.45	97.1818	57.381	4.329
Sandwell	3.15	92	140.98	53.2391	74.5926	-18.921
Solihull	N.A.	66	131.25	98.8636	69.4444	5.21886
Walsall	N.A.	66	136.89	62.9643	72.4286	-13.776
Wolverhampton	3.77	96	173.82	81.0625	91.9683	-4.1997
Average		82.8571	147.476	80.6149	78.,0295	-4.4366



(continued)

W. Yorkshire						
Bradford	2.22	93	229.41	79.129	121.381	30.5172
Calderdale	0.78	92	215.89	141.033	114.228	24.1603
Kirklees	1.69	84	2122.44	169.512	112.402	33.812
Leeds	0.2	78	166.04	191.064	87.8519	12.6306
Wakefield	N.,A.	74	173.47	191.73	91.7831	24.0312
Average		84.2	249.312	154.493	105.529	25.0303
Average All		88.8086	192.808	118.368	81.9439	13.9351

**Table 5: METROPOLITAN RATES**

Authority	Deprivation score	1977-78	1982-83	%change	1982-83 constant prices	%change constant prices
<b>Gtr. Manchester</b>						
Bolton	1.53	70.04	162	131.296	85.7143	22.379
Bury	0.11	85.26	189.5	12.261	100.265	17.5986
Manchester	4.19	104.9	228.2	117.541	120.741	15.1008
Oldham	1.69	89.71	164	82.8113	86.7725	-3.2745
Rochdale	2.05	86.52	215.5	149.075	114.021	31.7859
Salford	1.96	83.09	157.5	89.5535	83.3333	0.29286
Stockport	N.A.	90	157.6	75.1111	83.3862	-7.3486
Tameside	1.63	84.5	191	126.036	101.058	19.5955
Trafford	-0.15	75.7	154.5	104.095	81.746	7.98683
Wigan	N.A.	84.25	196	132.641	103.704	23.0904
Average		85.397	181.58	113.042	96.0741	12.7207
<b>Merseyside</b>						
Knowsley	2.67	92.98	188.9	193.162	99.9471	7.49311
Liverpool	3.51	82.05	197.97	141.28	104.746	27.6612
St. Helens	0.67	96.9	194.5	100.722	102.91	6.20232
Sefton	0.27	76.92	165	114.509	87.3016	13.4966
Wirral	0.33	N.A.			N.A.	
Average		87.2125	186.593	114.918	98.7262	13.7133
<b>Sth. Yorks</b>						
Barnsley	-0.12	88.33	212.8	140.915	112.593	27.4681
Doncaster	0.25	N.A.			N.A.	
Rotherham	-0.18	91.42	195.3	113.629	103.333	13.0314
Sheffield	0.87	90.93	251.5	176.586	133.069	46.342
Average		90.2267	219.867	143.71	116.332	28.9472
<b>Tyne and Wear</b>						
Gateshead	0.65	89.54	205	128.948	108.466	21.1365
Newcastle	1.17	98.41	248.7	152.718	131.587	33.7133
N.Tyneside	N.A.	91.49	214.8	134.78	113.651	24.2221
S.Tyneside	1.63	86.38	180.2	108.613	95.3439	10.3773
Sunderland	1.1	96.5	203	110.363	107.407	11.303
Average		92.464	210.34	127.084	111.291	20.1504
<b>West Midlands</b>						
Birmingham	3.56	77.55	165.8	113.798	87.7249	13.1204
Coventry	3.17	82.84	176	112.458	93.1217	12.4115
Dudley	-0.22	75.42	175.36	107.319	82.7302	9.6926
Sandwell	3.15	78.9	172.18	118.226	91.1005	15.4633
Solihull	N.A.	76.26	154	101.941	81.4815	6.84695
Walsall	1.6	77.9	198.4	154.685	104.974	34.7542
Wolverhampton	3.77	73.52	166.2	126.061	87.9365	19.609
Average		77.4843	169.849	119.212	89.867	15.9854

(continued)

West Yorkshire

Bradford	2.22	84.8	181.1	113.561	95.8201	12.9954
Calderdale	0.78	78.59	175.4	123.184	92.8042	18.0866
Kirklees	1.69	72.22	157.6	118.222	83.3862	15.4614
Leeds	0.2	65.16	161.4	147.698	85.3968	31.0571
Wakefield	N.A.	84.08	169	100.999	89.418	6.3487
Average		76.97	168.9	120.733	89.3651	16.7898
Average All		84.9591	189.521	123.117	93.9553	10.914

**Table 6: METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS: EXPENDITURE PER HEAD (£), 1977-78, 1982-83**

Authority	Deprivation score	1977-78	1982-83	%change	1982-83 constant prices	%change constant prices
<b>G.M.C.</b>						
Bolton	1.53	198.3	367.35	85.2496	194.365	-1.9843
Bury	0.11	174.5	359.39	105.954	190.153	8.97045
Manchester	4.19	305.6	571.13	86.8881	302.185	-1.1174
Oldham	1.69	202.1	387.4	91.6873	204.974	1.42184
Rochdale	2.05	225.5	436.55	93.592	230.979	2.42964
Salford	1.96	223.6	404.14	80.7424	213.831	-4.3691
Stockport	N.A.	204.2	317.93	55.6954	168.217	-17.621
Tameside	1.63	198.9	399.32	100.764	211.28	6.22445
Trafford	-0.15	194.6	348.52	79.0956	184.402	-5.2404
Wigan	N.A.	188.5	390.58	107.204	206.656	9.63188
Average		211.58	398.231	88.6873	190.039	-0.1655
<b>Merseyside</b>						
Knowsley	2.67	229.3	393.29	71.5177	208.09	-9.2499
Liverpool	3.51	234.1	467.71	99.7907	247.466	5.70936
St.Helens	0.67	194.4	399.6	105.556	211.429	8.75855
Sefton	0.27	176.5	317.33	79.7904	167.899	-4.8728
Wirral	0.33	195	344.59	76.7128	182.323	-6.5012
Average		98.2	188.36	95.9941	99.6614	3.70059
<b>South Yorkshire</b>						
Barnsley	0.12	204.8	362.97	77.2314	192.048	-6.2267
Doncaster	0.25	219.3	405.64	84.9704	214.624	-2.1321
Rotherham	-0.18	202	342.7	69.6535	181.323	-10.236
Sheffield	0.87	213.9	436.97	104.287	231.201	8.08839
Average		210	387.07	84.0356	204.799	-2.6267
<b>Tyne and Wear</b>						
Gateshead	0.65	200.6	354.5	76.7198	187.566	-6.4974
Newcastle	1.17	244.1	468.38	91.8804	247.82	1.52401
N. Tyneside	N.A.	206.6	415.15	100.944	219.656	1.52401
S. Tyneside	1.63	235.2	396.46	68.5629	209.767	-10.813
Sunderland	1.1	212.1	379.46	78.9062	200.772	-5.3406
Average		219.72	402.79	83.4026	213.116	-2.9616

(continued)

West Midlands						
Birmingham	3.56	214.7	356.03	65.8267	188.376	-12.261
Coventry	3.17	205.7	383.8	86.5824	203.069	-1.2792
Dudley	-0.22	147.2	282.6	91.9837	149.524	1.57867
Sandwell	3.15	195.8	345.95	76.6854	183.024	1.57867
Solihull	N.A.	170.7	315.52	84.8389	166.942	-2.2016
Walsall	1.6	192.2	392.1	104.006	207.46	7.93981
Wolverhampton	3.77	202.45	393.03	94.1368	207.952	2.7179
Average		189.821	352.719	86.2943	186.624	-1.4316
West Yorkshire						
Bradford	2.22	216.5	398.72	84.1663	210.963	-2.5575
Calderdale	0.78	203.1	376.84	85.5441	199.386	-1.8285
Kirklees	1.69	189.9	348.5	83.5176	184.392	-1.8285
Leeds	0.2	177.6	320	80.1802	169.312	-4.6666
Wakefield	N.A.	196.3	319.05	62.5318	168.81	-14.004
Average		196.68	352.622	79.188	186.572	-5.1915
Average All		205.61	379.656	84.7135	190.384	-2.268

**TABLE 7.****Federal grants to all state and local governments**

	Total Grant in Aid Current	Total Grant Constant 1976\$	Grant <u>Excluding</u> aid to individuals	Constant 1976 \$	Total grant as % of ALL SRL. exp.	Total Grant as % of GNP
1970	24,014	37,484	14,991		19.2	2.3
1976	59,093	59,093	38,070	38,070	24.2	3.5
1977	68,414	53,757	44,554	41,521	25.9	3.7
1978	77,889	67,936	51,908	44,942	26.8	3.7
1979	82,858	65,970	54,093	43,068	26.3	3.5
1980	91,472	66,044	57,298	41,370	26.3	3.6
1981	94,762	62,964	54,828	36,431	25.1	3.3
1982	88,144	57,711	47,518	29,478	22.0	2.9
1983	93,013	54,361	48,220	28,182	21.8	2.8

Source: Budget of the United States: Special Analysis, FY 1985, Tables H-7, H-8.

**TABLE 8****Grants to large cities (above 500,000 population)**

<u>Federal and State</u>	Current	%change	Constant 1978\$	%change
1977-78	12280		12280	
1982-83	15075	22.8	10172	-17.2
<u>Federal Alone</u>				
1977-78	4445		4445	
1982-83	4818	8.4	3251	-26.9
<u>State Alone</u>				
1877-78	7577		7577	
1982-83	9839	29.9	3251	-12.4

Source: City Government Finances in 1977-78, 1982-83.

Note: Federal Aid consists only of federal aid directly to cities.  
State aid consists of state aid to cities plus federal aid to states which states, in turn distribute to cities.

**TABLE 9****Change in real per capita Grant 1978-1983. 20 SMSAs**

	City	Suburb	Difference
Direct Federal Aid	-40	-8	-32
State Aid <sup>7</sup>	11	-2	13
Federal State Aid	-29	-10	-19

Source: Author's calculations based on data from U.S. Bureau of Census, Local Government Finances in Selected Metropolitan Areas and Large Counties, 1977-78 and 1982-83.

**TABLE 10****Average % real change for 20 SMSAs, 1978-83**

	City	Suburb
Federal and State aid	-7.0	-4.2
Per capita own source Revenues	8.3	8.9
Per capita Current Expenditures	-0.8	6.7

TABLE 11

% real change, 1978-1983

	% change in real Grant (Federal & state)		% change in real own source revenue		% change in real current expenditure	
	City	suburb	city	suburb	city	suburb
Atlanta	-39.2	8.7	25.1	9.9	3.0	12.0
Baltimore	-14.5	-16.3	2.2	3.8	-8.7	-0.9
Boston	46.2	1.2	-24.2	-19.7	-20.3	-11.2
Denver	-20.2	-6.3	15.5	17.6	1.1	11.6
Houston	30.6	-3.6	37.7	23.2	34.2	20.4
Indianapolis	-13.0	-4.4	0.6	20.9	-1.0	17.3
Kansas City	-32.9	3.3	-3.7	14.6	-8.2	18.2
Memphis	-7.2	-3.3	0.2	8.7	-0.8	-4.3
Nashville	-36.7	-14.6	6.1	19.0	-6.2	4.3
New Orleans	-3.7	6.2	40.1	41.6	11.0	27.7
New York City	-15.9	-24.4	2.4	-0.9	-12.1	-6.4
Omaha	-20.6	-14.8	28.6	14.8	2.3	5.7
Philadelphia	2.1	5.8	1.6	-4.4	-3.3	2.0
Portland	-11.8	-3.4	5.8	4.2	-27.5	2.9
Richmond	-14.7	-4.5	-0.5	-0.3	0.5	7.9
St. Louis	-15.1	-4.9	2.8	4.6	1.6	1.6
San Antonio	1.5	-10.1	28.1	11.9	13.7	6.3
San Francisco	14.2	4.2	-11.5	-13.0	1.0	-9.2
Toledo	0.6	-15.3	0.1	14.2	-4.5	2.9
Tulsa	9.9	11.9	6.3	11.9	7.0	12.2
Average	-7.0	-4.2	8.3	8.9	-0.8	6.7

<sup>1</sup>The British case presents some problems with the classification of metropolitan authorities into central city and suburban authorities on similar lines to the classification used for American metropolitan areas. In the British case, the classification is based on a combination of spatial criteria (inner-city authorities/outer-city authorities) and the Department of the Environment's very helpful classification of metropolitan authorities in terms of urban deprivation. See DOE: Information Note no.2, Urban Deprivation, Inner Cities Directorate, 1982.

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For a discussion of the new grant system and of the ratecapping legislation see Rhodes (1984); Rhodes and Dunleavy (1983) and Goldsmith and Newton (1983).

<sup>3</sup>Federal aid to state and local governments includes transfer payments to individuals (e.g. public assistance. Medicaid which goes through state and local budgets). If these transfer payments are excluded, federal aid reached its height at \$44.9 billion (in constant 1976 \$) in 1978 and fell to \$28.2 billion in Fiscal Year 1983, a decline of 37.2% over that time period, compared to 20.0% for all federal aid.



<sup>4</sup>Aid to suburban governments is not set forth directly in the available census of government finance publications; it must be calculated separately for each individual metropolitan area, a task to which we devote ourselves below.

<sup>5</sup>This conclusion is based on an examination of differences between per capita current expenditure in each of 36 central cities and their suburbs in 1981. Data are derived from the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Fiscal Disparities: Central Cities and their Suburbs, 1981*. In Western SMSAs city expenditures were 1.24 times greater than suburban, much less than in other regions of the country (1.45 times greater in the East, 1.41 in Midwest and South).

<sup>6</sup>Sharpe L.J. and Newton K: Does Politics Matter?. London, O.U.P., 1983.

<sup>7</sup>State Aid plus federal aid passed through state

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THE RIJNSMOND PUBLIC AUTHORITY'S SEARCH FOR IDENTITY  
OR THE UNTENABLE POSITION OF A FOURTH LEVEL OF  
GOVERNMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS:  
A DESCRIPTIVE NOTE

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This paper is a very preliminary report on developments surrounding the emergence and demise (?) of an experiment in regional government in the Rijnmond area of the The Netherlands. In the form presented it abuses royally the institution of the ECPR Workshop in the sense that its simple descriptive character means that we will surely profit more from the collected wisdom and insights of the experts gathered here than they from us. In order to avoid misunderstandings, as well as to dampen unrealistic expectations, it will be useful to indicate right at the start what this paper originally was intended to be and what, after all the dust has settled, these good intentions have become.

The original idea was to present two related papers dealing with the Rijnmond Public Authority. The first paper was to provide an historical overview of the development of regional government in the Rijnmond area, placing both the accompanying political debate over and the practical experiences with this level of government in the context of the theoretical discussion over the management of urban agglomeration and the allocation of functions to metropolitan institutions. The second paper was then to examine within this overall configuration of political and institutional forces how the public authority established has fared with regard to one specific functional activity, to wit, environmental management. The choice of this combination of papers was guided by the most recent events in connection

with the long search for an appropriate government structure for the region, i.e. the pending abolition of the Rijnmond Public Authority with, at the same time (so we thought), the continued existence of the Authority's Central Environmental Service. Given these emerging realities, the interesting analytical question seemed to be: why had the general authority, designed to serve as the structure through and around which integrated policy was to be developed to deal with regional problems, failed to establish itself as a viable institution, whereas one of its organs, concerned with one functional sector of the Authority's responsibilities, appeared destined to survive? An answer to this question was to be sought with reference to different perspectives on organizing urban government.

What remains of this original conception for our Workshop paper? With the absence of Theo Toonen, our expert in local and metropolitan government, the burden of sketching the development of the Rijnmond Public Authority has fallen upon my shoulders. Whatever expertise I may have in this area is limited to questions of implementing environmental quality programs at the local level including the Rijnmond area in The Netherlands. The result of reducing two papers into one and placing an inexperienced hand in charge of the job has turned out to be a rather thin, general overview and an even more emaciated analytical input. The fleshing out of the analysis and interpretation of the developments described has been shifted to the collective shoulders of the group assembled here. Nevertheless, at a minimum, the information presented on a Dutch

case of the phenomena under discussion in this Workshop (and a description of events that, I hope, will complement the paper already presented by Nico van Eck) may serve to extend the data base from which our discussions proceed. And perhaps the paper itself will draw attention to factors and relationships of significance for making sense of the context within and the dynamics under which actors concerned with the effective management of metropolitan areas search for viable institutional answers to the range of problems confronted.

After a brief description of the Rijnmond region itself, we present an overview of the events leading up to the establishment of the Rijnmond Public Authority and of its development as it sought to define for itself a viable niche in the preexisting system of intergovernmental relationships. What we will see is a conscious redefinition of the role and position of the RPA as it looked for a "hole in the market" for government in the region. Amidst all the shifting of positions on the part of the various actors involved, one central factor has remained constant: the fate of the RPA has to a larger extent been determined by its relationship with the city of Rotterdam. In the final analysis then, Rijnmond has been able to define its functional identity only in the room left to it by the central city of the region.

#### The Rijnmond region: industrialization and socioeconomic change.

The Rijnmond area extends over roughly the same area as the delta of the Rhine and Meuse rivers, where they end their

meandering journey and enter the North Sea. These two rivers connect Rijnmond with much of the interior of Europe, including the important industrial area of the Ruhr in the FRG, while the New Waterway channel provides an open connection with the North Sea. The region encompasses 16 municipalities with a combined population of more than one million people, approximately 8% of the total Dutch population. The surface area of the region is 680 square kilometers, giving a population density of 1.946 inhabitants per square kilometer. The Netherlands as a whole, with its total population of 14 million and a surface area of 39.395 square kilometers, has a population density of some 423 inhabitants per square kilometer. Although most of the important urban policy issues, e.g. housing, work, recreation, transcend the boundaries of any one community, the dominant economic and social position of Rotterdam is visible in all the regions activities. For example, with a present population of 570,000, the city provides work for about 250.000 persons, more jobs than its own work force can fill. Daily commuter traffic brings about 100.000 people into the city, while approximately 25.000 leave Rotterdam each day for work in the surrounding area. New employment opportunities in Rotterdam have transformed many of the Rijnmond communities into residential suburbs to absorb the increased population that accompanied the rapid post-war industrialization of the area.

Over the course of years an important harbor and industrial complex has developed along the waterways. The size of the urban area in physical terms has more or less kept pace with industrial growth. Work opportunities in the Rotterdam area

are related to activities in and around these ports and industry. While direct employment in the harbor constitutes but 5% of the available number of jobs, the percentage climbs to 65% when employment indirectly related to the harbor is taken into consideration. Needless to say, the port is important beyond the city borders and in increasing measure the whole region is affected by its development.

The expansion of the harbor and industrial area has soared since the end of the Second World War as, in the course of general post-war economic recovery and industrial growth, The Netherlands, and in particular the area along the New Waterway, grew to be a center of import and export. In the Rijnmond area itself the driving political force for economic growth was the policy of Rotterdam on the expansion of its harbors and the location of firms on industrial land it supplied. As each existing harbor "filled up", the city proceeded to spread out economically (since in many cases the areas developed were not within the city-limits of Rotterdam) in the direction of the North Sea with a series of new ports and associated industrial areas along the south bank of the New Waterway. The Botlek area, the Europoort and the completely manmade Maasvlaakte area were developed one after another to meet the city's need for expanded port facilities and new industrial terrain. One of the important driving forces behind this explosive development was the increased use of oil as fuel and as a feedstock for the chemical industry. Deep water ports, such as Rijnmond, were viewed favorable as sites for setting up basic industrial complexes, since they offered considerable cost savings in transportation.

In this connection, the decision of a number of German oil companies in late 1955 to use the Rijnmond area for the transshipment of oil, which was then to be piped to the industrial areas of West Germany, was a crucial stimulus to the development of the region. Subsequently, a whole network of (petro) chemical activities based on five larger refineries sprang up in Rijnmond as a result. The area is connected with several (petro) chemical complexes elsewhere via pipelines. In addition, many other port related activities occur in the region, such as the storage and transfer of oil, ores, coal, grain and general cargo. In 1982 about 250 million tons of cargo were shipped through or via the port of Rotterdam. Shipbuilding and repair and other construction activities are also important.

#### Development of regional government for the Rijnmond area.

Although the term as such does not figure prominently in this paper or in the initial political debates, with the urban agglomeration in the Rijnmond region we are dealing with a metropolitan area. Such an area encompasses a number of local governments in close geographic proximity and association, a circumstance that generates needs and issues that affect most or all associated governments. In particular, rapid urbanization of areas of settlement and industrial growth around old established centers of commerce and industry lead to social and economic problems, for the solution of which no suitable authority with adequate resources is available. The problems of surrounding rural authorities are, in the process, transformed



into and made dependent upon those of the major urban center.

The so-called "metropolitan problem" has a substantive and an institutional dimension. Institutionally, such areas are characterized by a multiplicity of jurisdictions within which operate a variety of public actors. Consequently, the specific governmental problem of such areas is rooted in the difficulties inherent to large urban agglomerations and in the specific problems created by the existence of fragmented administration. In attempting to deal with the inter-jurisdictional problems it faces, the need to match the "natural" and administrative scope of the problem or service becomes a fundamental precondition for the effective performance of governmental functions for the area. However, this situation in and of itself does not automatically lead to the formation of a metropolitan government. In some case "metropolitan needs and issues" can be handled adequately by other means such as joint powers agreements, special function agencies or amalgamation of separate local units.

In the 1950s the city government of Rotterdam came to realize that the rapid expansion of the harbor that it was actively pursuing was having far-reaching consequences for the inhabitants of the area as well as for the functioning of government administration. It was, the city concluded, time to take stock of the implications of its industrialization policy and to consider what measures might be necessary to deal with the problems this policy had brought in its train for the region. On the one hand, the development of the ports in the greater Rotterdam area had created new job opportunities, which,

in turn, had resulted in still greater concentrations of population in the area. In order to provide for this growing population, housing, schools and other socioeconomic and cultural services were needed in amounts that went beyond the power and resources of any one community alone. Moreover, the increasing use of land for the construction of new ports and the location of industry meant both limited possibilities for satisfying the need for recreational areas and, at the same time, threatened existing nature preserves. As a consequence of these developments, the area around the New Waterway was confronted with problems of increasing scarcity of land; growing demands on the technical and social infra-structure of the region, coupled with rising costs for the construction of new facilities; and increasingly serious environmental hygiene problems arising from the rapid industrialization of the area.

Although it came to be widely accepted that an effective response to the regional problems confronted required some form of administrative structure coinciding with the totality of the problem area, opinions differed sharply, at the local level, regarding the appropriate institutional arrangements to integrate the relevant problems dimensions.

This was not the first time that thought had been given to the the question of the appropriate governmental structures for dealing with the problems of the region. Already in the 1920s it had been critically noted that the development of governmental institutions had not stayed in step with the development of the harbor area. In order to deal with the fragmentation of efforts and the competition among the separate harbors of the different

communities many observers felt that it was necessary to take the port complex of the lower Rhine-Meuse delta area as the functional focus around which to set up a structure for effectively managing these activities. For its part, Rotterdam had made other plans for attacking the problems confronted when it reached the limits of its territorial and financial capabilities for developing and managing the port area. The way it sought out of its dilemma was a master plan for large scale annexations of surrounding communities that would have added roughly 100.000 in population and doubled its territory.

Higher authorities, in the person of the Minister of Interior and the provincial government of South-Holland were convinced that a "satisfactory solution to the harbor question could no longer be sought along the way of extending city boundaries, among other reasons, because of the size the port complex had reached." Other voices, too, concluded that the existing administrative arrangements for the port area which lay in the hands of the individual municipalities were no longer adequate in light of the regional function these facilities had to fulfill. In 1931 the first proposal for an administrative structure tailored to managed the development of the Rijnmond region was put forward in the form of a plan for a port authority. Further action on the issue of regional government for the area was put on the back burner during the war.

With the rapid and extensive development of the Rotterdam port facilities and industrial areas, the problem once again came to the fore. Once again Rotterdam initially sought a

solution to the shortage of space within the city boundaries through a policy of annexation. However, as this approach became increasingly less appropriate for dealing with the various administrative problems industrialization and port expansion brought, and as it met growing resistance from the surrounding communities, Rotterdam concluded that new ways of dealing with the region as a whole had to be sought, focused on the joint promotion of the interests of the whole area.

During 1956-58 Rotterdam took the lead in consulting with other interested communities on appropriate institutional arrangements to meet these needs. As would be expected, such deliberations proceeded not only - indeed probably only slightly - on the basis of the assumed objective merits of alternative structures. As a result of the smaller communities' healthy distrust of Rotterdam, the negotiations at the local level were difficult. Against a background of general agreement on the need for some form of regional government, the various parties approached the question of institutional design with an eye toward their own interests and the relative power position of perceived competitors.

In essence two alternative were promoted, corresponding to the two groups of protagonists. For its part, Rotterdam argued for a supra-local authority, while the other communities, under the leadership of Vlaardingen, preferred some form of joint powers or inter-local solution. The difference between these two proposals lies in the position of the regional authority vis-a-vis the affected communities. An inter-municipal authority would have only those powers

explicitly granted to it by the constituent municipalities. It would, therefore, be limited to a joint pursuit of community interests. A supra-local authority, on the other hand, would also have powers of its own, not derived from the participating communities, to act in a number of areas. It would, therefore, be able to pursue its own definition of the regional interest. Special legislation is needed to set up such authorities.

In light of the inability of local governments to come to agreement the Minister of Interior and the provincial government of South-Holland in 1958 formed a commission to study the appropriate form of regional government for the area. In 1960 this commission recommended a public authority be set up for the area around the New Waterway. Legislation to this end was submitted to parliament in 1962 and passed in 1964. The Memo of Explanation accompanying the proposed statute summarizes the government of the day's thinking on this matter: With the development of the Europoort and central facilities for the shipment of goods from and to large parts of the European industrial heartland, planning was required to insure that facilities for working and living, the preservation of natural beauty, opportunities for recreation, traffic and transportation systems were developed within the area taken as a functionally integrated whole. Space had to be found for these different functions in a great number of municipalities surrounding Rotterdam. The development of the area to an economic and social unity makes it necessary for the policy of the municipal authorities to be focused more on the interest of the area as a whole and, where necessary, the concerns of the individual

cities to be subordinated to those of Rijnmond. In other words, the policies of the affected communities must be integrated insofar as the interest of the area of Rijnmond as a whole demands.

The question then remained by what means the necessary degree of integration could be achieved. At the moment Rotterdam was making decisions on such matters without participation from the surrounding area whereas such regional decisions should involve the interests of all those entities affected. To provide the institutional forum for this kind of regional policy making and execution a supra-municipal body was necessary with the tasks of planning, coordinating, executing and advising on developments in the Rijnmond area. According to the government (which rejected the alternatives of informal consultations among the affected communities; a cooperative arrangement between them; or some form of consolidation of existing local units) it was not necessary to take powers away from the municipalities in order to deal adequately with issues of regional scope. The necessary amount of coordination of municipal activities could be achieved by using a number of general policy lines, formulated from a supra-local perspective, to provide a framework within which local governments would exercise their powers. If (as was the case at that time) the alternative of establishing a separate province for the area were discounted, the only alternative remaining was some form of special public authority.

## Organization and powers of the Rijnmond Authority

With the establishment of the Public Authority of Rijnmond a fourth level of government, embracing those communities with an interest in or otherwise affected by the development of the port area along the New Waterway, was created between the province and the municipalities. The authority itself consists of the Rijnmond Council, elected directly by the citizens of the participating municipalities for a term of four years. The Council, which deliberates over the general lines of policy for the Authority, also operates through a number of issue or functional committees; an Executive Committee, consisting of six members appointed by the Council from its membership for four years, which is in charge of managing the day-to-day affairs of the Authority; and a Chairman, who is appointed by the Crown, i.e. the government of the day, for six years. The Council, working through its Executive Committee, is supported on policy and administrative matters by a secretariat (under the direction of its chief official, the general secretary). The secretariat is organized along functional lines with departments for, among other things, regional planning (and housing), environmental health, education, economic affairs, recreation, and transportation and traffic. At present there is one technical service, the Central Environmental Service, which carries out the environmental management tasks of the Authority.

Although the elected Council is intended to provide the direct link between the Authority and the citizens in the region, the contacts between the Executive Committee and the various municipal governments in connection with policy planning

and current operations represent the more important channels of communication and consultation between the regional body and this significant political-administrative constituency. The form these take either formalized in regular meetings of the Authority with the mayors of these communities or workings groups with regard to particular projects or issues, or even direct personal contacts at a still less formal level will vary with the occasion and the issue under consideration.

The RPA was given an important original power in connection with the determination of the regional (land-use) plan for the area. In fact, as established in 1964, the Authority was predominantly a physical planning body with the task of preparing a regional plan to be approved by the provincial council. In this connection Rijnmond was empowered to require the municipalities to prepare or revise allocation plans (bestemmingsplannen) for detailed land-use in the areas covered by the regional plan. The Authority was also empowered to lay down guiding principles, after consulting with the municipal executives, dealing with issues in connection with docks and industrial sites construction, waterways and ferries, transportation, open-air recreation, and the control of water and air pollution. The Council can also give directions to the municipalities for implementing these guidelines; subject to appeal to the province, municipal executives must give effect to these directives. Although parliament had rejected a proposal that Rijnmond be empowered to promote its (regional) interests more directly (with functional tasks and powers inherent in its status as regional government), provision was made that



responsibility for certain matters could be transferred by the municipalities, voluntarily, to the Council. The Rijnmond Authority is also entitled to distribute house building and subsidy quotas allocated to it by the national government among the communities in the region. As far as its financial situation is concerned, its revenues come from contributions from the municipalities (according to their population), a direct contribution to expenses from the national government, and (since 1980) a property tax. Money is also available in connection with the various national programs being carried out in the region by or under the responsibility of Rijnmond.

At the time Rijnmond was set up, the thinking about such supra-local authorities was that they should play an active executory role in performing certain functions for the region. From this perspective, the general feeling among those pushing for strong and effective regional government was that Rijnmond began its life with too few tasks and every limited powers. The history of its subsequent development has been one of initially trying to gain new responsibilities and powers, by having tasks transferred from the municipalities, and then, when this approach proved generally unsuccessful, to search for a viable political and administrative identify by pursuing the strategy of provincial status.

According to one source, the development of Rijnmond has been one of falling down and standing up again, of trying to give meaning to regional government in the middle of a group of unwilling municipalities who were not breaking their necks to promote regional matters or to transfer tasks and powers to the

new public authority. The coming of the RPA did not, by any means, signal an end to the debate over the appropriate government structure for the region. The conflicts of interests that had motivated the research for new governing forms in the first place manifested themselves even more clearly and more strongly at the very moment that the new authority was formed. There was now, however, a new organization, the RPA itself, to push for the interest of the region as such. The course of developments would be shaped decisively by the changing relationship between the two main protagonists, the Rijnmond Authority and the city of Rotterdam.

From the start Rotterdam was unhappy with the compromise that came out of the legislative process in 1964. It had wanted a strong Rijnmond authority with broad authority and the ability to take binding decisions. It now argued that under the given institutional arrangements it would be impossible to achieve the significant integration of the policies of the municipalities involved. Shortly after the establishment of the RPA, Rotterdam decided that the new regional authority was to be viewed merely as a "goal corporation", that is, an authority set up with a very specific purpose (in this case in the area of land-use planning) and with a very limited jurisdiction. For its part, Rijnmond understandably stressed its "supra-local" character and argued that in order to play this role effectively there would have to be some kind of reallocation of powers between it and the municipalities involved. The reversal of position by Rotterdam position has been attributed to a combination of disappointment over the form the authority had

taken and the coming of a new mayor whose ideas regarding regional government differed from those of his predecessor. Consequently, when in 1968 the Executive Committee of the RPA took the initiative in reopening the debate on the appropriate structure for regional government with the announcement that it would seek an amendment to its enabling legislation extending its effective powers to govern the regional interests, the city government of Rotterdam argued that Rijnmond was trying to carve out a position that would relegate the local governments to a secondary position. It answered the RPA's proposal with a federative scheme for the relations between the municipalities and the regional body that was a throwback to the form of inter-local cooperation it had once rejected but which was now resurrected as a way to guarantee the city the leadership role in regional affairs it felt it deserved. A new basis for consensus between Rijnmond and Rotterdam was then found in 1971 when both expressed approval for the idea of a "stadsgewest" for the area in which both the RPA and the municipalities would "disappear" into a greater Rijnmond metropolitan government, combining both local and provincial tasks, with the possibility of a few tasks of central government thrown in for good measure.

In 1973 a draft proposal was made for amending the Rijnmond law. At that time supporters of a strong regional authority still believed that in order to incorporate effectively the regional consequences of private and public activities in the area, it was necessary for the RPA itself to carry out regionally important functions presently in the hands of the individual local governments. The suggested amendments

reflected, therefore, the conviction that, given the governmental situation in the area, tasks and powers of the Rijnmond Authority could no longer be limited to coordinating and guiding activities. The goal of the new legislation must be to provide the basis for greater opportunities for the transfer of local powers to Rijnmond. A revised draft of the initial proposal, prepared by officials from Rijnmond, the province of South-Holland and the Ministry of the Interior, did then represent a marked extension of the responsibilities and powers of the RPA. It was proposed that:

- o the number of issues be increased with regard to which the Authority was empowered to issue guidelines and directives to the municipalities;
- o the authority for approving the land-use allocation plans of the municipalities be placed in the hands of the RPA, thereby making it formally the land-use planning authority for the region;
- o the RPA be empowered to take over local powers with regard to public health, solid waste disposal, outdoor recreation and fire protection;
- o the Rijnmond Authority be authorized to levy a property tax;
- o the possibility be created to transfer provincial responsibilities with regard to a number of environmental protection laws to the regional body.

Viewed by the national parliament as the "last step prior to a definitive solution to the governmental problems in the Rijnmond region." these amendments to the 1964 statute went into effect in January of 1980. Although, in the initial amendments, great

deal of emphasis had been placed on the expansion of the Authority's "local powers" (in areas of regional significance), it was the acquisition of provincial tasks in the areas of land-use planning and (as of May 1982) that were to prove to be more decisive in the subsequent development of the RPA.

A fourth level of government, like Rijnmond, is dependent on the collaboration of the municipalities within its jurisdiction for the effective pursuit of an integrated regional policy. However, in this case, the participating municipalities were not voluntarily willing to subordinate their interests to the regional interest. Furthermore, the regional authority found its self in a situation of competition with the province too. But it was the problematic relation between the RPA and the central city of the region, Rotterdam, that was to determine the course of the development of regional government. The fundamental problem of the newly created RPA was that it was forced to pursue regional policies without possessing adequate autonomous powers to do the job. It was only after being granted certain "provincial powers" along with the strategic choice to seek its effective identity in the status of a separate province, that Rijnmond was able to work toward a regional policy in good relations with the participating communities.

The present-day Rijnmond Authority has a threefold set of tasks:

1. those local tasks which have been transferred to it along with the appropriate powers by the constituent communities in the area of environmental pollution, disaster management,

secondary education and recreation.

2. those listed in the original law for which the Authority can issue guidelines and directives for the purpose of coordinating the policy of the individual municipalities; and

3. provincial tasks in the areas of land-use planning and a number of environmental laws. There are also other "provincial" functions that are in effect exercised by the RPA, although the formal responsibilities for these tasks continues to be in the hands of the province of South-Holland. In such cases, the RPA "advises" the province, but the material decision is made at the regional level.)

This hybrid quality of its responsibilities has not been an unmixed blessing for Rijnmond. Being forced to act in a number of capacities has not only contributed to a lack of transparency in the government of the region (and duplication of effort with other governmental bodies), but also made it difficult to bring about a consistent and integrated policy for the region.

Against the background of the continuing debate regarding the position of the RPA in the system of local government in the region and the range of possible alternatives to the structure established in 1964, the actual policy pursued by Rijnmond has developed as follows:

- o there has been a very limited use of the power to issue guidelines and directives; of the three guidelines issued only one, that dealing with the allocation of housing space, is still in force;
- o likewise, there have only been a limited number of local powers transferred to the regional authority by the

municipalities; a number of communities have transferred their responsibilities in the policy areas noted above; the Authority itself has chosen not to act with regard to the areas for which it had been empowered by the 1979 amendments to take over the powers of the municipalities. (In one case, outdoor recreation, the tasks had already been transferred by the municipalities themselves. A brief glance at the activities of the Authority indicates that the real significance of regional government in the Rijnmond area has been with regard to its "provincial tasks." (This has occurred as a conscious strategy of the authority to seek its identity in this area, and has been carried out against the background of the general discussion of the reorganization of government in the Netherlands and the original idea to set up a number of smaller, but more active provinces of which Rijnmond would be one.)

Initially, the performance of the regional function in the Rijnmond area was conceived of in large measure as involving the "taking away" of tasks and powers from local governments and the expansion of the Rijnmond Authority's role in the provision of goods and services of a regional character. Thus an effective Rijnmond was seen in terms of loss of function and power by the constituent municipalities. In the earlier years, the emphasis placed by the RPA on the supra-local nature of its task brought it continually into collision with the city of Rotterdam in particular. This emphasis on its supra-local character brought Rijnmond, especially in the first years of its existence, in conflict with Rotterdam since this city manages many operations and services that have a regional

character. According the view of Rijnmond at that time, such municipal services with a clear regional character were to be transferred to the regional authority. An important item in this regard was the management of the port complex. Not surprisingly, it never came to such transfers, since in the eyes of Rotterdam to do so would have been tantamount to dismantling the central city.

Given the type of powers transferred to it by the constituent municipalities as well as the various "provincial activities" that RPA was already carrying out (even those the formal powers continued to rest with the province of South-Holland) Rijnmond chose in the 1970s to develop its own identity along the provincial dimension of its mandate. Although the emphasis that it then placed on the planning, stimulating and coordinating functions for the region brought it increasingly onto the "turf" of the province of South-Holland, it proved possible to work out with provincial officials an acceptable division of tasks between the two levels of government. The symbolic shift of Rijnmond away from its supra-local metropolitan role to that of a province-in-waiting came in the amendment to the enabling legislation in 1979. With the transfers of provincial authority this brought Rijnmond was given a formal "provincial core"

The strategic choice of Rijnmond to "go for" the provincial status had then favorable consequences for the further development of policy in the region (especially since the Rijnmond municipalities also supported this line of development.) By pursuing this strategy and as far as possible



avoiding direct challenges to or confrontations with the institutional interests of the local communities, the regional authority was able to defuse many of the jurisdictional conflicts that had plagued its relationships with its constituent municipalities. At the same time, in exercising its "provincial" function in the interest of the region as a whole, the RPA was bound on different occasions to come into conflict with the member communities. However these conflicts now had a different quality, being between "province" and municipality on substantive issues of regional management and no longer involving the disputes over tasks and powers characteristic of Rijnmonds's "betwixt and between" position as fourth level of government.

The issues over which policy conflicts frequently arise have to do primarily with housing construction, industrial location, transportation and traffic, and environmental protection all issues closely related to urban and industrial development. Furthermore, these conflicts between the "provincial" functions of the RPA and the interests of the individual communities quite frequently tend to involve Rijnmond against its principal protagonist, the city of Rotterdam. The simple fact of the matter is that the developments that Rijnmond wants to manage (in the interest of the region as a whole) quite often are either located on Rotterdam's territory or are generated by activities located there. In this sense, a good deal of its planning and coordinating activity is concerned with managing the externalities of developments occurring in the dominant central city.

It is easy in all this to exaggerate the tensions and conflicts between Rotterdam and the RPA. It is true that the position taken by Rotterdam on a given issue as well as its attitude toward the role of the regional body in general can be crucial for determining how a particular problem is handled. But, at the same time, it is widely accepted (even by the city itself) that Rotterdam has profited greatly from the existence of Rijnmond in that it has been able, as a result of a regional approach' to avoid many problems that have afflicted other large Dutch cities in the period of economic development and urban growth. This observation does little more than underscore the obvious fact that the quality or nature of this key relation in the dynamic of regional management in the Rijnmond area will vary with the particular issue in question. Given the nature of urban development and the package of powers that Rijnmond possesses, the confrontations between these two levels of government occur above all in the sectors of land-use planning and environmental protection. The following two examples illustrate this point.

In 1980 Rijnmond began a thoroughgoing review of its land-use planning that was to lead to a decision in 1985 on a revised regional plan. An essential task of this plan was to provide a policy framework for balancing environmental quality, spatial development and employment opportunity. The key instrument in realizing these policy objectives is zoning (or the spatial separation of polluting activities from those activities that are sensitive to environmental disturbances) as a means of dealing with the consequences of environmental

pollution. In practice this means separating harbor and industrial activities, on the one hand, and residential and recreational activities, on the other hand. In point of fact, this instrument can only be applied with regard to the development of new industrial, residential and recreation areas, within the constraints set by the already existing location for these activities. In this sense, however, zoning means the setting of certain limits to further development of the harbor and industrial areas which are, of course, the main sources of the environmental pollution zoning is meant to combat. It is not surprising that this land-use plan leads to basic tensions between Rotterdam, as the local manager of the harbors, and Rijnmond, as the provincial authority for land-use planning and environmental management. Rotterdam has a basic interest in securing, indeed even enlarging, the development potential of its primary economic base: the harbors and surrounding industrial terrain. For its part, Rijnmond is officially responsible for balancing within the regional frame of reference these economic interests and the regional interest in environmental quality. In this connection it views the instrument of zoning as indispensable for the pursuit of a consistent and equitable policy. Equally strongly, Rotterdam criticizes this approach as an undesirable restriction on the possibilities for economic development, but also upon its ability to supply much-needed housing in already existing residential areas.

The economic importance of the harbor complex for Rotterdam plays a central role in our second example. If the

harbors and the main channels are not constantly dredged, they will gradually silt up. Although this is a rather straightforward problem, things become complicated when it comes to disposing of the - in some cases - highly polluted mud removed. Since the continued economic viability of the harbor depends on it, Rotterdam has a keen interest in making sure that this dredge mud can be disposed of, in one way or another. Given the large amounts that must be handled annually, Rotterdam needs the assistance of other governments, and in particular Rijnmond in solving its problem. (With the expansion of the harbors, and the deepening of the access channel for large ships, the amount of sludge removed has grown from 3 million cubic meters in 1946 to around 23 million cubic meters at present.) In light of the perceived danger to the environment from storing this waster material on their land, surrounding communities have not been very cooperative in helping Rotterdam dispose of its dredge mud. Thus as the present locations fill up, it is feared that there will be an increasingly serious shortage of suitable dumping grounds for harbor sludge. In the search for a solution to this problem, Rijnmond and Rotterdam have been working together, each on the basis of its own particular governmental responsibilities. As the authority responsible of an environmentally sound solution, in as far as this takes place inside its territory it places conditions on where and how this mud can be disposed of. Since there is hardly any room left within the city limits of Rotterdam for disposing of the mud, this means that dump sites must be sought in other communities. In supporting Rotterdam in the search for a suitable location,

Rijnmond comes in conflict with other municipalities in the region. Given the fact that the willingness of these communities to cooperate in this enterprise is nil, Rijnmond finds itself in the position in the interest of the harbors and channels of Rotterdam of forcing these reluctant municipalities to tolerate the disposal of this polluted sludge on their territory.

Thus in contrast to Rijnmond's policy measures with regard to zoning, in the case of disposal of harbor sludge the policy of the RPA coincides in large measure with that of Rotterdam. This case illustrates that in those situations where problems of local origin require some kind of regional measures, the regional government will have to be a part of the pursuit of this interest. In such a case the local interest becomes a regional concern. It would appear that it will usually - always? - be the interests of the large central city that are involved whenever regional government must make local interests its own. On the other hand, it is this same regional authority that must on occasions set limits to local interests in order to secure the interests of the region as a whole. At these times it often acts at the same time as the protector of the interests of the smaller communities. It has been argued that this "dualistic position" of regional or provincial government manifests itself in particular in urban agglomerations. Here the conflicts of interest are sharper and the balancing of different concerns more complicated, not in the least because the interest of the large city is - particular in the case of economic development - synonymous with the interest of the region.

In any case, the examples of zoning and harbor mud

disposal illustrate that the "power" of the large city with regard to the region is variable, depending on the policy issue involved. These examples suggest the following general observations:

- o In the case of zoning: "A large city will, in the first instance, try to keep open as many options possible for its own policy by influencing the determination of policy of the regional authority. On the other hand, it is just the limiting of this leeway to realistic proportions that is the job of the regional government.
- o The case of the harbor mud suggests: "Where the problem at issue makes it necessary, the regional authority can function as an extension of local government. In such cases it is the job of the regional government to enlarge the policy possibilities of the municipality.

#### Concluding observations

Unfortunately, these remarks are being written under two fundamental constraints: the first is a shortage of time, and the second an embarrassingly limited data base from which to draw any kind of conclusions whatsoever. Be all that as it may, I would like to suggest some points that might serve both to structure the story of Rijnmond and to provide some fodder for the discussion.

The first comment has to do with the dynamics of both regional problems and the institutional arrangements set up to

deal with them. It is continually stressed in the literature on the management of this type of metropolitan area that the structures designed must be flexible and adaptable to the changing contours of the problems confronted. Therefore, in terms of jurisdictional boundaries and functions, metropolitan governments must be constantly redesigned and fit to new conditions and demands for integrated policy.

If we look at the development of the RPA, we can distinguish the following phases:

- 1920-55: the problem confronted is defined above all in terms of the management of the port and the port area. Rotterdam needs the territory of other communities in connection with harbor development and seeks a solution in terms of annexation; at the same time, however, thought is given to some form of regional administration.
- 1955-68: the problem of regional management has now been expanded to efforts to deal with the effects of the rapid development of the Rotterdam harbor and the surrounding industrial areas. The RPA is set up with the task of taking the lead in handling the joint interests of the community in the area of harbor and industry, housing, traffic and transportation, recreation and the environment.
- 1968-80: the administrative problem is now extended to the issue of the new regional authority itself and the whole question of the appropriate form of management is raised once more; ultimately, the solution is seen in the abolition of the fourth level of regional government and the establishment of a

separate province to perform the tasks of regional coordination and planning.

- 1980 - present: after unanimous support had been gotten to support the "provincial solution" to the problems of governing the Rijnmond region and legislation submitted to split the present province of South-Holland, the whole ball of yarn has come unraveled with the Minister of Interior's decision to abolish Rijnmond as planned but not to pursue the separate province solution; instead, the present government sees the solution in the good, old-fashion inter-municipal cooperation arrangements.

The whole question of adapting and reforming existing institutions to changing social and economic conditions, and thus to new problem structures, raises the issue of how this is to be done. As a final brief comment - since my plane is about to leave the ground - let me suggest that the Rijnmond experience provides an excellent case study illustrating a point that we, as political scientists, are well aware of: the process of institutional design, choice and operation is a highly political affair. Whatever the theoretical advantages or disadvantages of the one or other alternative scheme, the decisions will ultimately be made in the political process by which the different actors involved seek to advance their interests and improve their overall positions.



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TENDANCES RECENTES DE L'URBANISATION:

MOUVEMENTS SOCIAUX ET GESTION URBAINE

(recherche en cours, ne pas citer ou diffuser)

Rencontres communes de l'ECPR

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## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

De manière analogue à ce qui se passe partout en Europe occidentale, la Suisse, notamment dans ses régions urbaines, voit bourgeonner une multitude de nouveaux mouvements culturels, politiques et sociaux (NMS). Comment peut-on en rendre compte ? Quel est leur rôle dans la gestion politique du phénomène urbain ?

### 1. LE CONTEXTE GENERAL

#### 1.1. Quelques aspects de l'urbanisation en Suisse

Pendant le XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle et la première moitié du XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle la Suisse était décrite, contrairement à ce qui se passait dans le reste du monde occidental comme une société fortement industrielle et tertiaire mais inversement faiblement urbanisée. Ce décalage s'expliquait surtout, mais pas exclusivement, par le très vigoureux fédéralisme qui a généré une forte déconcentration et décentralisation socio-économique et urbaine. Les changements qui se sont produits depuis la fin de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale n'ont pas changé ce fait. Conformément aux indicateurs internationaux la Suisse reste toujours un pays tout au plus moyennement urbanisé.

Néanmoins, bien que situé à une échelle réduite, l'urbanisation de la Suisse se développe selon le modèle des sociétés d'Europe occidentale. En effet dès les débuts du XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle les villes et les cités helvétiques connurent avec leur croissance économique les mêmes vagues successives d'expansion urbaine, de suburbanisation, de périurbanisation alimentées essentiellement par l'exode rural et l'immigration étrangère. Entre les années 1970 et 1980, ces processus ralentissaient sans qu'on puisse pour autant parler, comme ailleurs, d'un renversement des tendances séculaires de l'urbanisation.

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Cependant de la fin du XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle à nos jours, nous assistons à une mutation du phénomène urbain. En effet, la typique agglomération urbaine, avec d'une part son centre regroupant la quasi totalité des emplois et des équipements techniques, sociaux, culturels et ses couronnes d'habitation ainsi que, d'autre part, les mouvements pendulaires correspondant, laisse place à un phénomène urbain nouveau, plus complexe: la région urbaine. Certes l'ancien centre reste très important, mais il perd son "hégémonie" : une part sensible des emplois et des équipements se déconcentrent. Dès lors le phénomène urbain doit être conçu comme un réseau polycentrique de zones et d'équipements, souplement articulés formant néanmoins une collectivité territoriale nouvelle: la région urbaine. Quelques récentes recherches nous permettent de distinguer en Suisse quatre types de phénomènes urbains.

1. Les métropoles : bien que comptant moins d'un million d'habitants (critère généralement admis pour définir une métropole) nous dénommons ainsi les cinq plus grandes régions urbaines : Zürich 838'000 habitants, Genève 367'000, Bâle 365'000, Berne 300'000, Lausanne 252'000. Toutes cinq sont fortement tertiaires (71%) et ont une vocation internationale importante.

2. Les régions urbaines tertiaires (61 % des emplois dans ce secteur) qui oscillent entre 30'000 et 200'000 habitants. Notons par exemple St-Gall, Lucerne, Lugano.

3. Les régions urbaines industrielles qui varient elles aussi entre 30'000 et 200'000 habitants mais dont le secteur secondaire voisine 50 %. Citons par exemple Winterthur, Neuchâtel, Bienne.

4. Les communes urbaines et les petites agglomérations entre 10'000 et 30'000 habitants.

En 1980, ces quatre types de collectivités urbaines ne regroupent que le 60 % de la population suisse (SCHULER, 1985, SCHULER et BASSAND, 1985).

### 1.2. Une société programmée

Depuis la fin des années soixante, la Suisse urbaine plus particulièrement voit se dégager une société nouvelle : la société programmée. Cette structure sociale joue un rôle important dans la formation des régions urbaines décrites ci-dessus.

Ainsi, de manière analogue à de nombreuses autres sociétés d'Europe occidentale, la Suisse est en train de vivre la métamorphose d'une société industrielle capitaliste à une société programmée. Le processus est engagé de telle manière que les deux structures sociales sont encore co-présentes. (BASSAND, 1981)

La structuration selon le mode capitaliste est toujours observable; l'opposition entre bourgeoisie et classe ouvrière avec leurs diverses fractions de classe est encore active, mais très institutionnalisée sous forme de nombreuses organisations sociales, professionnelles, économiques et politiques. D'autres antagonismes surgissent, qui annoncent une société nouvelle : la société programmée. Elle se caractérise par deux mouvements sociaux dont le profil n'est pas encore très clair, mais dont la réalité n'en est pas pour autant contestable.

Ces rapports sociaux nouveaux opposent d'une part, la technocratie et d'autre part divers mouvements d'habitants. La co-présence de ces rapports anciens et nouveaux suscite souvent des conflits parfois extrêmement vifs. Nous insistons sur le fait que les rapports sociaux de la société industrielle capitaliste n'ont pas encore disparu, mais par contre ils ne sont plus ni dominants, ni structurants.

La technocratie devient de plus en plus l'acteur central de la région urbaine. Elle dirige la modernisation et l'investissement par l'intermédiaire des grandes organisations privées et publiques de production, de distribution, de transport, de consommation, de planification, de santé, d'information, d'enseigne-

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ment et de recherche. Elle définit les objectifs et les moyens de ces organisations essentiellement en termes d'efficacité. La performance, la fonctionnalité, le productivisme, la compétitivité internationale, la rationalité technico-économique et aussi la rentabilité sont ses principes fondamentaux d'action. Ainsi, la technocratie émet des messages, des normes, des règlements, des codes, etc. qui mènent à une espèce de programmation systématique de la vie quotidienne. D'où le concept de société programmée. Une minorité - en toute bonne conscience - s'arroge donc le droit de penser et de décider pour la majorité. De ce fait, consciemment ou non, la technocratie tend à réduire les citoyens à de simples exécutants, à des consommateurs et à des usagers obéissants, à des spectateurs passifs. Pourtant la technocratie prétend défendre le bien commun et l'intérêt général. En effet, à travers ses plans et ses programmes, elle s'identifie à l'investissement collectif, à la "raison", à la "nature et à l'ordre des choses". Relevons encore un autre trait de la technocratie : elle tend à monopoliser la gestion de la connaissance et de l'information, or chacun sait qu'à notre époque, plus qu'auparavant, qui dit savoir dit pouvoir.

Enfin précisons que la technocratie pour le moment du moins n'existe que sous la forme d'un réseau constitué d'une élite de professionnels de toutes sortes : ingénieurs, économistes, sociologues, planificateurs, architectes, urbanistes, juristes, spécialistes en relations publiques et en publicité, etc.

Un pullulement de mouvements d'habitants qu'on réduit souvent à des usagers constitue l'opposition à la technocratie. Ces mouvements ne connaissent plus la misère économique, morale et politique de la classe ouvrière du XIXème siècle. Les exigences de la production ont accru son instruction; ses conditions de logement et de santé sont très améliorées; son revenu est aussi plus élevé qu'avant. Son malheur et sa souffrance se situent ailleurs : c'est la dépendance, la résignation, l'anomie, l'aliénation morale, culturelle et politique. Les opposants à la technocratie se manifestent concrètement par de nombreux mouvements

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qui semblent encore actuellement désordonnés, épars, éphémères, sans cohérence. Par ailleurs, ces mouvements sociaux sont loin de mobiliser sous leur bannière tous les individus qui se trouvent dans une situation identique et dont ils prétendent défendre les intérêts. Pourtant, dans leur diversité les actions de ces mouvements ne laissent pas indifférents la masse des consommateurs, des habitants et des usagers du phénomène urbain. Leurs actions se caractérisent essentiellement par trois traits :

- une quête d'identité;
- l'élaboration de projets de société fondés sur l'autonomie, la participation, la spontanéité, le désir d'être soi-même, la qualité de la vie;
- la désignation d'un adversaire; or, très caractéristiquement ce dernier n'est plus systématiquement la bourgeoisie, mais bien la technocratie.

Au départ, il peut s'agir de mouvements latents qui, se manifestent par un courant d'opinion, ou par un mécontentement plus ou moins larvé. Puis ils s'actualisent dans des luttes diverses, plus ou moins violentes : protestations dans les médias, création de médias spécifiques, débats acharnés, occupations de locaux, manifestations de rue plus ou moins pacifiques, refus des ordres et des disciplines.

Un groupe de sociologues zurichoïses a fait le recensement et l'analyse de 1945 à 1980, des événements contestataires qui ont animés la vie politique helvétique.<sup>1)</sup> Ils en ont dénombré plus de 6200. C'est ce qu'ils appellent "l'activisme en rase-motte". Or, il est intéressant de souligner que de 1945 à 1970, grosso modo, cet activisme correspondait tout à fait aux mouvements sociaux et politiques d'une société capitaliste et démocratique. A partir des années septante non seulement les manifestations contestataires doublent ou triplent en nombre, mais encore elles changent de nature. Certes les contestations de la société capitaliste subsistent, mais elles sont purement et simplement submergées par un activisme d'un autre type. Elles illustrent tout à fait clairement les nouveaux mouvements sociaux de la société programmée.

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Dans la masse des événements recensés nous distinguons au moins cinq types de mouvements: les mouvements des jeunes, des femmes, des écologistes, les luttes urbaines, les luttes anti-institutionnelles et les mouvements alternatifs. Nous y reviendrons plus précisément au paragraphe suivant.

On peut alors se poser la question de la mesure de l'importance et de l'impact de ces nouveaux mouvements sociaux (NMS). Indépendamment de la méthode utilisée par les sociologues zurichois, le système politique suisse offre une particularité intéressante puisque les votations<sup>2)</sup> permettent même à des groupes relativement marginaux d'intervenir sur la scène politique. Ceci est d'ailleurs plus vrai au niveau cantonal et surtout communal où il est relativement facile à un groupe de réunir les ressources nécessaires (signatures, campagne avant les votations, etc.) qu'au niveau fédéral qui exige une certaine coordination pour couvrir l'ensemble du pays.

Sans aborder les questions de contenu, de fréquence ou de type institutionnel,<sup>3)</sup> une remarque est importante pour apprécier correctement ces mécanismes. L'impact d'une initiative, par exemple, peut se mesurer de plusieurs manières.

1. On peut, par exemple, raisonner en termes de majorité: elle réussit car elle obtient la majorité des suffrages. Au niveau fédéral en tout cas, ce cas de figure est relativement rare.

2. On peut aussi raisonner en termes d'entrée d'un nouveau thème dans le débat politique. Par exemple, toute une discussion sur la décriminalisation de l'avortement a été initiée par une initiative. Même si elle n'a pas été acceptée en votations populaires (il y en eut plusieurs), la question reste ouverte dans le monde politique. Autre exemple, l'initiative populaire pour les cinq semaines de congés annuels a amené, par anticipation, une large réforme légale du droit aux vacances.



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3. On peut aussi faire l'hypothèse, mais là aussi d'autres recherches seraient nécessaires pour en vérifier la pertinence, qu'il serait jugé inacceptable en Suisse qu'un mouvement fasse des actions d'opposition sans avoir utilisé les moyens institutionnels à disposition, en particulier les instruments de démocratie semi-directe.

L'utilisation des instruments de démocratie semi-directe recouvre donc un spectre large, aux interprétations multiples. Avant de voir l'utilisation qu'en ont faites les NMS dans un milieu urbain, il importe de resituer aussi bien les NMS que le contexte dans lequel ils opèrent.

## 2. LA REGION URBAINE GENEVOISE

### 2.1 Un rapide profil socio-économique

Pour poursuivre notre réflexion nous allons nous concentrer une des cinq plus grandes régions urbaines de Suisse. Les transformations de cette région urbaine sont particulièrement exemplaires. Dans les années 1850 l'industrialisation de la ville de Genève s'intensifie. Ces changements socio-économiques entraînent une restructuration morphologique profonde. Le système des fortifications est démolit; sur le terrain ainsi libéré est construit une large couronne d'immeubles locatifs. Au-delà, mais toujours sur le territoire actuel de la Commune de Genève sont aménagées des zones industrielles et d'habitation. Dès la fin de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale l'habitation de Genève déborde largement sur les communes voisines pour finalement s'étendre sur tout le canton et dès les années 1960 - 1970 pénétrer la Savoie, le Pays de Gex et le canton de Vaud. Pendant la même période les emplois et les équipements commencent eux aussi à se déconcentrer : ainsi la région urbaine de Genève couvre tout le territoire du canton et va bien au-delà. D'ailleurs la croissance démographique est forte : 1960 265'000 habitants, 1970 342'000, 1980 363'000. Dans les années quatre-vingt comme dans les cinq autres grandes

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régions urbaines suisses la croissance se poursuit bien que ralentie. En dépit du fait que la croissance socio-économique est freinée, l'expansion des régions urbaines - la périurbanisation - se fait hors de leurs frontières politiques, et par conséquent elle n'est plus mesurable. De nombreux indices démontrent l'importance de ces nouvelles formes d'urbanisation. L'aménagement de la région urbaine genevoise qui se doit de rester en prise avec le reste de la Suisse et avec le monde entier implique des politiques et des actions considérables. Du coeur du centre historique aux zones les plus périurbaines, il faut systématiquement moderniser et agrandir l'équipement routier, mettre en place des autoroutes, construire un système de parkings souterrains, accroître le statut international de l'aéroport, construire des habitations en grand nombre, moderniser et agrandir toutes les infrastructures et équipements techniques commerciaux, sociaux, culturels. Se développe une technocratie de l'aménagement du territoire et de l'urbanisme extrêmement efficace et performante qui souvent entre en conflits avec les propriétaires fonciers et les professions et groupes sociaux qui leurs sont normalement associés. Les intérêts de ces derniers ne convergent pas avec ceux des premiers. C'est dans ce grand chambardement de la région urbaine genevoise que surgissent dès la fin des années soixante un pullulement de mouvements d'habitants de tout genre que nous dénommons avec A. Touraine les nouveaux mouvements sociaux (NMS). Avant de discuter et d'analyser l'effervescence de ces nouveaux mouvements sociaux mentionnons que l'économie genevoise pendant toute cette période se désindustrialise sous le couvert d'une expansion considérable d'activités tertiaires à vocation diversément internationale. En quelque sorte une économie à deux temps se met en place : un secteur secondaire en déclin, un secteur tertiaire en expansion. Jusqu'à quand ? Les autorités cantonales ont perçu la menace de cette dualité et lancent des politiques de réindustrialisation de la région. L'énumération des arguments avancés par les autorités cantonales pour assumer cette politique de réindustrialisation de la région genevoise vaut une analyse ; mentionnons en quelques uns : "une situation unique au coeur de l'Europe", "une fabuleuse concentration d'intelligence", "une

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tradition dans le savoir-faire technologique", "un tertiaire dynamique et efficace au service de l'industrie", etc. Enfin, dernière considération sociale, un tel type de développement a amené plus de 35 % d'étrangers dans la population de ce canton.

### 2.2. Le système des nouveaux mouvements sociaux genevois

Nous distinguons cinq types de mouvements qui du début des années septante à nos jours réagissent aux transformations que nous venons d'évoquer. Tous ne sont pas directement "branchés" sur les questions d'urbanisme et d'aménagement. Mais tous réagissent aux diverses facettes de la société programmée naissante dont les aménagements du cadre de vie sont un des aspects les plus visibles. (SCILACCI, 1984)

#### Mouvement de jeunes

Dans le contexte de l'émergence de la société programmée l'avenir des jeunes est flou. Ils considèrent que leur formation est inadéquate et trop autoritaire; le mode de vie qu'on leur propose ne les convainc pas. Il est vrai qu'à chaque époque, la jeunesse est en quête d'identité mais actuellement, sa recherche passe par une revendication d'autonomie dans tous les domaines: formation, vie affective, vie sociale, politique et culturelle. Elle dénonce les diverses formes de contrainte et de répression qu'elle subit; elle revendique des espaces concrets d'autonomie. C'est dans l'affrontement qu'elle découvre l'adversaire technocratique. Comme ses revendications mettent en question la société toute entière, elle fait face par conséquent, à des refus massifs et durs. Ce qui est souvent pour elle facteur de découragement, de repli, de désespoir. Relevons parmi le pullulement des actions de jeunes deux mouvements qui ont marqué les Genevois. D'abord l'affaire du Prieuré. C'était une maison de maître plus ou moins abandonnée dans le quartier des Pâquis. Dès les débuts des années 1970 des jeunes appuyés par des habitants du quartier s'approprient cet immeuble et décident d'en faire un centre autogéré de culture et de loisir. Les débuts sont prometteurs puis l'affaire

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

dégénère : manque de confiance des autorités, violence de certains groupuscules. Finalement l'immeuble est démoli par les autorités à fin 1972. Néanmoins les groupes de jeunes se multiplient, ils se manifestent par une floraison considérable d'activités culturelles (musique, artisanat, théâtre, édition, etc). Diverses tendances se regroupent et organisent un festival de culture juvénile ou de contre-culture. Les autorités municipales tolèrent l'expérience puis la financent. Le succès est surprenant : depuis 1977 le Festival du Bois de la Bâtie regroupe, sur une semaine de l'année, plus de 20000 personnes autour d'activités contre-culturelles et avant-gardistes menées autant par des Genevois que par des groupes nationaux et internationaux.

## Mouvements de femmes

Le féminisme date d'un siècle et ses conquêtes sont considérables, mais elles s'accompagnent de problèmes nouveaux. En outre, la dépendance économique, sociale et politique de la femme est très lente à être résorbée. Les luttes des femmes sont multiples : elles ont pour thème central l'autonomie collective mais aussi individuelle : elles luttent pour l'avortement (notamment par rapport aux initiatives fédérales pour légaliser l'avortement), contre les structures familiales qui les maintiennent dans des rôles dépendants, contre les préjugés masculins. Elles s'élèvent contre les sévices impunis et tolérés par les hommes : notamment le viol, les femmes battues, et contre l'érotisation de la vie quotidienne. C'est généralement dans ces luttes qu'elles découvrent l'adversaire le plus récalcitrant, non tant les hommes qu'elles côtoient quotidiennement, mais ceux qui dans des tours d'ivoire, élaborent des normes, des règlements, des lois pour elles et sans elles, à nouveau les technocrates. Outre une multiplicité actions ponctuelles et diverses, ce mouvement à la suite de manifestations répétées réussit à convaincre les autorités municipales de Genève d'ouvrir un Centre femmes en 1975; cette expérience sera suivie de la fondation d'autres centres, dispensaires, communautés du même type.

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

### Mouvements anti-étatiques et anti-bureaucratiques

Ils se manifestent surtout contre les bureaucraties d'Etat mais aussi contre toutes les formes de corporatisme privé; ils les jugent inefficaces, coûteuses et contreproductives. L'hôpital produit la maladie, l'école abêtit, les Etats-nations provoquent la dissidence et la guerre. Les entreprises de transports contribuent à ralentir les échanges, les prisons rendent leurs "pensionnaires" toujours plus criminels, les Eglises produisent l'athéisme, la famille engendre le divorce. En plus de cela, certaines de ces grandes organisations sont répressives, mettent en danger les libertés fondamentales et remettent en cause la dignité humaine. Dans la perspective de ces mouvements sont créés notamment:

- des écoles privées inspirées de la méthode Freinet; de même le Département de l'instruction publique du Canton de Genève lance une expérience d'enseignement auto-géré dans les niveaux primaires et secondaires: Unités coopérative d'enseignement.
- des centres sociaux alternatifs;
- des groupes pour la défense des droits des prisonniers, des usagers des hôpitaux, etc.

### Mouvements écologistes et les luttes urbaines (mouvements de quartier et luttes de locataires)

Ce sont les mouvements les plus connus les plus nombreux et les plus remuants. Leurs luttes se dirigent contre les centrales nucléaires, contre les autoroutes, contre les grands équipements de toutes sortes, contre le bétonnage généralisé, contre les rénovations abusives, contre les pollutions multiples de l'air, du sol, contre le bruit, contre la laideur. Ils défendent le milieu naturel et le patrimoine culturel. Ce faisant, très rapidement, ils rencontrent la technocratie, c'est-à-dire ces acteurs-promoteurs de l'efficacité, du rendement, de la rationalité, bref, de la modernité. Les mouvements écologistes décou-

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

vrent alors que l'enjeu central de leurs luttes n'est pas tant la protection d'un biotope, d'un quartier ou d'un patrimoine, mais bien la promotion d'un nouveau type de société. Par conséquent, ils en viennent à récuser les modes actuels de fonctionnement et de changement. Ils se battent autant pour la défense et la promotion d'un environnement construit plus humain que pour des modes de gestion plus démocratiques. Ils préconisent entre autres, une gestion du quotidien au niveau du quartier et du voisinage par des procédures renouvelées de démocratie locale. Il n'est pas question d'énumérer ici le nombre très considérable d'actions qui, des années septante à nos jours, se sont développés dans la région genevoise. Donnons seulement quelques indications. Le quartier des Grottes (derrière la gare) après de longues tergiversations devait subir une rénovation complète. L'action populaire aux Grottes par son action insistante mais aussi grâce à une conjoncture socio-économique favorable réussit au début des années 1980 à transformer cette politique brutale en une réhabilitation légère et plus respectueuse du charme discret du quartier et de la communauté de ses habitants. Pendant cette longue lutte près d'une vingtaine d'associations d'habitants de quartier se créèrent luttant contre la démolition d'immeubles locatifs ou la transformation de logements en nouveaux, la disparition d'arbres et d'espaces verts, la construction de parkings souterrains, l'élargissement des rues, la protection des locataires contre des hausses de loyer. Ils revendiquent des places de jeux pour enfants et des lieux de rencontre pour tous clans d'âge, exigent un urbanisme plus démocratique. Après diverses tentatives infructueuses de regroupement ces associations créent à la fin des années 1970 la Dédération des associations de quartier et d'habitants qui devrait éviter le ponctualisme et l'isolationnisme de chaque association. (CORDEY, 1975, SCILLACI, 1984)

L'Institut de la vie coordonne l'action de très nombreux groupes écologistes notamment contre le bruit de l'aéroport, contre diverses formes de pollution, pour des transports publics efficaces contre l'hégémonie de la voiture, contre les centrales nucléaires, etc. Il a été l'instigateur ou le partenaire de

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

nombreuses initiatives, référendums, pétitions et manifestations de tous genres.

Relevons encore la création du Parti écologiste genevois dont le succès électoral en 1983 fut réel.

Les autorités genevoises n'ont pas été sourdes à cet activisme et à ces luttes urbaines. D'ailleurs les institutions de l'initiative constitutionnelle et du référendum ont obligé les autorités à composer et à tenir compte des points de vues de ces nouveaux mouvements sociaux. Parfois elles entrent dans le jeu d'une réelle participation : ce fut notamment le cas de la ville de Genève qui proposa aux associations des habitants d'un quartier une expérience d'urbanisme démocratique. L'expérience fut mise en place et homologa des résultats intéressants puis quelques années après pour des raisons politiques la renaissance du (néo-libéralisme) elle vient d'être arrêtée. Parfois aussi les autorités assument un autre rôle type: "maintenir l'ordre": évacuation manu militari des squatter et des occupants de locaux, interdictions de manifestations de rue. Les nouveaux mouvements sociaux en font largement les frais, mais en même temps cette "répression" aiguise leur agressivité.

### Mouvements alternatifs

Ils s'efforcent d'inventer localement un autre mode de vie, tant au point de vue familial, alimentaire, éducatif que culturel ou professionnel. Ils pratiquent ici et maintenant la convivialité et l'autogestion. A des degrés variables la plupart des nouveaux mouvements sociaux ont cette connotation de mouvements alternatif. Relevons qu'en 1980 un collectif publie une brochure Genève Alternative présentant septante-cinq expériences alternatives genevoises.

Cette très brève description des nouveaux mouvements sociaux genevois démontrent que leur action n'est pas purement symbolique. Ils ont à leur actif des réalisations et des succès politi-

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

ques qui sont loins d'être négligeables. Tentons maintenant un autre type d'approche à travers quelques scrutins où ces NMS ont été impliqués.

### 3. ANALYSE ECOLOGIQUE DES VOTATIONS GENEVOISES

Il s'agit maintenant de rendre compte de certaines de ces nouvelles questions sociales, qui peuvent être exprimées par des votations. Deux ensembles de référence distincts vont nécessiter deux analyses différentes:

Dans un premier temps, l'analyse écologique sera menée sur un sous ensemble des votations cantonales qui se sont déroulées entre 1977 et 1983.<sup>4)</sup> L'unité sera généralement la commune sauf pour la Ville de Genève qui a été découpée en quartiers. La carte donnée en annexe en montre la distribution spatiale.

Certains enjeux, particulièrement en matière de logements, sont cependant restés spécifiques à la Ville de Genève. En d'autres termes, il s'agissait alors de votations communales et non plus cantonales, si bien que l'espace de référence a été limité aux quinze quartiers de cette commune.

#### 3.1. Les votations à Genève: le canton

Pour cette analyse, nous avons retenu, en outre des élections au législatif cantonal qui fournissent une référence pour l'implantation partisane, neufs votations. Certaines ont été initiées et/ou fortement soutenues par des nouveaux mouvements sociaux. Elles sont alors marquées par une astérisque. Les autres sont plus proches de la logique partisane classique.

- ILOG \* Initiative cantonale pour favoriser la construction de logements (acceptée à 54.7 % le 25.9.77)
- PALEXPO \* Référendum contre le projet de nouveaux palais des expositions (projet gouvernemental accepté par le 78 %



## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

- des votants le 25.9.77)
- LOGPROT \* Loi sur la protection des locataires (acceptée par 58.2 % le 4.12.77)
- COMBAUX Loi instituant la commission de conciliation en matière de baux et loyers (acceptée par 71.1 % le 4.12.77)
- TRIBAUX Loi modifiant le fonctionnement du tribunal des baux et loyers (acceptée par 70.9 % le 4.12.77)
- CORNAV \* Référendum contre l'aménagement de la place Cornavin, impliquant notamment la construction d'un parking souterrain. (projet gouvernemental acceptée par 67 % le 26.2.78)
- AUTOROU \* Préavis pour la construction de l'autoroute de contournement de la Ville de Genève (accepté par 55.2 % le 15.6.80)
- IJUS/XJUS Initiative et contre-projet pour la, "justice fiscale". L'initiative a été repoussée (44.6 % de oui) mais le contre-projet accepté (61.3 % le 9.4.81: XJUS)
- LDEMO \* Loi sur les démolitions, transformations et rénovations d'immeubles (acceptée par 66 % des votants le 26.6.83)

Il est extrêmement difficile d'identifier le rôle exact joué par les nouveaux mouvements sociaux. En effet, dès qu'un référendum ou une initiative est soumis au souverain, les groupes politiques et sociaux prennent position. Dans une grande partie des cas, le Parti socialiste (PS) prend fait et cause pour les NMS ainsi que le parti du travail (PDT, parti communiste) et le parti socialiste ouvrier (PSO) tandis que la droite reste opposée. Comme les NMS ne se présentent jamais en tant que tel à une élection, il est presque impossible de mesurer, à ce niveau d'analyse, leur poids et leur influence dans les votations populaires. Deux éléments peuvent pourtant être mentionnés ici. D'une part des études récentes montrent que les prises de position des partis ne sont pas entièrement déterminante du vote populaire<sup>5)</sup>. D'autre part, un excellent observateur de la vie politique suisse observe, après une estimation complexe, "sous cet angle il m'apparaît que les mouvements alternatifs, comme en RFA d'ailleurs,

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

peuvent être considérés comme deux fois plus nombreux que le groupe des membres des partis. Dans cet perspective, d'un point de vue quantitatif, il y a aussi une nouvelle dimension de la politique." (HERTIG et GRUNER, 1983, p. 300)

Une analyse en composantes principales<sup>6)</sup> de l'ensemble de ces données montre d'abord une forte uni-dimensionnalité: le premier facteur recouvre près des trois quarts de la variance (73.4 %), le deuxième un dixième (10.2 %)!<sup>7)</sup>

Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

Tableau

Coéfficients de saturation

	Fact1	Fact2	Explication	
IJUS	-0.97		0.95	
LOGPROT *	-0.96		0.94	S
ILOG *	-0.96		0.93	S
LDEMO *	-0.96		0.92	S
CONBAUX	-0.93	0.31	0.96	
TRIBAUX	-0.93	0.31	0.96	
PDT	-0.87		0.77	
PS	-0.83		0.69	
PSO	-0.63		0.40	
VIGIL	-0.62	-0.39	0.54	
PALEXPO *			0.05	E
PDC		0.43	0.23	
SANS		0.34	0.19	
RAD	0.38	0.46	0.36	
AUTOROU *	0.45	-0.35	0.33	E
P26.2.78	0.61	0.55	0.67	
P26.6.83	0.62		0.41	
P15.6.80	0.74	0.59	0.90	
P25.9.77	0.74	0.55	0.85	
P4.12.77	0.75	0.48	0.79	
LIB	0.76	-0.55	0.88	
P GC	0.80	0.48	0.87	
CORNAV *	0.85		0.75	E
P14.6.81	0.86	0.31	0.84	
XJUS	0.90		0.81	

Note: Seuls les coéfficients supérieurs à 0.3 ont été repris.

E ou S désignent respectivement Echec ou succès pour les NMS

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

Le premier facteur est alors typiquement un axe gauche droite: l'initiative et le contre-projet pour la justice fiscale en déterminent exactement les deux pôles. Mais la position des partis confirme très largement une telle opposition.

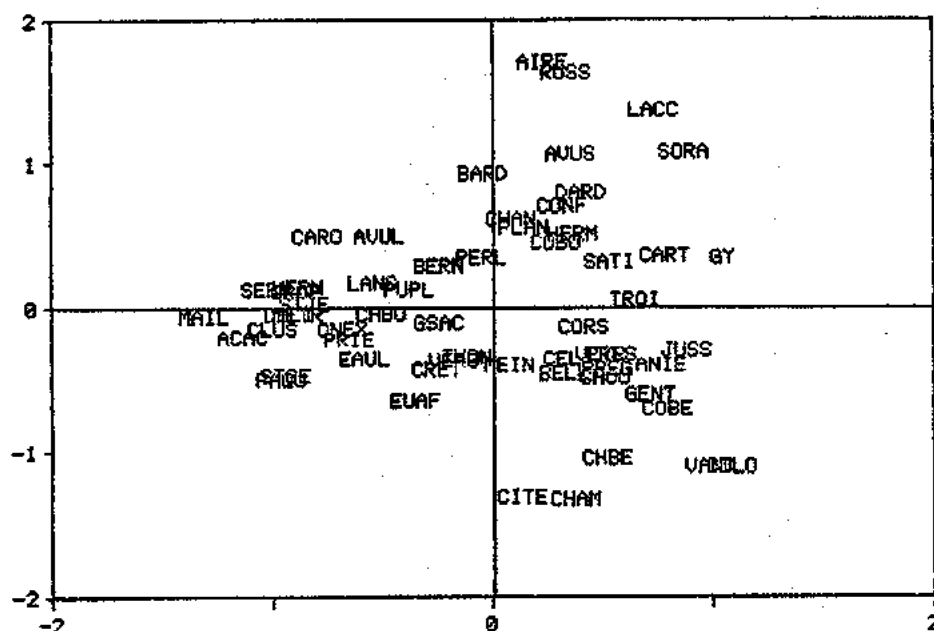
La participation électorale est également fortement associée au pôle de "droite". La logique de l'analyse écologique ne permet pourtant pas de conclure que seuls les gens de "droite" vont voter et que la "gauche" s'abstient! Il faut pourtant admettre que suivant le contexte urbain plus ou moins central ou périphérique, on observe des types de participation politique différents.

Les scrutins initiés et/ou soutenus par les NMS avec l'appui des partis de gauche ont été acceptés par les électeurs genevois. D'autres concernant des parkings comme Cornavin, l'autoroute de contournement de la ville ou le palais des expositions n'ont pas connu l'approbation populaire. Notons toutefois qu'il s'agissait aussi de problèmes d'aménagement local assez particuliers et que les intérêts en jeu ne coïncidaient pas avec les classiques oppositions politiques.

Le deuxième facteur, quoique son importance soit plus réduite en terme de variance expliquée, est néanmoins intéressant. Il montre en effet la distinction entre le parti démocrate-chrétien (PDC) et le parti radical d'une part, libéraux de l'autre. Mais il montre aussi, outre cette différence interne aux partis de droite ou du centre, que la participation, sur des enjeux particuliers, n'est plus seulement fonction de cette grande dimension gauche-droite mais recouvre aussi d'autres aspects. En somme, malgré son importance, la dimension gauche-droite n'est peut-être pas le seul déterminant.

Graphique 1

Scores factoriels: les communes genevoises



Si l'on étudie la répartition spatiale de ces facteurs, deuxième facette de l'analyse, on constate que la distribution des communes a, dans cet espace, une forme un peu étonnante: très concentré sur l'axe horizontal à gauche, relativement dispersé à droite. En fait le côté "gauche" se retrouve avant tout en milieu urbain: des quartiers comme le Mail ou les Acacias, des banlieux résidentielles comme Lancy ou des communes d'emploi comme Carouge. A "droite", on retrouve des communes d'habitat relativement dispersé, à dominantes de maisons individuelles. Pour ces dernières la distinction entre l'implantation libérale d'une part comme à Vandoeuvres par exemple ou démocrate chrétienne (Aire-la-Ville) ou encore radicale (Russin) d'autre part fonctionne pour expliquer ces écarts. Pour mieux préciser ce graphe, il suffit d'ajouter que la richesse se retrouve associée à des communes comme Choulex ou Gy par exemple<sup>8)</sup>.

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

En somme on se retrouve devant un modèle assez global, montrant avant tout l'importance fondamentale de la dimension gauche-droite. Pourtant, une telle construction reste un peu partielle dans la mesure où les nouveaux mouvements sociaux qui nous intéressent ici ont connu leur extension maximale en milieu urbain. Une analyse détaillée menée au niveau de la Ville de Genève va nous permettre de nuancer ces premiers résultats.

### 3.2 Les votations à Genève: la commune

Si l'on restreint l'analyse aux quinze quartiers de la ville de Genève, on peut alors inclure un certain nombre de votations où les NMS ont été très actifs:

- METROP \* Référendum contre la rénovation de l'hôtel métropole (projet gouvernemental refusé: 28.8 % de oui le 13.2.77)
- PLAINP \* Référendum contre la construction d'un parking à Plainpalais (projet gouvernemental accepté par 85 % des votes valables le 4.12.77)
- OBSERV \* Référendum contre la construction d'un parking à la Promenade de l'Observatoire (projet gouvernemental refusé, 45.8 % de oui, le 29.11.81)
- GROTTE \* Initiative pour la réhabilitation du quartier des Grottes (refusée, 42.4 % de oui, le 14.11.82)
- I100 \* Initiative pour la "construction de 300 logements et la réhabilitation de 10 logements" (acceptée par 79.1 % des votants, le 26.6.83)

Une analyse en composantes principales<sup>9)</sup> donne une structure un peu plus équilibrée que la précédente: certe la première dimension recouvre toujours plus de la moitié de la variance (56.3 %) mais les suivantes ont encore, respectivement, 10.7, 8.1 et 6.4 % soit, au total, plus des quatre cinquièmes de la variance!

Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

Tableau

Coéfficients de saturation, votations dans la ville

	Fact1	Fact2	Fact3	Fact4	Communalite	Res. NMS
LOGPROT *	-0.99				0.98	S
IJUS	-0.98				0.97	
CONBAUX	-0.98				0.97	
TRIBAUX	-0.98				0.98	
ILOG *	-0.98				0.96	S
LDEMO *	-0.96				0.96	S
PDT	-0.93				0.93	
PS	-0.88				0.82	
PSO	-0.67			-0.61	0.89	
METROP *	-0.55		0.43	0.44	0.70	S
OBSERV *	-0.46		0.57		0.67	S
VIGIL			-0.71		0.74	
GROTTE *		-0.43		-0.51	0.54	E
PALEXPO *			0.69		0.65	E
PDC		-0.78			0.63	
RAD		-0.83			0.73	
I100 *		0.71			0.65	S
SANS	0.61			-0.43	0.61	
PLAINP *	0.75				0.78	E
CORNAV *	0.85				0.85	E
AUTOROU *	0.87				0.82	E
XJUS	0.98				0.98	
LIB	0.98				0.98	

Note: Seuls les coéfficients supérieurs à 0.4 ont été repris  
E ou S: succès ou écherc des NMS

## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

Le premier facteur, largement dominant comme on l'a vu correspond à la dimension gauche-droite. Il est toutefois frappant de voir que les votations que défendent les NMS ne réussissent que si elles se situent comme de gauche et échouent autrement. Une seule exception, et encore très relative, l'initiative pour la construction de 300 logements (I100) qui fut un succès mais qui est caractérisé par une implantation de ses partisans dans les quartiers qui comptent le moins de démocrate-chrétien ou de radicaux! On peut alors supposer, sans que l'on puisse vraiment le démontrer, que seule le support des électeurs traditionnellement situé à gauche permet de faire réussir une votation initiée par les NMS.

Le deuxième facteur est surtout composé par deux spécificités: le vote pour les partis démocrate-chrétien et radical d'une part, qui ne se situe pas seulement sur un simple axe gauche-droite, mais aussi en opposition avec l'initiative pour la construction de 300 logements qui marque l'autre pôle de cet axe. On verra bientôt de quels quartiers il s'agit.

Le troisième facteur est aussi composé de spécificités ainsi qu'il convient à un troisième axe d'une importance, en termes de variance, sept fois inférieur au premier. L'opposition réside ici entre l'implantation du parti "xénophobe" Vigilance par rapport à deux projets d'aménagement local: le parking de l'Observatoire et la construction du palais des expositions.

Enfin le quatrième facteur est intéressant car il montre la relation, en terme d'implantation spatiale entre le PSO, petit parti d'extrême gauche relativement marginal en termes de suffrages, très proche des NMS et le vote pour l'initiative pour la réhabilitation du quartier des Grottes. On peut probablement voir là un effet d'entraînement que les mouvements de quartier ou de locataires peuvent avoir sur des formations politiques.



## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

Cette analyse plus détaillée confirme l'analyse précédente dans ses grandes lignes: réussite des votations sur le logement, échec relatif des votations contre la voiture: parking, autoroute, etc. Mais surtout elle démontre que l'on ne saurait se contenter d'une structure uni-dimensionnelle pour décrire l'espace politique genevois au moment où on prend en compte les nouveaux mouvements sociaux.

Une analyse complémentaire permet de confirmer ce point. La description des résultats des votations cantonales montrait la forte relation entre "droite" et participation. Or, qu'en est-il sur ces enjeux où les NMS ont été particulièrement actifs? Une manière d'y répondre est de considérer la corrélation entre les scores factoriels, et la participation de manière à obtenir des coefficients analogues à des saturations.

Tableau

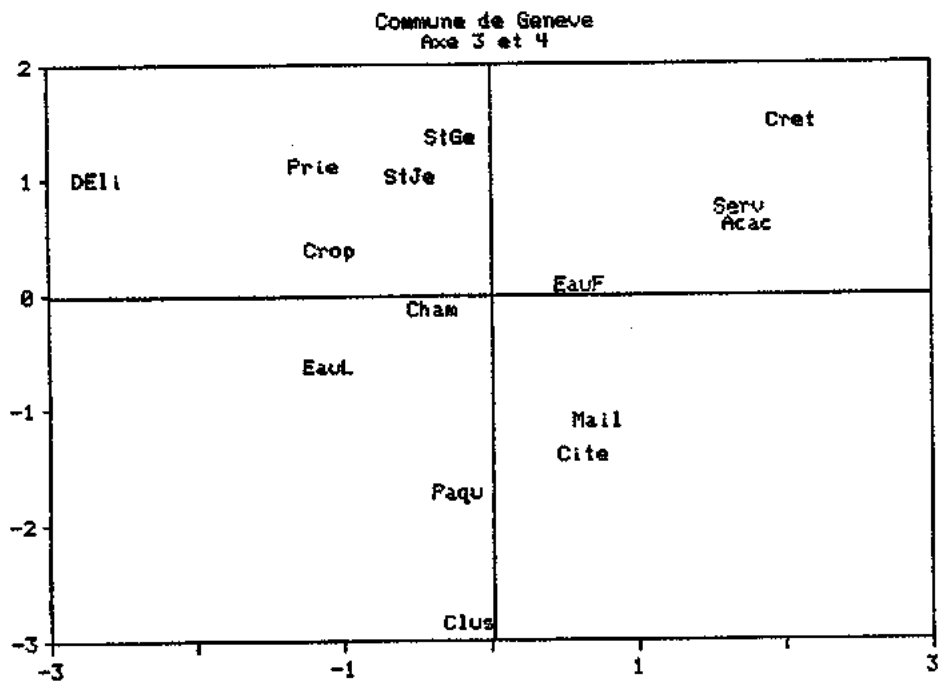
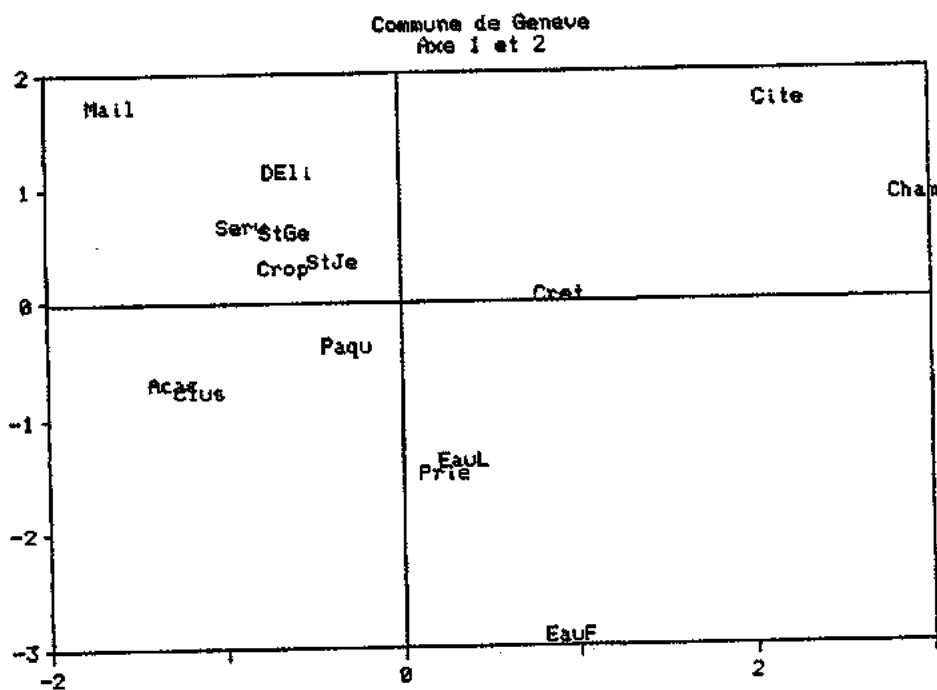
### Corrélation entre participation et scores factoriels

	F1	F2	F3	F4
Participation à				
P ILOG *				0.51
P METROP *	0.73			
P BAUX				0.54
P Plainp *				0.61
P Observ *				-0.53
P Grottes *		-0.58	-0.50	
P 100 Log *				
P Cornav *				0.63
P Autorou *	0.76			
P Jus fis	0.79			
P Demo *	0.87			
P GC	0.78			

On s'aperçoit alors que seule la participation aux votations cantonales s'organise suivant la dimension gauche-droite. Par contre, la participation aux votations où les NMS ont été vérita-

Graphique 2

Scores factoriels: ville de Genève



## Mouvements sociaux et gestion urbaine

blement actifs se situe bien sur les dimensions plus particulières que nous avons dégagées. En somme, on retrouve une correspondance entre ces aspects spécifiques aussi bien par une analyse de l'acceptation que par une analyse de la participation.

La distribution des quartiers dans un tel espace n'est pas sans intérêt non plus. Bien sûr, le premier facteur distingue entre les quartiers "populeux" comme Cluse-Roseraie, les Acacias ou le Mail avec une traditionnelle implantation de la gauche des quartiers comme la Cité, voire Champel, quartier "chic" par excellence! Mais la distinction fonctionne aussi sur le deuxième facteur entre les Eaux-Vives d'une part et le Mail et la Cité de l'autre où la distribution partisane est bien différente. Or c'est aussi cet aspect qui explique le succès de l'initiative pour les 300 logements dans ces derniers quartiers.

Il est plus difficile de rendre compte de manière simple de la situation des quartiers dans le plan des troisièmes et quatrièmes axes factoriels: il s'agit en effet d'axes résiduels, où l'influence des deux premiers facteurs n'intervient plus. Néanmoins la position extrême du quartier des Délices doit s'expliquer par le vote pour le parti "nationaliste": Vigilance tandis qu'un quartier populaire comme Cluse est marqué par un attachement relativement plus grand au PSO ou aux problèmes de réhabilitation soulevé par l'initiative sur les Grottes.

## CONCLUSION

En conclusion, l'analyse écologique nous permet de montrer l'importance globale, voire la dominance de la dimension gauche-droite à Genève. Notons que cette tendance est particulière à ce canton, beaucoup plus forte que dans le reste de la Suisse, où d'autres facteurs jouent un rôle déterminant. Cette dominance occulte partiellement le rôle des nouveaux mouvements sociaux.

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Pourtant, au moment où l'on restreint l'analyse à la commune même de Genève, on s'aperçoit, qu'en matière de logement tout au moins, ces mouvements sont capables d'apporter une émulation nouvelle à la vie politique. L'interaction est alors telle que même des partis politiques marginaux en termes de suffrages comme le PSO, commencent à jouer ponctuellement un rôle non négligeable.

De plus, alors que d'une manière générale, on avait vu la participation aux votations être fortement corrélée à cette grande dimension gauche-droite, voire à la richesse de la commune ou du quartier, ce qui était conforme à des études américaines (CLUBB et TRAUGOTT, 1972), on s'aperçoit que cette participation politique fonctionne, sur ces nouveaux enjeux, d'une manière particulière. Les NMS apportent donc, au niveau du quartier, une animation politique originale.

On se retrouve pourtant ici aux limites de l'analyse écologique. Il faudrait maintenant, et c'est là que notre communication est aussi un plaidoyer pour d'autres recherches, retourner aux analyses de cas, aux monographies, pour montrer comment fonctionne, sur ces enjeux particuliers, l'interaction entre NMS et partis politiques. Il faudrait aussi savoir si l'hypothèse avancée par certains<sup>10)</sup> d'une forte proportion de nouvelles classes moyennes (employés, voire universitaires ou professeurs, etc.) comme moteur des NMS se vérifie. Là encore l'analyse écologique ne peut plus y répondre même si elle permet de de décrire au mieux les quartiers dans lesquelles ces manifestations se marquent le plus.

D'une manière plus générale, l'importance de ce type d'analyse nous semble se jouer à deux niveaux.

1. D'un strict point de vue politologique, on mesure alors mieux l'importance de la dimension rural-urbain dans le comportement politique. Plus globalement des recherches en cours<sup>11)</sup> montrent fondamentalement une décomposition du vote suivant des

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déterminants socio-culturels au niveau régional et beaucoup plus suivant le mode de vivre et d'habiter au niveau local. C'est beaucoup plus sur ce dernier aspect que nous avons insisté ici, mais il ne saurait être analysé sans ces références générales.

Au développement des nouveaux mouvements sociaux correspondent des nouvelles dimensions de la politique. GRUNER, comme nous le rappelions tout à l'heure, estime que les sympathisants aux NMS sont d'ores et déjà le double des militants des partis politiques. Cette différence est certainement plus forte en milieu urbain dont nous avons vu, en tout cas pour l'exemple genevois, le bouillonnement et la diversité.

2. Du point de vue des décideurs d'autre part, ces mouvements ne sauraient être négligés. On a vu dans une première partie les succès qu'ils pouvaient remporter en menant des actions ponctuelles, ce qui n'est déjà pas négligeable.

Mais l'institution helvétique des initiatives montrent aussi qu'ils sont capables d'amener dans le débat politique des nouveaux enjeux sur lesquels les partis "classiques" sont obligés de prendre position, voire de proposer des réformes minimales.

Enfin, si l'on raisonne en termes de succès, l'impact des NMS mérite d'être nuancé suivant les thèmes abordés. Par exemple, le cas genevois, avec ses particularités, montre que toute mesure de protection du logement est quasi immédiatement adoptée par une très large majorité. Les votations genevoises du 10 mars 1985 ne vont en tout cas pas nous contredire! Au niveau fédéral, l'écologie, renforcée par la discussion actuelle sur la mort des forêts, semble aussi un thème qui va amener un réalignement des partis tant la sensibilité populaire y est attachée. Leur impact dans d'autres domaines reste plus sujet à discussion. De même leur développement ultérieur reste aussi une question ouverte: la dégradation nettement perçue des conditions économiques va-t'elle amener une diminution de ce type de conflits ou leur développement va-t'il se poursuivre?

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Enfin nous ne saurions assez insister sur l'importance du contexte du développement de ces NMS. En l'occurrence l'aspect urbain, et ses modifications récentes, ne peut être négligé. Sous cet angle aussi, articulation entre espace de vie et traditions régionales, comportement politique conventionnel et non-conventionnel, la recherche doit encore être élargie et approfondie.

Notes

1) Voir à ce propos KRIESI et al (1982) ou DUVANEL et LEVY (1984)

2) On désigne, en Suisse, les votations comme étant les enjeux où le peuple se prononce directement sur des objets particuliers, soit le cas où des signataires demandent qu'un vote sur un sujet soit organisé (Initiative); dans ce cas, le parlement peut proposer un contreprojet; des signataires peuvent aussi demander qu'un vote du parlement soit soumis au souverain (référendum facultatif); enfin toute modification constitutionnelle est soumise à l'approbation populaire (Référendum obligatoire).

3) Sur le rôle particulier de l'initiative, on consultera par exemple DELLEY (1978), pour le référendum NEIDHART (1970). Enfin la répartition récente des enjeux a notamment été évoquée par JOYE et BASSAND, (1984)

4) Entre le début de 1977 et la fin de 1983, la ville de Genève a connu 51 votations fédérales, 32 cantonales et 8 communales.

5) Sur le rapport entre consigne des partis et vote populaire, cf notamment GRUNER et HERTIG (1983) ou JOYE et SCHULER (1984)

6) Analyse de la matrice variance-covariance: analyse des pourcentage de oui et de participation.

7) Notons que si l'on analyse la matrice de corrélation la variance est moins concentrée sur le premier facteur. En d'autres termes cela signifie que la variance est beaucoup plus grande sur les enjeux gauche-droite que sur les autres.

8) L'indicateur de richesse utilisé ici était simplement la fortune totale déclarée dans la commune divisée par le nombre d'habitants.

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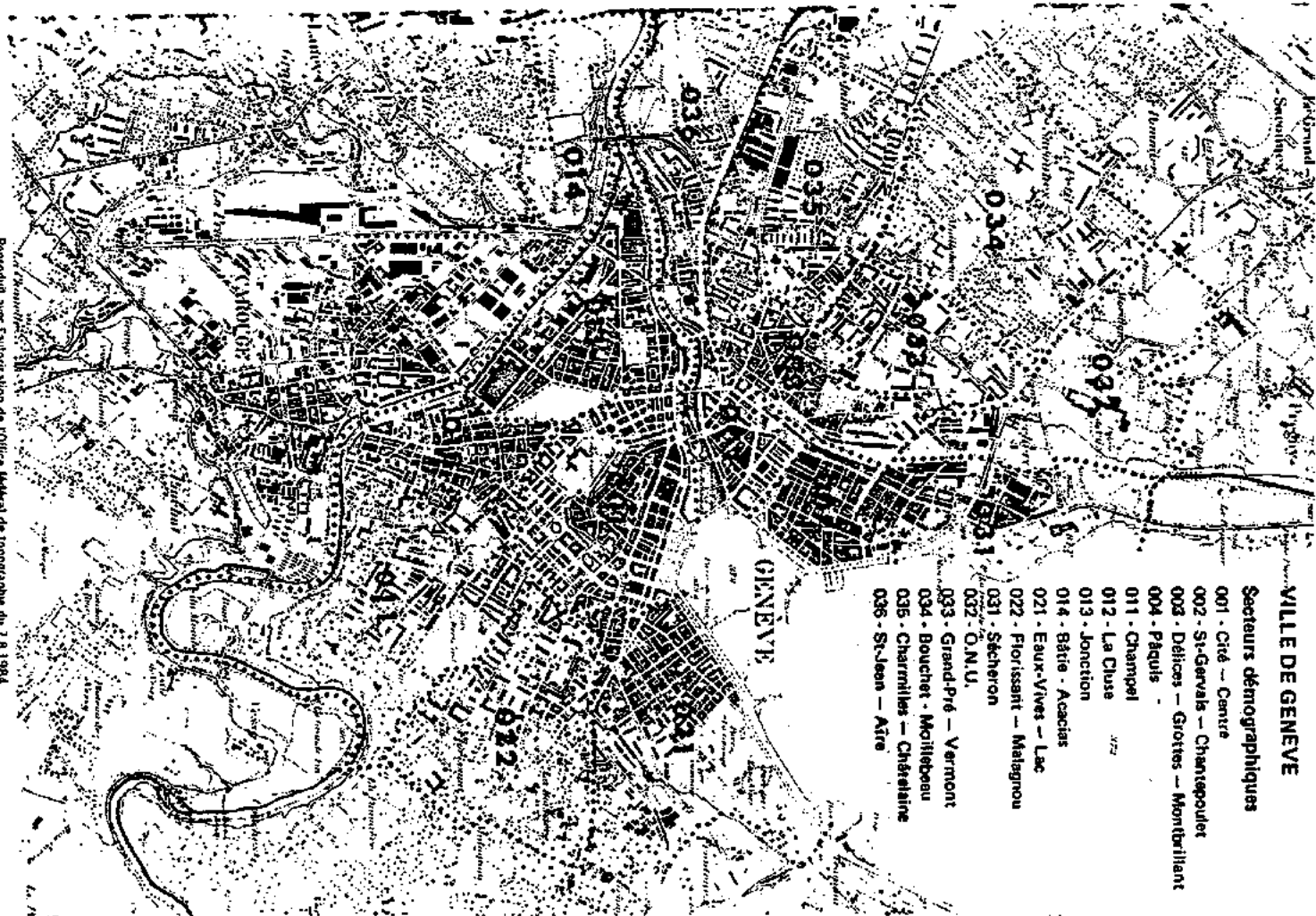
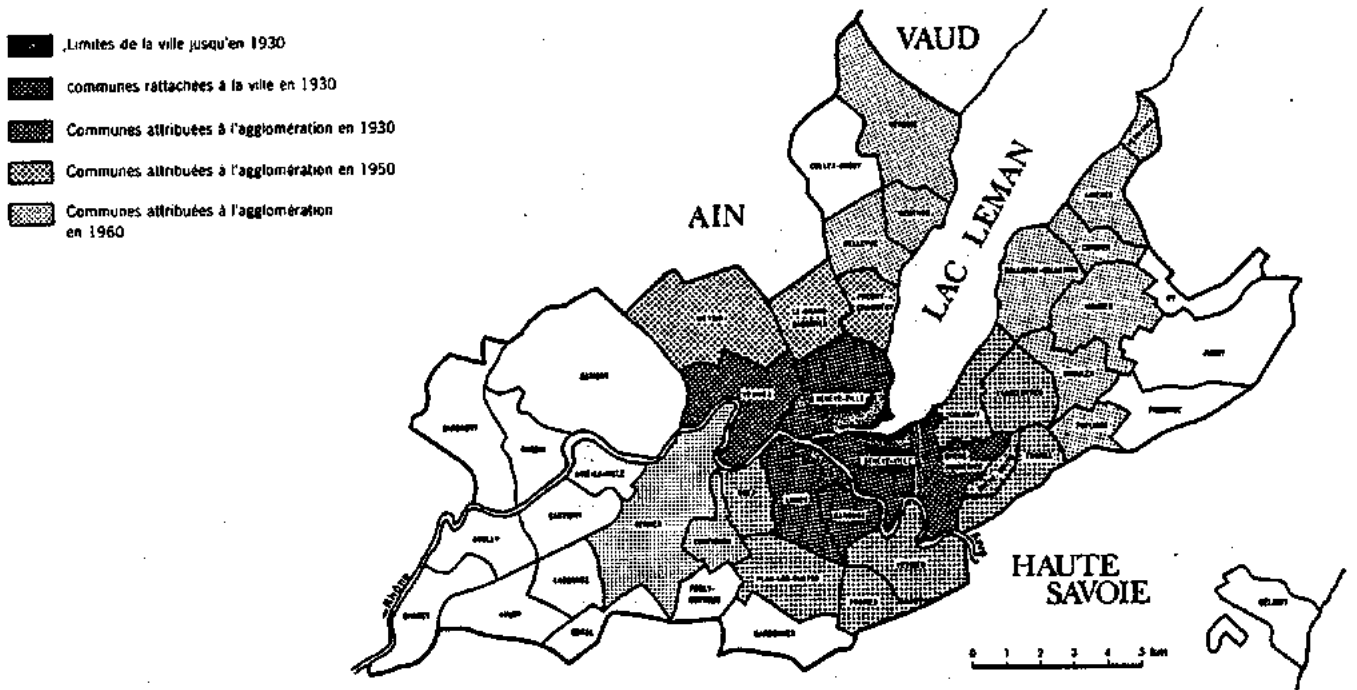
9) Analyse de la matrice de corrélation, variable calculée en pourcent de oui.

10) Cf notamment BERNASCONI et VALIQUER (1983) ou MEISTER (1980)

11) SCHULER et JOYE (1985)



Croissance de l'agglomération genevoise



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MAYORAL LEADERSHIP AND PROBLEMS OF URBAN GOVERNANCE

by

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Preliminary draft.

## Introduction.

"One average mayor equals ten so-called cultural personalities", a Norwegian publisher was heard saying once. Be that as it may, I nevertheless share this persons high regard of the job mayors are doing. Exaggerating slightly, they are the turning wheel of municipal democracy. The Norwegian word is "ordfører", meaning the person who's right it is to speak on behalf of others; more accurately, perhaps, to be the speaker within a corporate group of equals. The word itself clearly indicates the ancient - if not to say tribal - origins of this function. Today, the role of mayor is one that is found in most industrialized societies with some form of local government structure.

The functions of the mayor will vary considerably between and even within the one and same country; if not to mention authority and the possibilities of exerting influence. Quite often, we will find that the rights and duties of the mayor are not very specifically stated, which leaves room for both individual variation as for role performance, and incremental changes taking place; changes that can not be traced back to any single decision or political "intention". Bearing big cities in mind, especially, we might ask: Should the mayor be "president" or "prime minister"? The position of the mayor is, of course, a focal point of attention in local political life, and as such has always had symbolic functions. But is - in the age of television and mass media - symbolic reassurance (cf. Edelman, 1964) replacing policy-making and priority-setting? Is it just by accident that the image most commonly projected of the mayor of Oslo (and Copenhagen?) is that of "smiling Albert", opening restaurants, festivals and big hotels? Is what we observe just the other side of the coin, or do we see a shift in role performance, reflecting increasing problems of urban governance?

In this paper, I will discuss some aspects concerning mayoral leadership, and problems of local governance, with special attention to urban contexts. Central-local relations in Norway, as well as the structure of local government itself, is going through a process of reform and reorganization. These may be looked upon as changes in contextual factors structuring the way Norwegian mayors perform their role; and I will discuss some of these changes in relation to problems of urban governance. The points being made will to some extent be based on empirical evidence, but often stated as propositions. Right at present, though, I am responsible for a rather large survey being carried out in Tromsø, covering all Norwegian mayors and general managers.

#### The Norwegian Mayorship.

Norwegian municipalities are not rooted in the Constitution of 1814, but do for their legal basis date back to the so-called "Law of Aldermen" (Formannskapslovene"), which was passed in 1837. Before that, municipal affairs were part of the over-all activity of the state, taken care of (mostly, that is) by government officials being part of a national hierarchy. The most important of these was, perhaps, the prefect at county level. The law of 1837 prescribed local elections of a representative body, the council; and within this a board of aldermen. Among these "able men", one was to be elected mayor. He was given duties such as deciding when meetings were to be held; to lead these meetings, prepare formulas for decisions, take care of minutes and correspondence.

By these laws, a local government structure of dual purpose was established in Norway: On the one hand it is an expression of and an instrument for local autonomy and self-governance; but on the other simply the lowest level of a three-tier system of political and administrative power derived from the state. Basically, this dual function of local authorities - to express and transform the needs of a geographically defined population, and to implement national

policies - has remained ever since. In a comparative perspective, the most important point to make is that the discretion of local authorities is potentially very large, and in principle only negatively delimited by the law. After doing what the various laws prescribes, the municipalities are free to take on any task they like.

Clearly, the role of mayor is one of articulation of local needs and demands rather than implementation of national policies. Despite it's age of nearly 150 years, the role is not very formally structured; and despite some attempts in that direction, very few formal changes have been made during these years. (In 1900, a committee proposed direct election of mayors, but this was eventually turned down by the government.) The biggest and most important changes in this role on a national basis, seems to have taken place during the last 20-25 years, and are mainly due to consequences stemming from the welfare state and its implementation through and by the municipalities. A simultaneous, and in some areas even more recent phenomenon, has been the convergence of local and national political cleavages; i.e. the party politization of local politics.

#### The Reform Process: Towards increased local self-government?

Between the years 1960 and 1970, the number of municipalities in Norway was reduced from 744 to 451, and since the beginning of the seventies, local government reform has been more or less continuously on the agenda. The overall goals of this reform process - as expressed by the government appointed "Main Commission on Local Government Reform" - to achieve "...decentralization and democratization associated with a practical and effective form of administration". (Kjellberg, 1981:45) To obtain this, the municipalities would have to be made more effective units for service production and delivery, which meant establishing them as economically viable units. An equally important



aim, and by far the one paid most lip service to, was to increase local discretion and self government. This value enjoys a high standing in Norwegian politics, at least at a symbolic level, and is these days often referred to as the main reason behind the reforming of the grant system, to be effective from Jan. 1, 1986.

According to Kjellberg, local government reform has been of a more piecemeal character in Norway than in Sweden and Denmark. Still, I think it is possible to argue that the changes in central-local relations has been of a rather different nature in each of the three decades since 1960. The sixties were primarily marked by efforts to make the municipalities larger, more effective and economically viable units, and a belief in planning and "rational" action. On the agenda was the amalgamation of municipalities (mostly taking place between 1960 and 1965; and the introduction of a new and very ambitious Planning Act in 1965.

If the sixties were a period of amalgamation, the seventies may be characterized as a decade of implementation. During this periode, the dominant feature of the municipalities is growth, both in budgets and number of employees. I shall touch upon this later on in the paper, but will here draw attention to the predominantly administrative character of this period. There were expansion in the municipalities, and heavy investments being made in different sectors. Increasingly, though, local politicians could be heard voicing voicing dissatisfaction as to the degree of central control; especially so when the financial consequences of all the investments started to "hit" municipal budgets. Put sharply, local politicians often felt like puppets on strings pulled by central authorities.

The eighties may represent a break with this, at least if we are to pay any attention to the rethoric being made to legitimize the reforms now being introduced. Most important of these are the the abolishment of the plethora

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of specific grants for only four sectorial grants, and the experiment with so-called free-communes.

Whether these reforms will in fact increase the amount of municipal self government remains to be seen. However, an assumption that seems to be shared by politicians as well as political scientists, is that the reforms will increase the political "pressure" on local government. The reforms will emphasize the municipalities as political institutions, with an increased demand on the ability to set priorities and implement policy. In short, there is ample reason to assume that a process of politicization will take place at the local level. Evidence from Denmark, where a similar reform of the grant system has been carried out some years ago, lends support to this hypothesis (Mouritzen and Skovsgaard, 1984). The limits of this paper does not allow for detailed speculation, but this process of politization may take on many forms, such as increase in the activity of party politics, tendencies of local corporatism, increased pressure activity from citizens groups and ad-hoc organizations.

Here, I will concentrate on one aspect of this process, namely the increased demand for local political leadership. I think there is reason to believe that the role of mayor will be a more interesting one as a consequence of the reform process now taking place, but also a considerably more difficult one. Problems of urban governance is by no means a new phenomenon (Yates, 1977; Williamson, 1971), neither so in Norway (Baldersheim, 1981). Such problems lies behind various attempts at reorganizing the government apparatus in some cities. Although increase of political control has been one of the concerns in such processes, there is a case for more attention to the function of mayoral leadership. It seems there is likely to be an increase in demand for this "commodity", but corresponding problems of delivery. Given this situation, it is my assumption that the mayor will have to lean to some group or groups for support, and that such support may be found not only in his political "environment", but also in the "administrative". The alternative may be for the mayor

to try to be "president"; that is to escape the difficulties of the political process by striving for a position slightly "above" politics. This will not only imply a stress on the symbolic functions of the role, but doing this to an extent that verges on political abdication. In the following part of the paper, I shall consider some theoretical aspects of mayoral leadership. I will then draw attention to some changes in contextual factors of the Norwegian situation, and discuss how these may have implications for mayoral role performance and the prospect of mayoral leadership.

## II. Political Leadership.

Although the study of political leadership seems to be an "emerging field" in political science (Paige, 1972), the concept is not easily defined, and may often take on a rather elusive character. In the literature, political leadership is often viewed in terms of social causation; i.e. the leader is seen as a person who has unusual power or influence, and thereby is able to alter people's behaviour (Wildawsky, 1964; George, 1968; McFarland, 1969; Pressman, 1972). In his essay on comparative analysis of political leadership, Edinger (1975) finds it possible to delineate two major types of definitions - the positional and the behavioural. In the first case, it is associated first and foremost with the rights and duties of an office or status in a hierarchial structure. When behaviourally defined, leadership is identified with what I have termed social causation, i.e. with followership and processes of interpersonal relations.

Either position implies certain difficulties and possibilities for analytical purposes, and as far as I can see, there are insufficient reasons for adopting one to the exclusion of the other. Following Edinger, we may on the whole conceive political leadership in terms of some form of control over the authoritative assignment of benefits and obligations among the inhabitants of a geographically defined entity.

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The question of democratic leadership may be seen as an expression of the age-old problem of political representation (Seligman, 1950), but in my view, it is basic that one does not conceive of this in terms of responsiveness alone. If we do this, we tend to think of peoples' attitudes, demands and identifications as something fixed; a universe of preferences being "out there" just waiting to be aggregated by some would-be leader. Such a view underrates the fact that the relationship between leader and followers is a transactional and a dialectical one, subject to continuous negotiation. The political process is not merely a one-way drive from support, attitudes and demands into decisions, but also the production of symbols, meaning and identifications. (Edelman, 1964; March and Olsen, 1982).

Political leadership is an institutional phenomenon. Three remarks are to be made in that connection. First, there is distance to followers; although to a varying degree. Size in itself may thus be of importance (Dahl and Tufte, 1974; Baldersheim, 1982). Secondly, there are certain rules, norms and routines associated with the particular role. These rules may be formal or informal; either normative - i.e. specifying what should be done or what will be normatively respectable; or pragmatic - i.e. defining what will be politically effective (cf. Bailey, 1969). Thirdly, political leadership is performed within some kind of organizational structure, specifying rights and obligations of the organizational roles, and the transaction structure regulating their interaction. To the leader, the organization represents both a constraint and a resource, and thus a kind of "environment".

Correspondingly, the legitimizing of the function will be affected by the institutional context. In general, legitimacy is achieved by the leader's identification with central values of the political system; by the way recruitment is organized; by the effective and symbolic ways of representation; and by the ability of producing decisions and values (cf. Seligman, 1968). In short, legitimacy is achieved by the leader performing functions of instrumental,

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social and expressive character. Without going into a discussion of the theoretical forms of legitimate power, we can assume that crisis of legitimacy will occur when there is a discrepancy between what is expected from the system, and what the system actually can "deliver".

A focus on leadership roles in political institutions may thus yield some analytical rewards:

- Political leadership may be seen as a form of authoritative exercise of power, with followership resulting from initiatives with high degree of legitimacy.
- Leadership may be associated with the notion of a political system (consisting of a political structure and its environment), with the leader constrained by the system, but also maintaining and changing it.
- Leadership may be associated with certain functions within a political structure (defined as a set of roles and rules). Leadership may represent an element of coordination, performing instrumental as well as social and expressive functions: "...the problems of morale, coordination and efficiency in large-scale organizations have been erroneously conceived to be those of technical arrangements. In the task of integrating the web of informal relationships to the goals of the association, lies the crucial problem. And towards the solution of this problem, leadership plays a vital role."  
(Seligman, 1950:910)

In general, then, political leaders, as individuals and as aggregates, act in "...patterned ways that affect the creation, maintenance and change of institutions as well as the processes and policy outcomes of institutional behavior." (Paige, 1977:103). Still, we find considerable variance in performance of the one and same leadership role. At a very basic level, I will assume that political acts by the mayor may be categorized as to whether they affect his or her legitimacy, or his effectiveness. Needless to say, there is also a relationship between these two.

Mayoral Leadership.

My concern is with mayoral leadership, and the way such behaviour is patterned into some types of role performance. These patterns of actions may be seen as resulting from three types of factors; task, context and situation. Following Kotter and Lawrence, I would suggest that mayoral behaviour can be seen as occurring in three different but somehow interrelated processes: "In one he decides what to do - he sets his agenda. In another he builds and maintains a network of relationships to resources he needs or may need to pursue his agenda. In a third, he accomplishes tasks that are on his agenda." (Kotter and Lawrence, 1974:43-44). This behaviour, or these processes, occur in a context that affects the behaviour and in turn is affected by it. The behaviour of the mayor is not, of course, determined solely by the context, but modified and structured by the situation in which the behaviour occurs. As for the mayor's personal goals in relation to organizational goals, I shall make no other assumption than the general one that the mayor will act with reference to a political norm; i.e. he will seek power in order to achieve certain ends. The game-like qualities of politics will then be evident, involving the mayor in processes of bargaining, coalition formation, and so forth.

Which contextual factors should be taken into consideration may be subject to discussion. Paige's model of political leadership uses personality, role, organization, task, setting, and values (paige, 1977); whereas Kotter and Lawrence goes for the four : mayor, network, city, and agenda. I will structure my discussion of changes in contextual factors affecting mayoral behaviour and leadership around four broad types of factors: person, role, organization, and environment. These make up a conceptual scheme, and may be elements in a causal model; although I shall not try to specify the linkages here.

### III. Changes in contextual factors affecting mayoral leadership in Norway.

#### Person.

By "person", I am considering the individual occupying or performing the role of mayor. However, the interest lies not so much in personality as with the individual as social person; i.e. the sum total of the various status-positions making up the social person. Doubtless, variation in what we with a term more familiar in social anthropology than political science, might call status repertoire, will act as a resource or constraint on mayoral behaviour, because the various status positions will imply differences in access to arenas and networks.

Thus, changes in recruitment patterns may be of importance. There is not very much systematic knowledge on this in Norway, at least if one is considering recruitment to the role of mayor, and not elite recruitment in local politics generally. One line of development is a professionalization of local politics, implying a change in the basis of local leadership from a more diffuse and traditionalistic one to expertise and political skills. According to Kjellberg, the driving force behind this development has been the greater need of the municipalities for contact with the state, since the composition of the goods of the welfare state (collective goods) presupposes an active demand by the locality (Kjellberg, 1965). The exchange of "notables" for "politicians" is by no means specific for Norway, though (Tarrow, 1977). What still seems to be the case in Norway is the fact that becoming mayor is very much a local career: two thirds of the mayors in office in 1976 were born within the same municipality where they held office. However, this pattern of local recruitment is weakened with increase in level of education and size of city (Strand, 1985), and may thus be a changing feature. Some new data on recruitment and background will be provided by the project I am now doing.

11.

Role.

"Role" is, as will no surprise to you, one of the more difficult concepts to apply in a clear and consequent way. According to Roos and Starke (1981), role may be seen as normative culture patterns; as expectations held by those people who interact with the individual occupying positions; or as the actual behaviour of the occupants of positions. As far as I can see, these definitions are not mutually exclusive, and only to some degree alternatives to each other. One might, I think, say that there one structural aspect of the concept, and one dynamic, expressed in the actual behaviour. When used as a dependent variable, the interest would be on behaviour; e.g. role performance. When used as an independent variable, one would ask for the laws, rules, norms and expectations regulating or influencing the behaviour. But role does not determine behaviour: "The main empirical finding to date in political science role studies related to political leadership is that for any given formal institutional role, different styles of incumbent performance are possible" (Paige, 1977:111).

In general, we may assume that the more the role power, the greater the leader influence upon overall organizational behaviour. Is, then, the Norwegian role of mayor a powerful one? Again, this is one of the things we are going to study in our project; among other things asking for the mayors' own perception of their role. Some points may be made, though:

- As earlier noted, the formal rules defining the role have not been changed very much throughout the years. The committee mentioned did at that time (year 1900) wish to strengthen the position of mayors by introducing direct elections, but this was rejected by the government, and never debated in Parliament. Mayors lost one possible source of influence when direct elections to the county council was introduced. Before 1975, the county was a secondary level, and the council comprised of mayors representing the municipalities within that county. Today, mayors are therefore "deprived" of an arena. (Which



may be one of the reasons why mayors so vigorously have made it clear that by the new arrangement, the municipalities are by no means "subordinate" to the counties.)

- A feature of the role may be its relative lack of formal rules to define what mayors should do. The law defines certain obligations and some rights connected with the position, but to a large extent the incumbents are free - at least in theory - to perform the role as they choose. It may be adequate to talk of a continuum of mayoral behaviour with the "minimalist" and the "entrepreneur" at the extremes.

- There have been - and are still taking place - changes as to the quantitative aspects of the role. Full-time mayors are a rather new phenomenon in Norway, with the exception of some of the bigger cities. Out of a total of 360 mayors, only 21 worked full time before 1971. Up to 1977, the figure had risen to 94;

- Thus, some of the structurally given possibilities of power or influence associated with leadership roles in general, and the role of mayor in particular, may be heavily modified by the variance in occupancy. Potentially, the mayor should be able to exploit power of initiative in special; and also to enjoy influence and possibilities arising from knowledge, position and external contacts. The mayors are, generally, the "foreign secretaries" of the municipalities (Strand, 1985; Jonassen, 1978; Brandsdal og Tjemsland, 19 ).

#### Organization.

The laws regulating municipal activity in Norway does not specify very accurately how local government should be organized, and there is, consequently, considerable variation to be found. Still, standard models have developed, and the Central Association of Local Authorities in Norway has been a driving force behind this. I will not bore the reader by entering a detailed account various minor organizational changes to be found. Rather, I will suggest some main

trends visible or emerging of the reform process.

The administrative part of local government has been growing quite enormously. The employees now by far outnumber politicians even in the smallest municipalities. Only 25 years ago, the total number of council members in Norwegian municipalities was larger than the number of administrative and technical personnell. In 1981, the total number of council members had reached 13 772, and the number of employees (with exception of teachers and hospital/social institution personnell) was 64 591 (Holmer Hoven, 1984). There are, of course, differences as to size of the municipalities. The number of employees pr. politician were in 1979 412 in Oslo; 68 in the second, third and fourth largest cities; whereas it was down to 6.6 in the smallest quarter of the Norwegian municipalities (Baldersheim, 1981)

In addition, one may talk of a qualitative growth in this tendency of bureaucratization, with rising levels of functional competence among the staff, primarily due to rising levels of education. Although politicians and administrators basically rely on different forms of legitimacy or "competence" (territorial versus functional), there is still reason to believe that the professionalization of the local "civil service" will affect the distribution of influence between politicians and bureaucrats. A survey carried out ten years ago discovered a marked difference in levels of formal education between mayors and chief executives, with some 60 % of the mayors having education below high school level. This may not be very important, though; at least when asked, the mayors did not consider their lack of formal education an important obstacle to their ability to do a good job (Strand, 1985).

One important change in the relative positions of mayors and administrative staff, may be the amendment of the law done in 1980, stating that all municipalities should have a function of chief executive. It seems fair to say that the position of the head of the municipal staff - the chief executive - have been strengthened both realita and symbolically during the last years; and

local politicians are quite commonly heard voicing criticisms of what they label "the regime of the chief executive". Nevertheless, in the face of severe fiscal crisis last year, the politicians of Oslo sought "protection" against themselves and their production of expenditures, and gave the chief executive extensive discretion over the budgeting process.

This differentiation as for roles, and a diversification of the administrative structure seems to be distinguishable features of the processes reshaping local government. The problems created are mainly those of governance and coordination; especially in big cities, whereas smaller municipalities often report problems of capacity as the most important ones (Strand, *op.cit.*). Consequently, decision-making processes may show signs of coalition formation, bargaining, and even "garbage can" (cf. Cohen, March and Olsen, 1976), rather than being hierarchially structured.

#### Environment.

Generally, the mayor's environment (i.e. outside local government) seems to have become more politicized, fragmented, and "demanding" rather than supportive. A party politicization has taken place in Norwegian local politics during the last 10-20 years, making territory or community a less frequent basis for representation. This may provide the mayor with an ally and someone to share the eventual blame with. On the other hand, it may produce polarization, which is especially the case in bigger cities (Baldersheim, 1981), and immobility by making the mayor primarily a go-between and an arbiter.

Traditionally, there has existed a certain ideology of cooperation in Norwegian local politics, saying that in between elections, the representatives of the various parties should play down their party affiliation, and seek compromise and promote the local "common interest". This norm can still be found to be quite strong in some municipalities, but this may be changing in the mid-

eighties. Formation of local branches of each and every national political party, and the subsequent organization of local elections on a party basis may in itself be driving forces behind the party polarization. In addition, it is becoming increasingly difficult to define what the "common interest" and the "common good" should be. A differentiation in occupational structure is taking place in most industrialized countries, followed by a proliferation of interest organization and pressure group activity. From Norwegian evidence, it seems that citizens' demands are more often channeled through the numerical channel in the smaller municipalities, and that the "ad hoc"-channel is relatively more often used in cities. This is consistent with the picture of the deeply fragmented structure of citizens' demands given by so many students of urban political life; summarized by Yates in the notion of "street-fighting pluralism" (Yates, 1977).

The reforms in central-local relations now to be introduced in Norway, and particularly the changes in the grant system from a wide range of specific grants to just four sector specific grants, and one general grant, should prove to increase pressure on local government as a political institution. Evidence from Denmark suggests that this is a fairly safe hypothesis (Mouritzen and Skovsgaard, 1984; Villadsen, 1984). Today, most cities report problems of coordination and governance, and some are, although in an uncoordinated fashion, trying out various structural experiments to help overcome these problems. (Oslo is going for a structure including a city government, and the central authorities will probably allow this.) The reform of the grant structure will increase the already existing politization and pressure group activity at the local level, and the sum total of the processes and changes that I have been drawing attention to in this paper, will be an increased challenge to the governing capacity of local authorities.

#### IV. Mayoral Leadership and Urban Governance.

Thus, the current situation in which the mayor is supposed to exercise political leadership, can be summarized to be one of increase in demand on the ability of local government as to coordination and priority setting ("delivery of decisions"); and an increased demand for the production of ever more specialized goods and benefits to various persons or groups ("delivery of services"); and the dominant economic feature of the situation is that of fiscal austerity. There is a strong indication from our data so far that the problem of "balancing the books" (Newton, 1980) is one that not only the chief executive, but also the mayor is paying quite a lot of attention. (In fact, the mayor of one of the biggest cities in Norway returned our questionnaire unanswered, followed by a polite letter saying he was so busy finding a way out of fiscal trouble that he had no time to sit down with questionnaires!) Surely, the task of the mayor should not be the envy of anyone!

In his insightful study, Yates has suggested that given the situation of a fragmented urban system and declining power base, the mayor's possibilities for innovation and entrepreneurship will be small, and his role that of "crusader" or "broker". (Yates, 1977). As the reader will do, I do, normatively, take it for granted that the mayor should play an active part in local democracy. From a constitutional perspective, the Norwegian mayor appears as much more of a prime minister than a president, if we associate the latter term with purely symbolic and head-of-state functions. Thus, if the mayor is unable to fill the leadership function in local government, I will consider it an important democratic problem.

Basically, I have suggested that the question of political leadership is related to the tasks of securing legitimacy and effectiveness. The everyday life of the mayor is a constant "commuting" between the two. How the mayor scores on these factors, will be relative to what he is doing or wants to

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do; and influenced by contextual factors and the actual situation. In the paper, I have briefly discussed some changes in contextual factors taking place in Norway. Taken together, they seem to make it more difficult for a mayor to get a high score on legitimacy and effectiveness. If so, this will affect mayoral role performance; the prospect for leadership, and in turn the working of local government.

The question of mayoral leadership should be viewed in an institutional framework. It is an assumption made in this paper, that the mayor, facing a situation of fragmentation, ambiguity and uncertainty, will tend to lean towards some "supportive structure", and that the composition of support the mayor is able to marshal, will affect role performance and impact. The whole setting of mayoral activity has become a more organized one, making perhaps, the interaction between mayor and councilmembers less important compared to the interaction mayor - chief executive, mayor - party, mayor - interest groups, etc. In the project we are carrying out, we will look into these questions more closely.

Fiscal strain, reform of central-local relations, and politization at the local level may provide opportunities for political leadership and control. Functionally speaking, the role of mayor is one of over-all coordination and responsibility. Normally, the mayor is not associated with one specific sector. Mayor and chief executive are the two most important roles with such an overarching responsibility in local government. One hypothesis has been that situations of fiscal austerity will strengthen such positions, making coordination and territorial rationality replace sectorial dominance. Ongoing studies of the budgetary process in Norwegian municipalities suggests that this seems to hold water in at least some cases.

But this control and coordination in local government policy- and decision-making may not necessarily be a political one. Fiscal strain, need for long-term planning and budgeting, distribution and access to information, administra-

tive competence and strategic position may give bureaucrats "the upper hand". Local administration does not, of course, speak with only one tongue, but local politicians can sometimes be observed performing a rather helpless role in the face of book-sized budgets. (cf. Olsen, 1970). Therefore the crucial question of whether and how political priorities are organized into the budgetary process.

The other substitute for political influence and control, may be symbolic reassurance (Edelman, 1964). In many ways, the mayor is the focal point of local democracy. The discrepancy between this visible position and the expectations of voters and citizens on the one hand, and the lack of ability to deliver decisions and goods on the other, may drive the mayor into a role of mere rethoric and symbolic action. Needless to say, mass media may facilitate such a performance. It may, in fact, be possible to sustain symbolic reassurance and political quiescence this way for a considerable period of time, but in the long run, crisis of legitimacy will be the result. In the meantime, organized interests will enjoy the more tangible goods (cf. Edelman, op.cit.).

I think prospects and preconditions of mayoral leadership are a vital concern when local democracy and the functioning of local government is on the agenda. Lack of such leadership should not make us go witch-hunting for "bad" mayors, but instead question the way representation is organized. To a large extent, this is a question of political and institutional design (Andersson, 1979; Olsen, 1983; March and Olsen, 1984).

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SIZE AND DEMOCRACY IN BRITISH  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

Two main objectives of local government reform during the 1960s and 1970s were said to be an increase in the efficiency of service provision and an enhancement of local democracy. Beliefs in the possibilities of economies of scale and the needs of modern management practice steered local government reformers in the direction of much larger administrative units. Their opponents maintained that such developments would be contrary to the interests of a strengthened system of local democracy. More remote local authorities coupled with fewer councillors would weaken the links between voter and authority. In the event the movement towards expanded units of local government was checked by the inclusion of lower tier authorities. Thus, it was claimed that the subsequent reorganisation of local government had balanced the needs of service efficiency with those of local democracy.

Just over a decade after the creation of new authorities for the metropolitan areas outside London and twenty years since the establishment of the GLC, the Government is now about to introduce wholesale changes. Their proposals to abolish the GLC and the other six Metropolitan Counties are based on the view that the upper tier of local government for these areas is wasteful and irrelevant and that their work can be carried out by alternative means. Their opponents hotly contest these plans and various management consultants' reports, commissioned by the threatened local authorities, have sought to show that the charges of inefficiency are unfounded and the claims that public expenditure will be saved misleading. One important observation of this confrontation between the Government and the metropolitan areas is that evaluating the success or otherwise of reorganisation in terms of administrative efficiency would prove highly contentious.

But what of the other objective, that of an enhanced system of local democracy? Clearly, qualitative assessments of local democracy are bound to be influenced by a host of factors, not the least of which would be a definition of democracy itself. Daunted by this prospect we might alternatively try to evaluate local democracy in terms of its success in encouraging public participation in local authority elections. Unfortunately, for political scientists in particular, and possibly for an ill-informed public in general, complete election statistics for local government in Britain do not exist. As part of its efforts to reduce public expenditure the Government has recently stopped all central collection of local electoral data although that which was previously collected was often of poor quality.

We hope that this deficiency will shortly be remedied, but meanwhile what we can examine are local government by-election results collected since June 1983. We now have available data on some 550 of these contests and can therefore analyse the relationship between voter participation in local government and such factors as local service provision, type of authority, and party competition.

In particular we will be concerned with examining the association between size and democracy in local government measured in terms of the electors' perception of local community and their willingness to participate in the electoral process. In their book, Size and Democracy<sup>1</sup> Dahl and Tufte draw our attention to the increasing problems of modern societies, the breakdown of traditional ties and the dangers of alienation. Such developments, they argue, "call attention to the search for community, and thus to the question of the appropriate political units for expressing one's identity as a member of a community".<sup>2</sup> It will be interesting to discover if the legislators' and the voters' perception of that community are in

agreement with one another.

We will pursue this aim by formally testing a number of relevant hypotheses. In the conclusion we will examine more closely the relationship between size and democracy and consider ways in which local government in Britain appears to be developing in two quite distinct directions. First, there is the idea that local administration must take advantage of modern management practices and economies of scale. Second, there is a belief that local democracy and subjective interpretations of community of local interest are positively related. Previous reorganisations have tried to balance these competing theories but the evidence increasingly points to an ever-widening gap.

#### HYPOTHESIS 1:

Local electoral participation is a function of the local authority's range of service responsibilities.

The 1972 Local Government Act saw most of the administrative responsibilities in the metropolitan areas transferred to the lower tier authorities, the Metropolitan Boroughs. In the shires it was the County Councils which were to be the main units of administration, with the smaller District Councils as very much a minor lower tier. The Bill's original proposals had foreseen the Districts as necessary appendages, satisfying those who placed most emphasis on some sort of congruence between community of local interest and administrative boundaries. Indeed, it was only with the pressure from Conservative backbenchers that the shire Districts were eventually given more functions.<sup>3</sup> So it was that when the new authorities came into being the bulk of local services were carried out by the metropolitan boroughs and the county councils.

Given this unequal distribution of services we might, therefore, expect that voters would take more interest in those local authorities having the greatest administrative impact upon their daily lives and responsible for incurring the greater share of local expenditure. In the shires this would be the County council with its control over such services as education, social services, police, fire service, main highways, and major planning. In these areas the Districts were to be responsible for housing and some other minor functions. Our analysis of by-election results, however, appears to contradict the hypothesis that electoral participation will increase as the level of service responsibility increases. The mean turnout in County Council by-elections is 30% and that for District Councils 36.5%. Moreover, whereas in half the District contests more than 35% of the electorate bothered to vote, in the Counties this was the case in only a quarter of elections surveyed.

Looking at the same picture in the metropolitan areas it could be expected that electoral participation would be greater in the boroughs (responsible for education, social services, housing, some planning functions) than for the Metropolitan Counties (responsible for structure and transport planning, highways, fire service and police). Given a more equitable distribution of services in these areas, however, we might not, perhaps, anticipate such a wide variation in levels of electoral participation. In the context of less apparent interest in local government in general the mean turnout in Metropolitan Counties was 25% and that in the Metropolitan Districts 29%. In the former case, moreover, there is some evidence to suggest the impending abolition of these authorities has had an adverse effect on voter participation - an example, perhaps, of electoral blight.<sup>4</sup>

It is worth noting, however, the considerable differences in rates of turnout between London Boroughs and their equivalents in the other metropolitan areas. The mean turnout in London Borough by-elections was 37%. Below, we will consider the differences within the metropolitan areas in more detail, examining in particular whether the age of the institutions has any effect upon voting participation. Unfortunately, as far as London is concerned, the relevant comparison with the Greater London Council cannot be made owing to the paucity of fully competitive GLC by-elections. An impression is that turnout universally in London has been higher than in the country as a whole. This may well reflect considerations not so much of community as of the high profile of local government issues in London since 1983.

As a whole range of output studies, culminating in the publication of Newton and Sharpe's Does Politics Matter?, have indicated, electoral outcomes clearly do have an impact upon the type and manner of local service provision.<sup>5</sup> Given that politics does matter, perhaps, the electorate ought to take more heed of these authorities and participate in them. More importantly, those responsible for creating a new system of local government should be extremely perturbed that cherished notions of local accountability to electoral opinion are seriously undermined by findings which demonstrate voters participate less in those authorities which have a greater impact on their daily lives than in those which many commentators were added to the system as something of an afterthought. (See Table 1)

TABLE 1:

	<u>Type of Authority</u>				
	<u>LBC*</u>	<u>MCC</u>	<u>MBC</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>DC</u>
Mean Turnout:	37%	25.5%	29.5%	30%	36.5%
% Contests where Turnout over 35%	53%	33%	19%	27%	49%

\* GLC excluded.



## HYPOTHESIS 2:

Local political parties will be more interested in contesting elections where the local authority's range of service responsibilities is greatest.

Although the electorate do not necessarily participate more in authorities with the bulk of local service responsibilities we might expect that the political parties would behave in a different manner. For them the attractions of political and governmental power would be greater in the Metropolitan Boroughs and in the County Councils where administrative and budgetary responsibilities resided. Our data demonstrates that the political parties did indeed conform to this expected pattern of competition. In the shires, contests with all three main parties competing accounted for 75% of elections whilst the comparable figure for the Districts was just 63%.

The existence of party competition was more prominent in all types of authority in metropolitan areas. In these areas contests involving the three main parties accounted for well over 90% of cases. The differences between these patterns of contestation should be seen in the context of a well established level of party competition in urban areas in Britain together with a nationalisation of politics following reorganisation which still has fully to penetrate some of the more rural authorities and wards.

It is interesting, however, that whilst the electorate do not conform with the expected view that electoral participation will increase as the administrative responsibilities of the authority increases, party competition does appear to get fiercer as the political and administrative stakes become higher. This finding has important implications both for the nature of party competition and ultimately for the relationship between party and voter in local by-elections.

### HYPOTHESIS 3:

Local participation is a function of the perceived marginality of the contest.

In order to examine the influence of party competition still further we examined the relationship between electoral participation and the marginality of the anticipated result. We expected that voters might feel their vote was more significant where the seat was expected to be marginal. However, the results of this analysis demonstrated no such relationship. It must be pointed out, however, that our data may be insufficient to test this question of marginality properly. What would be required in addition is information about the previous result and this is at present being added to our data set.

### HYPOTHESIS 4:

Electoral participation tends to be greater where the seat is contested by Liberals.

Since reorganisation the Liberal Party in particular has been noted for its grass roots community activity coupled with a strong local party organisation aimed at gaining access to this level of government. Neither Labour nor Conservative parties have followed the Liberals in this tactic. Are there any indications that the Liberal's tactics have caught the voters' imagination, thus encouraging the electorate to participate in greater numbers.

Certainly in those contests which include Liberal candidates there is a higher turnout. The mean turnout where Liberals are present on the ballot paper is 36% compared with an overall mean of 34% and in particular we should note that the turnout in seats which the Liberals win is on average as high as 39%. The comparable figures for the Liberal's Alliance partners, the Social Democratic Party, are not as

great, suggesting this party must concentrate on much more vigorous grass-roots campaigning if it is to make significant independent inroads at the local electoral level.

It is also true that the Liberals tend to be most successful in the Districts but it is difficult to say with any certainty whether increased turnout is necessarily a function of their participation in the election process. However, when we examined the level of turnout in those contests which the Liberals won, controlling for type of authority, we discovered that in every case turnout was between 4% and 7% higher than the mean. (See Table 2)

TABLE 2: TURNOUT IN SEATS WON BY THE LIBERALS

	<u>Type of Authority</u>			
	<u>LBC</u>	<u>MBC</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>DC</u>
Mean Turnout:	43.5%	33.5%	36%	39%
% Contests where Turnout over 35%	75%	33%	50%	60%

Since there was little or no relationship between turnout and the marginality of the electoral outcome, these findings do appear to give support to the style of political campaigning engaged in by the Liberal Party. At a more significant level, however, it might be argued that the appeal to the electorate on the grounds of community of local interest is one which strikes a chord, unlike appeals based on the level of administration undertaken by that unit of local government.

HYPOTHESIS 5:

Participation will increase as electors perceive the authority to accord with their view of community.

Assessments of local government reform have frequently examined the nature of the relationship between local democracy and administrative efficiency. During the debates on local government reorganisation attention was given to the need for administrative areas to reflect some sense of a community of local interest. The Redcliffe-Maud commission, set up to identify the most suitable method of reform, was instrumental in gathering evidence to help identify what was understood by a community of local interest. The response, however, was somewhat confusing. A Community Attitudes Survey concluded that individuals identified community as synonymous with 'neighbourhood'.<sup>6</sup> Other research which adopted wider social and economic parameters identified much larger communities based on such factors as the journey to work etc.<sup>7</sup>

In this light the needs of the densely populated urban areas were viewed as especially important, given a belief in the decline of urban community and the possible social dangers of such developments.<sup>8</sup> A number of writers advocated the development of city regions to better represent the sense of urban community. Indeed, the main dissenting voice to the final Redcliffe-Maud report was that of Derek Senior whose own recommendations for a system of city regions were published separately from the main report.<sup>9</sup> At the heart of Senior's proposal was the belief that existing administrative arrangements would do little to arrest the decline in the sense of urban community.

Clearly, both subjective and objective views of community existed alongside one another. In terms of the new administrative areas, however, it was the attraction of such factors as economies of scale and ease of management which were allowed to weigh more heavily than any subjective definition of local community in terms of the allocation of functional responsibilities.

In the context of the current arrangement of local authorities we might expect a much closer correlation between the sense of subjective community and the District councils than with the County councils. An important question now becomes to what extent electoral participation may be affected by this sense of community. Will voters feel more inclined to vote for authorities which they feel are closer to them and more in tune with their perceptions of society? We examined the relationship between turnout and service provision earlier and saw that electoral participation did not necessarily increase with the level of service responsibility. Here we will be examining another aspect of that local government reorganisation debate: how best to create a system of democratic local government capable of harnessing the voters' sense of a community of local interest.

#### HYPOTHESIS 5A:

The smaller the size of the electoral division the greater the degree of electoral participation.

We examined this relationship more closely since our previous analysis may have confused size with type of authority. Although turnout is greater in District rather than in County elections we were not convinced that this related to identity with the authority rather than with the electoral boundaries. In other words is turnout more strongly related to the size of the electorate than to the type of authority?

To examine this question we divided local electorate size into the categories shown in Table 3 below and then measured the level of turnout within each of these categories. The results show that turnout is greatest where the electorate is smallest.

TABLE 3: TURNOUT BY SIZE OF ELECTORATE

<u>Size of Electorate</u>	<u>% Elections with Turnout over 35%</u>				
	<u>ALL</u>	<u>LBC</u>	<u>MBC</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>DC</u>
<1000	100	-	-	-	100
1000-2500	75	-	-	75	75
2500-5000	44	54	-	20	47
5000-7500	46	59	40	52	32
7500-10000	35	48	16	39	27
10000-20000	15	0	19	6	0
20000+	9	-	0	-	-

The table appears to suggest that if one aim of constructing local electoral boundaries is to reflect the sense of local community then there may be an optimum size for such areas. Clearly, where the electoral division is between 5000 and 7500 the amount of electoral participation is greater than for divisions with populations in excess of this figure, regardless of the type of authority. Although voter interest does seem greater still in those divisions with less than 5000 electors other factors (such as the need to restrict the total size of council membership) might intervene to prevent such boundaries being regarded as optimum.

HYPOTHESIS 5B:

Minor parties and Independent candidates are more likely to succeed in smaller authorities.

Earlier, it was noted that there is a sense in which the extent of party competition undertaken by the three main parties makes little impact on the local electorate. We also noted that the Liberal Party's campaigning strategy, particularly its emphasis on community politics, worked in its favour. What appears to have been tapped here is the

electorate's desire to have local representatives with whom they have a certain degree of personal identity. This impression can be supported in the data when we examine the involvement of minor parties and candidates who campaign without a clear party identity. Non-party candidates do seem to be more successful in the smaller authorities.

TABLE 4:

<u>% Seats Won by:</u>	<u>Type of Authority</u>			
	<u>LBC</u>	<u>MBC</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>DC</u>
Labour	42	53	35	28
Conservative	29	22	45	30
Liberal	23	20	14	28
SDP	3	4	4	5
Independent	2	0	3	9

Our data suggest that whilst hypothesis 5 is substantially correct its significance should not be exaggerated. It does though appear to be the case that minor parties find it difficult successfully to fight elections in the larger authorities because of the problems of organising and canvassing and there does appear to be rather more importance attached to the candidate's personality the smaller the local authority. However, a significant factor in this relationship may well be the level of rurality, where local notables have a much better opportunity for election than in the more densely populated areas. Subsequent analysis of local electoral data which contain appropriate socio-economic measures may provide a more rigorous test of this hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS 5C:

Minor parties and Independent candidates are more likely to be successful in the smaller electoral divisions.

Once again, however, we should examine whether this relationship between candidates with no party affiliation or members of minority parties and success in the election is necessarily one between authorities or the size of the ward or division. When we examined the success rate of candidates according to electorate size we noted the following. Whilst 47% of by-election contests took place in seats with electorates of less than 5000, 57% of Liberal successes, 63% of SDP victories and fully 75% of Independent wins occurred in such divisions. This evidence helps to reinforce those arguments which point to the importance of establishing personal contacts between councillor and electorate in strengthening the system of local democracy.

#### HYPOTHESIS 6:

Electoral participation will increase the more familiar the electorate become with the authority.

We should not lose sight of the fact that for the most part the system of local government in England and Wales is barely a decade old. There is indeed, therefore, a possibility that as voters become more accustomed to the authorities they will then become more inclined to vote. We can examine this point in the metropolitan areas by considering the turnout in the London Boroughs which came into being in 1965 alongside the much younger Metropolitan boroughs which were fully established in 1974. Here we may note that the London Boroughs do enjoy a higher rate of electoral participation than do the other metropolitan authorities. Initially, therefore, it might appear that there is some evidence to support this hypothesis.

However, if we undertake a similar exercise for areas outside of the metropolitan areas the picture is somewhat different. Although the system was reorganised in 1974 many former county boundaries



remained intact and, therefore, they can lay claim to be much older as distinct administrative entities than their constituent districts which, apart from the former county borough areas bear little resemblance to the old authorities. Following the above example, therefore, we might expect electoral participation to have been greater in the traditional shires than in the relatively new districts. In fact, the reverse situation resulted. This finding seems to question the validity of a hypothesis which posits a relationship between voter familiarity with administrative area and electoral participation.

Finally, we examined electoral participation in those District Councils which could be seen as reasonably coterminous replacements for the former County Boroughs. Those ex-County Boroughs which now form the basis of shire districts displayed a slightly higher rate of electoral participation than shire districts as a whole but in general differences were not significant. Given these results, therefore, there seems to be little hope for those who would argue that given time voter interest in authorities will increase. What appears to be more crucial is that local government reorganisation recognises and endorses the electorate's sense of a community of local interest.

#### CONCLUSIONS

At the outset of this paper we tried to show how size affected attitudes towards local government and its reorganisation in Britain. One school of thought viewed reform as an opportunity to increase the size of local authorities, thereby streamlining administration and providing the basis for more effective management styles to be introduced. An alternative view was that any reorganisation must take account of the need to preserve and balance the vitality of locally-based democracy by designing administrative and electoral units with which local

populations could easily identify. In true British fashion, perhaps, the subsequent reorganisation of local government was triumphantly introduced as containing proposals to please both those who argued for larger scale authorities as well as those wanting more intimate administration.

Ultimately, however, any form of local authority which has pretensions to be a democratic representation of its electorate must evoke a degree of voter participation. Our examination of 550 by-elections seems to suggest that the electorate do not share the same enthusiasm for the larger local authorities as displayed by both central government and the political parties. Despite the fact that these authorities are responsible in the shires for the majority of locally provided services, the voters themselves appear either ignorant of this responsibility or are more interested in authorities which seem truly local in their eyes.

Further evidence for this view could be seen from the close relationship observed between the size of electoral divisions and the voters' willingness to participate. When electoral divisions conform closely with such subjective perceptions of community as 'neighbourhood' or 'locality' then voters display a greater sense of citizenship. Conversely, when the electoral area bears little resemblance to individual perceptions of locality it does seem that voters never quite develop the same level of belonging. Reforms, therefore, which focus more on constructing councils capable of arriving at decisions, i.e. keeping council membership as small as possible, run the risk of decreasing electoral participation. On the other hand, steps being taken in some metropolitan areas in London and the West Midlands to decentralize the administration of local services to the neighbourhood level will be worth monitoring for any sign of an increased identity between citizen and council and thence a possible increase in electoral participation.

The research reported on here appears to suggest that size and democracy, as measured by electoral participation, are linked. Despite the absence of major administrative responsibilities participation in District Council by-elections was higher than in the shires of which they are part. In the metropolitan areas the contrast between the different tiers of local government was not as great and the prospects of abolition of the Metropolitan Counties made observations especially difficult. However, the overall impression is that despite academic research which demonstrates the importance of politics in determining policy at the local level, the electorate show a greater interest in community than in policies. It would seem, therefore, that while parties and politicians play one game of local politics the electorate are playing their own, and rather, different game.

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THE ABOLITION OF THE GREATER LONDON COUNCIL:  
THE ONWARD MARCH OF CENTRALIZATION IN BRITAIN

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urban centres and their hinterlands. Perhaps the best example of this city regional type of restructuring can be seen in the reorganizations undertaken in England and in Scotland in 1972.

The third form of local government modernization constitutes, in effect, the insertion of a new, uniform level of elected government between the existing local government system and central government at what may be loosely termed the regional level. This form is most clearly evident in the post-1982 decentralization in France, is well established in Italy and has been more recently established in Spain. Comparable regional arrangements also exist in Belgium, and it is perhaps also possible to discern echoes of this type of modernization in the democratization of the Norwegian county in the mid-1970's.

The rationale for this regional mode has no doubt many elements with purely political considerations of regional ethnic identity playing a part in most cases. There also seems to have been in almost all cases a perceived need to create units of decentral government that can cope with the extension of state activity in the field of hospitals and personal health care generally. Another element seems to be the difficulty of effecting local government modernization of the first or second type in those states which are based on the Napoleonic model. This difficulty probably derives from both the bureaucratic and political capacity, and especially the former, to defend the status quo that such a system generates.

The fourth and final type of structural modernization of local government is what may be called the metropolitan model. This is the attempt to re-design the government of major cities by substantial enlargement so as to encompass the continuously built-up core and some or all of the outer suburbs as well. There is considerable variation in the form that such enlargement takes but in almost all cases (Winnipeg is an exception) the structure has two levels or tiers. In some cases the new top-tier metropolitan authority is superimposed on the existing structure; in others (2) - like Toronto and London - an entirely new re-designed lower tier has been created.

INTRODUCTION: MODERNIZATION MODELS

Re-structuring local government systems so as to meet both the changing functional role of the system and to cope with post-war urbanization seems to have been common to most Western states since the early 1960's.<sup>(1)</sup> Very broadly speaking, it is possible to distinguish four types of such restructuring or modernization. The first is the most basic and is largely concerned with sweeping away the local government structure, that had lingered on from the pre-industrial era, especially in rural areas. Because of the very small size of units of this traditional structure it was increasingly incapable of providing the widened and improved range of local services to acceptable standards. There may also have been considerations of economies of scale to be exploited by extending the population base of local units for the personal services. In addition there may have been a need to extend the boundaries of the urban units to encompass the burgeoning suburbs. This form of local government modernization is almost certainly the most common and can be seen in the reorganization of local government in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and West Germany during the 1960's and 1970's.

The second type of modernization is somewhat different and much less common, it remains as much a concept as it does a reality and reflects both the continuing urbanization of late twentieth century society and somewhat less the continued accretion of new service responsibilities at the local level. In some of the more densely populated industrial states, such as the Netherlands, West Germany, Belgium and the U.K., there are now belts of continuous urban development arising from the growing together of formerly separate urban centres which form a new type of socio-economic settlement pattern which is entirely urban or quasi-urban. This second form of modernization seeks to meet the needs of such settlements by creating relatively large units based on

The broad aim of this form is to achieve as high a degree of self-containment for the government of the city that is politically possible given the likely resistance of peripheral communities to incorporation in the new structure. The need for self-containment (or the minimization of externalities), it is argued, is at its most acute for those local functions that are spatially determined especially strategic (i.e. metropolitan-wide) land use planning, major highways, public transport, traffic management, but also economic development, sewerage, water supply, and refuse disposal. It may also be convenient for the metropolitan authority to be responsible for major cultural establishments and recreational space. These, then, tend to be the responsibility of the top-tier metropolitan authority. The rest of city services will be the responsibility of the lower tier. Examples of the metropolitan type of modernization are Toronto, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Barcelona and London. It is to a discussion of the last example that we now turn; not, we must hasten to add, because it is necessarily typical, or because it has proved to be a particularly successful example (although it may be), but, rather, because its metropolitan-wide component is soon to be abolished. A Bill with precisely that objective including the abolition of six further metropolitan governments (M.C.C.'s) in England (Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Newcastle) as well is now before the British parliament. Short of a Conservative revolt in the House of Lords the Bill will become law later this year.

THE ABOLITION OF THE G.L.C. - PREAMBLE

The metropolitan government for London - the Greater London Council - was established in 1965 and it comprises a top tier directly elected council of about 90 members. It covers an area about 30 miles east to west and 25 miles north to south with a population of about 7 million. Its responsibilities include strategic land use planning, major roads, traffic management, the fire service, refuse disposal, some housing, major recreation space, and cultural establishments. The second tier of government in London,



which is unaffected by the Abolition Bill, comprises 32 Greater London Boroughs and the City of London. Each has a directly elected council and, except for inner London,\* are responsible for all the remaining city services including, education, housing, personal health and welfare services. (3)

At the 1983 general election the Conservatives included in their election manifesto a commitment to abolish the G.L.C. and the 6 M.C.C.'s. The reasons given for this drastic policy, which had no support from any independent body or enquiry and was supported in the political sphere solely by the Social Democratic Party (which has since completely reversed its position) were that these authorities no longer had any purpose and that they got in the way of the lower tier authorities; and, moreover that in their desire to carve out a role for themselves had wasted public money. We will discuss these claims again in a moment, but it must be said that whatever the government's publicly stated motives for abolition in general, they were rather more complex in relation to the G.L.C.

In the first place, many London Conservatives have wanted to get rid of the G.L.C. from its inception, especially, of course, when it has been controlled by the Labour Party. (4) Mr. Heath toyed with the idea of abolition when he was Conservative Prime Minister in the early 1970's. Secondly, Labour won the G.L.C. in 1981 and set about a series of radical policies which deeply upset the Thatcher government. These included subsidized fares for public transport in London; \*\* declaring Greater London a 'Nuclear Free Zone' and the creation of a London Enterprise Board to pump public money into the local economy to stem the growth of unemployment.

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\* In the 12 inner London Boroughs education is the responsibility of a joint Committee, the Inner London Education Authority (I.L.E.A.) which also has G.L.C. members and constitutes an independent committee within the G.L.C.

\*\* At that stage the G.L.C. was responsible for public transport in London it has since been stripped of this function as part of the policy of abolition.

But perhaps the most upsetting policy for the centre was the G.L.C.'s expansion of its overall expenditure which was directly counter to the Thatcher government's major objective of cutting local government expenditure.

So the centre, by its own lights, had developed a very strong antipathy to the G.L.C. and this antipathy seems to have got translated into a desire to abolish it as a major policy priority when it was returned to office with an increased majority in May 1983. It therefore set in train the procedures for giving effect this policy. The most important of these procedures is the publication of a White Paper which gives notice of proposed legislation and states the case for that legislation.

#### THE WHITE PAPER

In October 1983 the Government published its White Paper Streamlining the Cities (Cmnd 9063). In it they announced that they proposed to abolish the G.L.C. and the 6 Metropolitan County Councils. The White Paper is an extraordinary document of its kind for there is very little attempt to match the importance of such a drastic policy with a correspondingly seriously argued case. In so far as a case for the change is attempted, it is set out in a mere 3½ pages of a 32-page document. This case amounts to two arguments; the financial and the functional. Briefly these may be summarized as follows:

(a) Financial The G.L.C. was created when the continuous growth of local expenditure was assumed. This assumption is no longer possible since one of the government's major objectives is to cut local expenditure. As part of that exercise it needs to abolish institutions the expenditure of which outstrips, without any apparent justification, that of most other local authorities.

(b) Functional The need for an upper tier of London government is no longer necessary because the need for strategic planning is no longer necessary. The Council has a very narrow range of functions in any case

which not only raises doubts about the necessity for a fully-fledged elected government, but on the other hand it tempts the G.L.C. into impinging on central responsibilities and upsetting the London Boroughs by impinging on theirs as well.

It must be emphasized that the brevity of the case made out for abolition in the White Paper is fully matched by the brevity of the evidence in support of it. For example, the only evidence it presents of the G.L.C.'s excessive expenditure is that in the six-year period between 1978 and 1984 its current expenditure increased in real terms by 65%. This fact, it could reasonably be argued, does not constitute a case for abolishing the G.L.C. unless we are to reduce the function of local government to fiscal desiderata. But more pertinently, the White Paper makes the large assumption that the government can make an objective assessment of how much the increase should have been. However, if it was feasible for the centre to make such a calculation that was acceptable to the London electorate, and hence its elected representatives, there would be no need for local government.

The evidence in support of the functional arguments of the White Paper are equally threadbare. Does the need for strategic planning exist merely in terms of whether Cabinet Ministers approve of it? Was the Herbert Commission, whose Report formed the basis for the creation of the G.L.C., merely talking through its collective hat? Not the slightest attempt is made to substantiate the blank dismissal of the G.L.C.'s major function, and there can be little doubt that the purpose of the White Paper is to announce the government's intentions not to justify them. In short, there seems to be no sense of obligation by the government that it needs to make a case. To put the matter bluntly, as a White Paper it is a pathetic document. Such a cavalier attitude to the proprieties of policy change tempts the outside commentator to respond in kind. It could not be claimed that in this paper such a temptation has been wholly resisted.

Yet the case for such a fundamental change in the local government system is, in this instance, especially urgent since the G.L.C. (and of course the M.C.C.'s) is the product of, first, a prolonged and systematic enquiry (the Herbert Report for the G.L.C., Redcliffe-Maud for the M.C.C.'s) plus lengthy departmental appraisals. The government's proposals were also subjected to the whole apparatus of consultation with interested parties plus parliamentary debate and scrutiny. Moreover the government promoting the London Government Act was not some radical junta, but another Conservative cabinet, and not a remote one either. Indeed the very Minister who piloted the London Government Act through parliament in the early 1960's - Sir Keith Joseph - is in the Cabinet as Secretary of State for Education, so he must have been a key party in the preparation of the White Paper. Nor did Sir Keith create what he now seeks to destroy in any sense reluctantly. On the contrary, he brought to the promotion of the London Government Act that characteristic zeal and what a critic might call flat-earther certitude that has coloured his other legislative exploits during his long ministerial career. Of these we may note the industrialized high rise housing policy of the early 1960's, the massive 'managerial' reorganization of the National Health Service in 1972, and since 1979 the axeing of higher education, the degutting of the Social Science Research Council, and most recently of all, his proposals for transferring a large slice of post-school vocational training to the Manpower Services Commission. Some of his, what, at the time, seemed like visionary zeal for creating the G.L.C. can be captured in his speech on the Second reading of the London Government Bill. He noted the claim by those who opposed the Bill that it was they who really loved London. If that was so he challenged,

'..... let them see that it is part of that love and part of that service to save all London from the paralysis that must come from an ossified and anachronistic structure of local government ... the new councils in their new structure will be able more effectively to improve the life of the citizen, to deploy efficiently and humanely for his benefit the increasing services provided, to reconcile the town to its traffic, and create with the years to come out of the squalor and the shapelessness of so much of the past, a new twentieth century urbanity of the best in our history'. (5)

Sir Keith's eloquence on behalf of his nascent creation was well matched by his industry and doggedness as he pushed through the Act in the teeth of opposition, not just from the Labour Party - where it might have been expected - but many of his own party (especially in outer London) and a virtually unanimous phalanx of London local authorities, professional and voluntary associations and a surprising number of independent figures (for example the Committee for London Government) and, last but not least, an admonitory leader in The Times. The London Government Act was in fact the most contentious piece of legislation of the second Macmillan administration. The Leader of the Labour opposition in Parliament, Mr. Gaitskill, not in any sense an extremist and who held no special brief for local government, was so incensed by Sir Keith's bulldozer tactics he announced that the opposition would fight the Bill not only 'clause by clause' but 'line by line'. In the passage of the Bill through the Commons 1,000 amendments were tabled, probably an all-time record. Opposition in the House of Lords was no less fierce and produced the largest continuous sitting of the House in its long history. Summing up the whole parliamentary battle over the London Government Act a totally disinterested American observer concluded:

'..... the Parliamentary struggle over the reform of London's government has been bitter and intense. The Commons spent 20 per cent of the time taken on legislation on the floor of the House considering this one Bill alone, not to mention twenty one committee sittings.' (6)

No one who is at all familiar with the workings of British central government could claim that the Conservative volte-face (Mr. Walker, the creator of M.C.C.'s is also still a Cabinet Minister as is Mrs. Thatcher herself) that the White Paper represents is without precedent. Moreover, some might argue that all politicians make mistakes and, if anything, Mrs. Thatcher's cabinet is to be applauded for its willingness to recognize an error, if not entirely of its own then of its party, and take corrective action. The problem

with this argument is that it still must first be demonstrated that an error has occurred: that the London Government Act of 1963 got it wrong. Some sort of appraising exercise needs to be undertaken and then, if the status quo is found wanting, a systematic rationale is presented for an alternative. There is no shortage of reputable appraisals on which the government can draw if time is short for fulfilling its 'mandate'. Perhaps one reason why this course was so studiously avoided is that the two occasions when such an appraisal of London government has been made the conclusions have favoured change, but have not in any sense advocated the abolition of the G.L.C. It is of some interest that the most recent of these inquiries was conducted under the auspices of the Conservative party itself.<sup>(7)</sup>

There is a very good reason for being severely critical of the abolition proposal and insisting that a thoroughgoing enquiry must precede such fundamental change, because otherwise the local government system as a whole will be under threat. The dangers cannot be easily underestimated. There is, first, the perennial likelihood of non-congruence between majority party centrally and majority party locally. This creates the conditions in which the centre, with the present proposals as a magnificent precedent, will be tempted to abolish any local authority controlled by its opponents which resists its policies; or, at the very least, hold over it the threat of abolition. In short, without some sort of non-partisan mechanism like the existing Boundary Commission, or a Speakers Conference, the only safeguard that exists against the steady degeneration of the local government system by recurrent institutional manipulation is the demand that wholesale change be backed by a detailed and a properly argued case. As we have seen, nothing remotely like this is to be found in the White Paper, nor can it be found in Ministerial pronouncements. Indeed, so far as the principle Minister, Patrick Jenkin, is concerned the proposals to abolish the G.L.C. seems to

be a kind of elaborate joke: I give but two samples of his approach to promoting the White Paper

\*To a conference of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities:<sup>†</sup>

'The departure of the G.L.C. and the Metropolitan Counties will obviously affect the A.M.A. itself. It will be smaller and slimmer. This is in line with national trends. Every book shop I go into seems to have a book on personal fitness. Everyone wants to be leaner and fitter. Where the A.M.A. is concerned I am doing all that I can to help.' (8)

\* To a dinner sponsored by a leading local government journal:

'I hope that the Local Government Chronicle can survive the demise of the Greater London Council. It is always tragic for a theatre to close. Especially when it is a South Bank Comedy of Errors. Although it had a rather shorter run than the 'Mousetrap', its cast of characters has rivalled the 'Rocky Horror Show'. Now the curtain is ready to fall. As in the "Young Vic" they have called in "The Caretaker". (9)

Mr. Jenkins's rather leaden-footed humour apart, it was possible that the Government at that time did have a case and the White Paper was merely the small tip of a logically constructed justificatory iceberg. After all, a busy cabinet may not have had the time to hone the arguments and marshal the detailed evidence if it was to achieve its objectives safely before the next General Election. However when the Bill came to Parliament, Mr. Jenkin, although he had, thankfully, dispensed with ribaldry had little to add to the meagre case presented in the White Paper.

Perhaps his failure is not altogether surprising since there are two fundamental reasons undermining the case for abolition. It is to a discussion of these which we must turn. But before doing so some preliminary comments are necessary. First, it would be wrong to claim that the G.L.C. is free from blemish, still less that it has fulfilled the noble role that Sir Keith Joseph envisaged in his peroration quoted earlier just before he thrust it, so to speak, down the throat of a sceptical London.

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† A national association of which the G.L.C. and the M.C.C.'s are members

On the contrary, it has been beset by problems from the start. Probably the most important of these has been the fact that the G.L.C. has very few services for which it is solely responsible so that it has never been able to exercise a 'clear run' in policy terms. Thirty-two very powerful London Boroughs always stand in its path. We will come back to this problem in a moment, we must also note a number of other reasons why the G.L.C. has not fulfilled the role assigned to it by its begetters, including, it must be emphasized, central intervention on all the key strategic planning decisions in London since its inception. In short, the Council has been trapped between the upper grindstone of Whitehall and the nether grindstone of the London Boroughs. But this is not the place to rehearse the Council's problems since they have been amply and ably set out elsewhere. In any case such problems have little or no bearing on the government's case for abolition since none of them could be construed as amounting to a case for abolition. Some would argue quite the reverse: that the GLC must be made stronger if London government is ever to be set to rights. We now come to the reasons why a structural change in London government which involves lopping off the G.L.C. cannot be logically justified.

The first has to do with the integral relationship between the two tiers. The rationale for the present structure was set out by the Herbert Royal Commission which was a full-scale analysis and persuasively-argued case in which the primary reason for reorganizing London government was to establish the G.L.C.<sup>(10)</sup> It was, in short, the Commission's claim that there was an overwhelming need for a metropolitan-wide authority that made any fundamental change possible. Had there been no case for a G.L.C. it is quite inconceivable that two whole counties (London and Middlesex) and two of the largest in the country in resources and population terms, could have been abolished and large chunks sliced off the counties of Kent, Surrey and Essex. The case for the G.L.C. was inextricably linked to the case for



change in London Government generally and thus to the case for the London Boroughs. There can be no rationale for one without the other: they are, in a word, in a symbiotic relationship. It is to an explanation of this symbiosis, broadly in the terms in which the Herbert Report made its case, that we now turn.

#### THE AREA:FUNCTION TRADE-OFF

Designing the right government for London is in one sense no different from that of any major city. Reduced to its most basic elements there is, first, the problem of the boundary; where does the true city in socio-geographic terms end and something else - rural community or the influence area of another urban centre - begin? Determining the true boundaries of the city is partly rooted in functional desiderata; that is to say, the optimal area for those local functions that have to do with spatial distribution such as, pre-eminently, the strategic planning of land use and transportation (major roads, traffic management and public transport). The aim is to achieve the maximum self-containment of those factors that make strategic planning and transportation planning necessary. Put in another way, the boundary should embrace as much as possible of the city's socio-economic influence area as a provider of jobs, goods and services.

From the boundary setting of the city's government arises the problems of scale. For the wider its boundaries are set the less the likelihood that a single unitary form of government will be appropriate. The danger is that the government will be too remote and far-flung from most citizens and a sense of common identity among them so stretched as to render that government no longer local government in the conventional sense. Equally, the need for such a spatially extended government does not apply to the bulk of local services; their optimal scale may be very much smaller. Thus seeking the optimal planning and transportation area carries the risk that

the master planning and transportation tail will wag the local government dog. An additional more localized level of government is therefore necessary. In other words, the greater the tendency to seek the best master planning area, which we may call horizontal area integration, the greater the likelihood that other functions will have to be divided between two levels of government - the metropolitan-wide master planner and the more local community-based unit. In functional terms, this division is unlikely to be a discrete one and some services will have to be divided between the two levels. We may call this vertical functional disintegration. The essence of modernizing metropolitan government is a trade-off between area integration and functional disintegration. There are no right answers; only a preference for one kind of integration over the other. However, the sheer physical size of even the most parsimonious definition of the real London, the continuously built-up area, is such as to render some sort of trade-off inevitable. In short, a two-tier structure in London of some kind seems to be inevitable. No one has ever suggested that it could have a unitary government. It should perhaps be noted in passing however, that the City of New York has about the same population as the G.L.C. and it does have, to all intents and purposes, a unitary government; although its area, because of higher population density, is about half that of the G.L.C.

In the case of the G.L.C. the degree of horizontal integration achieved was rather modest for a conventional master planning authority. The Council's boundary was pitched on just about the narrowest basis possible, namely the boundary of the continuously built-up area. Had it been drawn so as to embrace what a not-too-exacting socio-economic geographer would have regarded as London's true influence area, the boundary would have been much closer to what has been termed the London Metropolitan Region. This would have meant a top-tier London government with a population of more than double that of the

G.L.C., covering an area seven times as big as the G.L.C. area, extending down to mid-Sussex in the South, part of Hampshire and Berkshire in the West, most of Buckinghamshire and the whole of Hertfordshire to the North, and a large part of Essex to the East. Even the narrowest boundary that satisfies the socio-geographic definition of the true London would add another million to the GLC's population.<sup>(11)</sup>

A master planning authority for London on the kind of scale of the London Metropolitan Region would have been more akin to what is usually regarded as regional, rather than local, government. But it should not be thought of as being entirely out of court in this country for, in relation to the bricks and mortar urban core, it would bear a similar relationship to London that the present Strathclyde Regional authority bears to Glasgow. So, in terms of the horizontal area integration objective, the G.L.C. area is about as small as it can be and it is of some interest to note that the area of the proposed new London public transport authority chosen by the present government is substantially wider than the G.L.C. area. According to our trade-off assumption, minimal horizontal integration should mean that service disintegration is equally modest. That is to say, the second more localized tier should have a relatively narrow range of functions. This is not, however, the case; on the contrary this tier - the London Boroughs (L.B.'s) - have a very wide range of responsibilities and are, in effect, 'most-purpose' local authorities. This is especially so for the outer London group of L.B.'s which are education and housing authorities in their own right. But not only are the 32 L.B.'s 'most-purpose', they are very large authorities by any measure. Twenty-six of them have over 200,000 population and five of them are in excess of 300,000 population.

It is this lack of correspondence between the area and functional imperatives in the present system that is at the root of one of the problems of the present system. For it means that the G.L.C. is functionally under-endowed. Or, to use an Americanism, it cannot punch its weight.

Also, as we have noted, it had no unimpeded ambit for those functions it does exercise except the fire service and until 1984, public transport.\* Moreover, it has to share its responsibility with 32 powerful and potential rivals. Although finance is no clear guide to power, some indication of the relative distribution of power in all its forms between the G.L.C. and the L.B.'s is indicated by the fact that the former is responsible for only 16 per cent of the total of local government current expenditure in its area.

This weakness of the London system is, as it happens, largely the consequence of the Macmillan government's alteration of the Herbert recommendations. These changes included taking education and housing from the G.L.C. and making the L.B.'s planning authorities in their own right. The average population size of the L.B.'s was also doubled. Critical as this problem is for London's present government, it cannot in any sense be cured by merely abolishing the G.L.C. any more than someone's headache may be cured by lopping off his head: the two tiers of London government are the product of a single logic.

#### SERVICE INTEGRATION AND POPULATION DENSITY

The symbiotic relationship between the L.B.'s and the G.L.C. is not the only reason why the Government had no further arguments of any substance to make in support of abolishing the G.L.C., other than the thirteen bald paragraphs of its White Paper. This second reason is that abolition will destroy not just the horizontal integrative element of an interdependent structure, but the only structural recognition that London is, in any sense whatsoever, a single city.

London government has for the past century and a half had an important feature which makes it probably unique among major cities and designing an effective government for it much more difficult. This feature is derived

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\* Even that did not include British Rail commuter services

from the fact that the the boundary of the original medieval city - the City of London, a mere square mile, has remained unchanged right up to the present. Unlike other cities the medieval boundary did not move progressively outwards to encompass more or less the outward growth of bricks and mortar. The City and its Guilds consistently resisted such expansion in order to maintain their own power and their enormous financial resources. Instead the real London grew, but an increasingly larger proportion of it came under the jurisdiction of separate local authorities. In 1855 when the Metropolitan Board of Works was created and in 1871 when the London School Board was established, some recognition of the essential need to achieve some functional coherence was recognized. But it wasn't until 1888 that conventional local government was established in the capital. But when a government was created in that year that did bear some correspondence to the continuously built-up area it was designated not as a County Borough, that is to say as a unitary city government, but as a special kind of County - the London County Council (L.C.C.) London was not to be treated as a socio-economic unity like all the other large cities in the country, but as if it was not really a city at all. Its nearest approximation to a normal city government - the L.C.C. - had to share London's government with a series of lower tier units, the Metropolitan Boroughs which were created ten years later in 1899. The L.C.C. therefore had no claim to be the local authority for London in the same sense that, say, Manchester or Birmingham City Councils, which were designated at the same time, could. When the L.C.C. was abolished in 1965 the unitary element of London government was further eroded since the G.L.C. had even fewer powers than the L.C.C. The functional weight of the system had shifted decisively to the second tier. In this sense the London Government Act was, despite all the debate about the G.L.C. and the need to give London 'a single eye', essentially a decentralist change.

This decentralist change was most acute in the former L.C.C. area, or Inner London. Instead of a single government for the bulk of local functions (the L.C.C.) the area was divided up into 12 very powerful L.B.'s. Not even in the heart of the metropolis - the Central Business District (C.B.D.) - was there any possibility of unified treatment and no less than seven L.B.'s and the City share responsibilities in this area together, of course, with the G.L.C. An attempt has been made to paper over the administrative cracks at least for planning in the form of the Central London Planning Conference which has produced a unified plan for central London. This is better than nothing at all but the Plan has only advisory status. The absence of any core authority in London almost certainly has no parallel in any other major city in the Western world. As the Vanden Heuvel Commission, which was set up by the Governor of New York State to examine the possibility of modernizing New York City government in 1972, concluded after a world-wide survey of the government of major cities:

'Most of the large cities have some form of administrative decentralization, some of them with limited community political institutions, such as elected councils with mainly advisory functions ..... Intensive research to date has turned up none like London, with full-fledged local governments checkerboarding the dense urban centre. (12)

thus we have at the present time, in the name of a relatively modest level of horizontal area integration, a degree of functional disintegration - even in the C.B.D., that is substantially greater than existed before the London Government Act and also greater than in any other comparable city. It is hardly conceivable that everyone else has got its city government wrong and that the present system in London is right. On the contrary, the reverse is much more likely to be the case. For it may be hypothesized that, in the first place, there is a direct relationship between the need for service integration as population density increases. The higher the density, for example, the greater the number of negative externalities generated by individuals and firms so that more government is needed to regulate and minimize such externalities such as building regulations,

environmental health, land use planning controls, consumer protection, traffic management, police, air pollution and so forth. There are also likely to be critical non-market city services to be provided, such as car parks, concert halls, sports centres, art galleries, museums, mass public transport facilities and so forth. All of these, it may be argued, will tend to be provided more effectively where there is a unified central city authority than if there were no such authority at all. In a very real sense London has, since 1965, lived off the inheritance of the L.C.C. whose far-sightedness has masked this crucial deficiency of the present structure and, we may presume, has added to the present government's apparent inability to grasp even the most basic principles of big city government. Even the Herbert Report envisaged some special powers of co-ordination in planning by the G.L.C. in the central area but the recommendation was ignored in the London Government Act.

Yet deficient as the present system is in terms of the necessity for integration of local functions in the core of the city, the abolition of the G.L.C. extinguishes what degree of integration that already exists in inner London and to compound matters will extend the process of dis-integration to the whole of the built-up area.

#### INTERDEPENDENCE AND EQUALIZATION

Last but by no means least, there remains a powerful socio-economic reason why the Government's plan to abolish the one remaining integrative element in London government is wrong. Variations in the spatial distribution of wealth in London are enormous. Whereas the London Borough of Westminster has a tax base that exceeds that of the cities of Manchester Liverpool and Birmingham combined, some of the East End L.B.'s are per capita well below the national average in wealth terms. This spatial variation is a characteristic of all large cities and reflects the fact that location is a function of income: if you want to live in a salubrious area or locate

your shop in the C.B.D. or your firm near a transport axis, you have to pay the market price. But although such spatial variation gives each area a degree of homogeneity and distinctiveness, it also reflects each areas' interdependence. No city core could function without its army of unskilled or semi-skilled service workers as well as all the professional and entrepreneurial skills that are needed to provide central city services. Nor could the C.B.D. function as a retail shopping area without the surrounding suburbs which generate much of its custom. The separate parts of London, no less than any other large city, are, then, interdependent and that interdependence must in equity be reflected in its government so as to ensure the equalization of the costs and benefits of the necessary collective action.

The necessity for such equalization has always been recognized in the various forms of equalization schemes that have existed between local authorities in London (M.B.'s and L.B.'s) since the turn of the century. A comparable scheme will be continued in the new order and will be extended to the outer London Boroughs. However, such schemes recognize only a resource base difference that may or may not be translated into service equalization. They meet, in other words, only part of the case for equalization; to ensure the full case there needs to be some chance of equalization not just in resources but in service provision and that requires, at the very least, a common service provider. The White Paper's proposals meet this requirement for education by retaining the Inner London Education Authority (I.L.E.A.). Similarly, equalization on the service will continue to be a possibility via the Metropolitan Police, the Regional Water Authority and the new statutory bodies for Fire and Public Transport. But for all the services transferred from the G.L.C. to the L.B.'s the possibility of equalization will be lost.



THE FUTURE

So much for the defects of the proposed abolition of the G.L.C. There seems every likelihood however, that despite these defects the abolition will occur. There are therefore good reasons for briefly discussing the functional consequences of the disappearance of the G.L.C.

The first point to emphasize is the most obvious, that there will no longer be any voice to speak for London as a whole. London's collective interests will almost certainly get lost in the battle of sectional interests and the competition for public funds. There will be a statutory joint board for the fire service and an elected board for the Inner London Education Authority. Under separate legislation there is already a new London Regional Transport Authority; drainage and flood control will go to the Thames Water Authority; and Police will remain the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police. There will also be a London Planning Commission 'to advise the Secretary of State on the strategic issues'.<sup>(13)</sup> The remaining G.L.C. functions will all be transferred to the London Boroughs. These include pre-eminently housing, highways, traffic management, refuse disposal, aid to the arts and to sports. Insofar as the Government contemplates an area-wide perspective for these transferred services it expects that the London Boroughs will 'cooperate voluntarily as necessary'.<sup>(14)</sup> That presumably means joint committees.

In short, the institutions of London Government will be spatially and functionally fragmented between 33 territorial units and anything up to a dozen functional bodies, either joint boards or joint committees. Let us say something like 45 separate agencies for London. That out of this horizontal and vertical mosaic a less costly government will emerge seems highly improbable, although it is very important to remember that cost saving is a central plank of the Government's stated case for abolition. If the Government's proposals have achieved nothing else they have at least given a new meaning to the word 'streamlining'.

Yet it is not the strong likelihood that the new 'streamlined' order will fail to produce the cost savings predicted that is the most decisive argument against those proposals. Joint boards and joint committees have a number of basic defects, as the Herbert Commission on London Government concluded after two years deliberating the matter:

'It is inconceivable to us that bodies of this kind could contribute much to a solution of the major problems.' (15)

The first deficiency is that they are non-accountable. This is especially true of joint boards which the Herbert Report also noted were either the creature of the central government or responsible to no one. (16)

All joint bodies also suffer from two further deficiencies. The first is that they are essentially uni-functional bodies the rationale of which is precisely to concentrate on their chosen task - police, fire, water, etc. Their aim is efficiency within the terms of their own responsibilities and not any other public function. They are, then, quite incapable of coping with a central problem of city government, namely the inter-relationship between public services given the unitary character of an urban centres' socio-economic structure.

The last deficiency of the joint board-cum-committee is also to do with coordination, but spatial rather than functional coordination. The London Boroughs, as collective entities, have a primary responsibility to their own electorates. That being so they will be unlikely to cooperate with other L.B.'s if they stand to lose by so doing. It may even be that cooperation will only occur if the L.B. sees a positive gain as a result. However, in the nature of the case, area-wide coordination problems cannot be resolved if everyone seeks to be winners, or at least never to lose. Given this virtually inherent difficulty, the kind of L.B. cooperation the White Paper envisages, indeed requires, is unlikely to occur. Formal cooperative arrangements there may well be, but it is unlikely that they will meet the need. Rather, they will confine themselves to those activities that

tread on no ones toes. In the result, the interests of London as a whole will have to rely on central Ministerial action.

One small aspect of the new order offers some hope of re-building some order out of the shambles that the Government's Bill will assuredly create. Given the arguments earlier about the positive relationship between population density and the need for government, an elected I.L.E.A. could provide a foundation on which a new government could be built in the future, at least for the inner city.

One final thought; the abolition of the G.L.C., barely 20 years old, and the 6 Metropolitan Counties barely 10 years old, must seem somewhat bizarre to the outside observer. Can it be possible, he may well ask, that a government in an old and well-established democracy can act in such an obviously irresponsible and cavalier manner and from motives that appear to be little better than party political vindictiveness? \* What kind of democracy is it, he may go on to ask, that can allow a government to act in this manner? The answer to both questions is that the abolition will occur and the government, far from losing support because of the abolition, may go on to an election victory in 1988.

It has to be remembered that there is no written constitution that would almost certainly protect a local government system from this kind of depredation by the centre. As one respected political commentator has noted, the G.L.C. and M.C.C. abolition Bill,

'is downright improper and would be thrown out by a Supreme Court if we had one'. (17)

Nor is the abolition Bill an isolated example of the exercise of central power. Since the advent of Mrs. Thatcher's first administration in 1979, there has been an unremitting attack on local government autonomy which has evoked a corresponding absence of cooperation from many Labour

controlled local authorities. This reaction seems to have fed the centre's desire to tighten its grip on the localities and a long stream of enactments reducing local powers has flowed from parliament, especially in the field of finance where, amongst other things, local autonomy in budget making has been effectively abolished. A reduction in local autonomy can also be seen in education, housing and transport.

So the abolition of the G.L.C. is not in any sense an isolated incident, but, rather, it is part of a wide-ranging process of centralization of the British state. That this centralization process seems to be running precisely counter to the decentralizing processes that seem to be occurring in most other Western states is a conundrum this paper will not seek to answer.

NOTES

1. See Administrative Aspects of Urbanization (New York, United Nations, 1969). A. Hauck Walsh The Urban Challenge to Government (New York; Praeger, 1969); Donald C. Rowat (ed) International Handbook on Local Government Reorganization (Westport, Greenwood, 1980); A.B. Gunlicks (ed) Local Government Reform and Reorganization (Port Washington: Kennikat, 1981).
2. See W.A. Robson & D.E. Regan (eds) Great Cities of the World, Vols. I & II (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972); D.C. Rowat (ed) Government of Federal Capitals (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1973) and Alan Norton The Government and Administration of Metropolitan Areas in Western Democracies (Birmingham University, Institute of Local Government Studies, 1983).
3. For a description of the London government system see G. Rhodes & S.R. Ruck The Government of Greater London (London: Allen & Unwin, 1970); For some account of the working of the system see G. Rhodes (ed) The New Government of London: the First Five Years (London: L.S.E., 1972). D. Donnison & D. Eversley (eds) London - Urban Patterns and Policies (London: Heinemann, 1973); and K. Young & J. Kramer Strategy and Conflict in Metropolitan Housing (London: Heinemann, 1978).
4. For a discussion of the long standing antipathy of the London Conservatives to the G.L.C. see K. Young 'Governing London: Political Aspects' in Governing London (London: L.S.E. 1984).
5. Hansard, Vol. 669, No. 30, cols 67 and 68.
6. Frank Smallwood, Greater London: The Politics of Metropolitan Reform (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1965), p.276.
7. The two inquiries were the Royal Commission on Local Government in England (R.C.L.G.E.), Research Study No.1, Local Government in South East England (London: HMSO, 1968) & The Marshall Enquiry of Greater London Council, Sir Frank Marshall's Report to the Greater London Council (London: G.L.C., 1978).
8. Speech to the A.M.A. Conference, 21 September, 1983.
9. Speech to the Local Government Chronicle dinner, 14th September, 1983.
10. The Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London - Report (Herbert) Cmd. 1164, (London: HMSO, 1960).
11. R.C.L.G.E. Research Study No.1, Local Government in South East England, Research Report No.3, pp. 411-56.
12. Decentralising New York City Government: the London Experience - Misunderstood? (Albany: The City of New York Commission on State-City Relations, 1972), p.30.

13. White Paper, Streamlining the Cities, p.7.
14. Streamling the Cities, p.6.
15. Herbert Report, p.190.
16. Herbert Report, p.188.
17. Peter Jenkins, Guardian, May 23rd, 1984



## I N T R O D U C T I O N

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L'institution et la pratique référendaires locales (1) en Belgique font aujourd'hui l'objet d'un débat politique, que ce soit au niveau de l'Assemblée législative nationale, du Conseil de la Communauté Française (2) ou encore à celui de certains Conseils communaux.

Le contrat de législature conclu à Liège entre le cartel "Rassemblement progressiste et socialiste wallon" et le parti "Ecolo" (3) est significatif à cet égard. Il appelle en effet un renouveau démocratique fondé sur de nouvelles structures participatives. Parmi celles-ci, on trouve la procédure de consultation populaire, soit à l'initiative du Collège échevinal, soit à l'initiative d'une fraction significative de la population concernée.

Au plan des finalités, le référendum initié par le Collège échevinal, en accord avec le Conseil communal, lierait ce dernier, non pas en vertu d'une norme juridique quelconque, mais par le biais de la pratique politique. Quant au référendum d'initiative populaire sur base d'un pétitionnement, les citoyens pourraient le susciter soit pour proposer des projets ou des objectifs prioritaires, soit pour modifier une décision qui les lèsent, à condition d'avoir épuisé tous les autres moyens de faire valoir leur point de vue. Au plan de l'organisation matérielle, celle-ci implique un certain nombre de choix susceptibles de modifier sensiblement la signification de l'institution référendaire.

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- (1) Nous nous limiterons à l'analyse du référendum local, celui-ci paraissant le moins contesté tant sur le plan politique que doctrinal.
  - (2) Cfr. P. LEWALLE, le référendum local, Journées d'études juridiques, Jean DABIN, La participation directe du citoyen à la vie publique et administrative, 14-15 février 1985.
  - (3) Les élections communales du 10 octobre 1982 ont abouti à Liège à la formation d'une majorité RPSW alliée au parti "Ecolo". Les partis de cette majorité, et plus particulièrement le partenaire "Ecolo" ont axé leur programme d'action sur l'information, la consultation et la participation des habitants de la Ville de Liège.



L'objet de la présente étude est une évaluation ex ante du projet liégeois. Pourquoi ce projet liégeois ? Celui-ci nous a paru exemplaire à un double titre. Il constitue une illustration du mouvement en faveur de la participation directe du citoyen aux activités du service public qui se dessine dans bon nombre de démocraties occidentales ayant jusque là pratiqué exclusivement la représentation élective. Il est également exemplaire de ce que l'institution référendaire en devenant pratique référendaire peut voir ses finalités se transformer, et changer par là même de signification.

Evaluation, certes mais par rapport à quoi ? Les objectifs opérationnels de la réforme projetée se trouvent encore à l'état d'enjeu politique. Aussi, ce sont les finalités, définies par les théories politiques, scientifiques et/ou normatives auxquelles souscrivent les défenseurs de la pratique référendaire qui constituent le point de référence de notre démarche.

Celle-ci consiste à confronter aux finalités de l'institution référendaire locale, définies à partir d'un certain nombre de présupposés théoriques, les finalités de la pratique référendaire telles qu'elles se dégagent, une fois qu'un certain nombre de choix quant à l'organisation de la procédure référendaire ont été arrêtés.

L'organisation de cette procédure vient-elle modifier la signification de l'institution référendaire ? Dans l'affirmative, quelle(s) pourrai(en)t être la (les) signification(s) nouvelle(s) de la pratique référendaire ? Telles sont les questions auxquelles nous tenterons d'apporter un élément de réponse dans les pages qui suivent.

## § 1.- LES SIGNIFICATIONS THEORIQUES DE L'INSTITUTION REFERENDAIRE.

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Une réforme, comme toute politique, consiste en la mise en oeuvre d'un programme d'action publique, c'est-à-dire d'un choix spécifique de moyen(s) pour atteindre un ou plusieurs objectifs. Ceux-ci, selon l'état d'avancement du projet, se présentent sous la forme d'énoncés plus ou moins généraux ou abstraits d'un état désirable quant à la condition de l'individu et/ou de la société.

Quelles sont les finalités qui ont guidé les auteurs d'un projet de réforme qui vise à institutionnaliser le référendum, une forme de participation politique directe, rarement utilisée par le pouvoir communal en Belgique ?

Toute réforme, acte délibéré et conscient émanant des autorités publiques, est à la fois réponse à un changement et source de changement : retour à l'état antérieur ou réalisation d'un état autre, jugé désirable.

Le mouvement réformateur qui nous occupe n'y fait pas exception. Le changement qui a initié ce mouvement repose sur la conjonction de deux facteurs. Le premier, l'inaptitude croissante du système représentatif du type électif à assurer la réalisation du principe démocratique, n'est pas neuf. Un vaste courant de théories politiques prolongées ou non par des recherches empiriques, ont analysé ce problème, sous la rubrique "aliénation politique". Le second facteur de changement est lié à l'évolution des conditions de la participation politique. Aux yeux des réformateurs, tout au moins, les progrès de l'éducation, de l'information, etc.. permettent désormais de dépasser le stade fort élémentaire de participation politique qu'est le vote de délégation.

Le changement dont le projet est porteur est la transformation du processus décisionnel. L'institutionnalisation de la pratique référendaire dans le système politico-administratif est appelée à instaurer un mode nouveau de relation entre gouvernants et gouvernés, à pallier aux carences du système de représentation élective, à savoir : des élus peu réceptifs à la demande sociale et peu efficaces quant à leur action.

## I.- LE REFERENDUM : UNE REPOSE A UN CHANGEMENT.

La non-réalisation du principe démocratique, l'analyse de ses causes, de ses conséquences et de ses remèdes font référence aux recherches scientifiques et aux théories normatives portant sur la participation politique et l'aliénation politique.

### 1°) L'identification du mal : l'aliénation politique.

L'identification du mal pose la question de son sujet : l'individu ou la société. Pour les défenseurs de l'institution référendaire, c'est l'individu qui se trouve aliéné, qui vit son inaptitude à exercer le contrôle que son statut de citoyen lui donne sur les décisions politiques.

### 2°) Les sources de l'aliénation politique.

Quelles sont les sources de cet état d'esprit ?

Deux explications sont proposées à l'aliénation politique de l'individu. Celui-ci réfracterait dans sa conscience, dans son comportement, une situation sociale déséquilibrée. Le modèle est sociologique. La personnalité de l'individu, son histoire, se trouverait à l'origine de son aliénation. Le modèle est psychologique. Les deux types d'explication ne s'excluent pas nécessairement. Le modèle peut dès lors être psycho-sociologique. L'aliénation est à la fois un fait social (produit d'une structure politique et/ou sociale plus ou moins aliénante) et un fait psychologique (le sens donné à la situation aliénante varie selon les dispositions psychologiques de l'individu).

La référence à l'un ou l'autre des modèles explicatifs est dans une certaine mesure - par ailleurs difficilement appréciable - le produit d'une option entre deux systèmes de valeurs. Celui-ci est implicitement contenu dans la démarche tant heuristique que praxéologique. Les questions n'expriment-elles pas le système de valeurs du chercheur ? Le choix de l'un ou l'autre de ces modèles explicatifs ne définit-il pas le point d'application - individu ou société - d'une éventuelle démarche correctrice ?

Chacun des modèles est fondé sur une hiérarchisation différente des objectifs individuels par rapport aux objectifs sociétaux. Au modèle sociologique est associée l'orientation libérale, la réforme porte sur la société. Au modèle psychologique est associée l'orientation sociétale : c'est sur l'individu que porte l'effort d'ajustement.

C'est au premier modèle que font référence - explicitement ou implicitement - les défenseurs de la démocratie directe, lorsqu'ils font le procès du système de la représentation électorale. Ils accusent celui-ci de reléguer le citoyen dans l'aspect le plus élémentaire de son rôle - la désignation des gouvernants - et de le placer finalement dans une situation où il ne peut contrôler les décisions politiques.

### 3°) Les conséquences de l'aliénation politique.

Quelles sont les conséquences de ce non-contrôle, de cette aliénation politique ?

Les conséquences de ce phénomène, tant sur le plan individuel que sociétal, ont fait l'objet d'un grand nombre de recherches empiriques. Celles-ci visent à établir une relation de causalité entre l'individu aliéné, conscient de son non-contrôle et une variété impressionnante d'attitudes et de comportements. Parmi ceux-ci, l'apathie politique occupe une place privilégiée. Le jugement porté sur la signification à donner à l'apathie politique - jugement partiellement préférentiel - emporte la décision objective quant à l'opportunité d'une réforme et au contenu à lui donner.

Ce jugement préférentiel, les défenseurs de la démocratie directe le proclame sans ambiguïté, sans concession aux thèses de certains théoriciens qui voient en l'apathie politique soit un facteur favorable au fonctionnement harmonieux du système politique, soit encore un comportement rationnel face aux réalités de la vie politique (1).

(1) Voir sur ce point, P. Favre, La décision de majorité, Cahier de la F.N.S.P., Paris, Presses de la F.N.S.P., 1976, p. 238.

Bien au contraire, l'apathie politique est un mal à combattre, au nom de l'auto-réalisation de l'individu - "homo-politicus"-. Celle-ci est fonction d'une certaine qualité éthique du rapport politique qui lui viendrait de son caractère immédiat, direct, transparent. Concrètement, un tel rapport politique ne peut s'obtenir qu'en faisant participer au sens propre du terme (1) l'individu au processus décisionnel dans son système politique local et cela sans force médiatisante (partis politiques, groupes de pression, etc...).

## II.- LE REFERENDUM : UNE SOURCE DE CHANGEMENT.

L'institutionnalisation du référendum comme correctif au système représentatif électif relève quant à ses finalités d'un double discours.

### 1°) Référendum et changement politique.

Un discours politique d'abord. L'action des gouvernants gagnerait en légitimité démocratique si elle se montrait plus réceptive à la demande sociale. Les partisans de la démocratie directe, par hypothèse sceptiques quant à la réalité de la responsabilité personnelle des gouvernants face aux gouvernés, voient un triple avantage à la pratique référendaire. Les gouvernés seraient plus enclins à croire que les gouvernants sont conscients de leur existence et que leur volonté est dès lors prise en considération. Le processus décisionnel gagnerait en transparence au plus grand bénéfice des gouvernés.

### 2°) Référendum et changement technique.

Un discours technique ensuite. A la légitimité par la source du pouvoir-garantie par le mode de désignation des gouvernants -, à la légitimité par la finalité de son action - garantie par la réceptivité à la demande sociale -, s'ajoute désormais un

(1) Participer ou prendre part, ou partager (voir verbo participer, P. Robert, Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la Langue Française, T. V, Paris, 1972).

troisième impératif : la légitimité fondée sur l'efficacité de cette action. Les gouvernants ne peuvent plus échapper à la contrainte du but.

Dans cet ordre d'idées, la pratique référendaire peut assumer une double fonction : elle est à la fois outil de gestion et instrument d'auto-légitimation des gouvernants.

Outil de gestion, la pratique référendaire l'est à un double titre. La recherche de l'efficacité de l'action se traduit en tout premier lieu par la formulation d'objectifs à partir de la connaissance scientifique des besoins sociaux à l'origine de la demande sociale. La qualité de l'information ascendante devient dès lors primordiale. L'intérêt que présente la pratique référendaire en qualité d'instrument de mesure de la demande sociale est fondée, selon ses partisans, sur le caractère singulier de l'information qu'elle offre - opinion exprimée sur un problème unique - et sur son caractère immédiat, non biaisé par l'action des forces organisées.

Le souci d'efficacité exige également que l'on s'assure de ce que la décision prise compte tenu des objectifs et des moyens choisis, pourra être effectivement mise en oeuvre. L'évaluation de l'état des soutiens et des résistances au système politique en général et à la décision prise en particulier prend, dans cette perspective, toute son importance. "Il ne suffit point que l'administration commande pour être obéie et la décision n'accède à la réalité que si elle est exécutée : l'exécution fait partie intégrante du processus décisionnel et constitue même la pierre de touche de toute décision" (1).

Toute résistance est une contre-force susceptible soit d'empêcher la réalisation partielle ou totale des objectifs, soit d'en augmenter les différents coûts (2).

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(1) J. Chevalier, La participation dans l'administration française : B.I.I.P., 1976, n° 37, p. 103, Discours et pratique.

(2) Cf. A. Dunsire, Obstacles, Contraintes et résistances à la Réforme administrative, R.F.A.P., 1978, pp. 35-56.

La technique référendaire informe, plus ou moins bien, sur l'état des soutiens spécifiques au système politique. Cette information est utile tant pour anticiper l'évolution des appuis - ou des résistances- sous l'effet de l'action publique envisagée que pour corriger l'action en cours afin de ménager les appuis nécessaires, vaincre les résistances coûteuses. L'intérêt de cet aspect de la pratique référendaire n'est peut-être pas comparable toutefois à celui d'autres techniques d'information tel que le sondage d'opinion par exemple.

Le succès de l'idée de progrès démocratique étant ce qu'il est, le référendum peut constituer un moyen fort efficace d'auto-légitimation pour les gouvernants. Cette efficacité explique d'ailleurs, pour une bonne part, la suspicion, la méfiance qu'éprouvent nombre d'adversaires du référendum, se fondant sur certains enseignements de l'histoire (1).

Technique nouvelle dans le champ des pratiques politico-administratives en Belgique, le référendum peut donc prétendre à une triple finalité technique : évaluer la demande sociale, réguler l'action publique qui y répond, réduire les résistances à cette action.

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(1) Voir sur ce point, G. Burdeau, *Traité de Science Politique*, T.V., Les Régimes Politiques, p. 265-266, Paris, L.G.D.J., 1970.

## § 2.- LES SIGNIFICATIONS VIRTUELLES DE LA PRATIQUE REFERENDAIRE.

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Les finalités de l'institution référendaire étant définies, la question de son efficacité reste posée. En d'autres termes, les finalités que se donnent l'institution référendaire peuvent-elles être réalisées par la pratique référendaire ? La mise en oeuvre de l'institution référendaire est-elle un fait neutre quant à la signification de ces finalités ?

La mise en oeuvre de l'institution référendaire suppose qu'un certain nombre de choix soient faits quant au déroulement concret de la procédure (1).

Chacun de ces choix est susceptible par ses effets directs ou secondaires (prévus ou imprévus) sur le déroulement concret du référendum, d'en altérer les finalités initiales, en privilégiant l'une ou l'autre d'entre elles ou encore en lui découvrant une finalité nouvelle.

Dans l'état d'avancement actuel du projet liégeois, la plupart de ces choix ne sont pas encore définitivement arrêtés (2). La lenteur du processus de réforme s'explique par les résistances

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- (1) Les choix à faire sont nombreux. Ils vont de la délimitation de la population à consulter au choix de l'organe chargé du contrôle de la régularité de la procédure, en passant par la détermination de la fraction significative de la population à consulter et par celui du libellé des questions.... La liste n'est pas exhaustive.
- (2) Quelques choix paraissent toutefois acquis dans la mesure où ils font l'objet d'un consensus entre les partis de la majorité. C'est ainsi que la population à consulter déborde le corps électoral, les ressortissants étrangers et les jeunes de plus de 16 ans étant admis à la participation. Celle-ci serait facultative. La consultation pourrait porter sur une décision à prendre ou une décision déjà prise. Le consensus est par contre beaucoup moins évident sur l'objet du référendum : un objet d'intérêt exclusivement communal ou un intérêt éventuellement de niveau supérieur.



opposées par certains acteurs politiques à un choix qui commande la délimitation de la population à consulter. Plus précisément, le point litigieux est constitué par la définition des quartiers (taille et délimitation). Ceux-ci sont appelés à constituer la base territoriale d'une vie communautaire en même temps que la base du découpage territorial de la population à consulter. Manifestement, ce choix constitue un enjeu politique important. La lenteur avec laquelle progresse le projet de délimitation des quartiers - résistances rencontrées en cours d'élaboration du projet, contre-projet, etc... -. Le secret qui entoure cette démarche en témoignent à suffisance. Aussi avons-nous décidé de nous limiter à l'analyse des critères de la délimitation de la population concernée.

La délimitation de la population concernée pose deux problèmes, à savoir : l'extension du droit à la participation et le titre de ce droit.

Qui participe à la décision ? La réponse est déterminante quant aux finalités privilégiées par la pratique référendaire. Comme dans tout processus de décision où le principe de majorité est d'application, l'étendue du droit de participation est essentiel à l'interprétation que l'on peut donner à la décision de majorité.

A quel titre le droit à la participation est-il accordé ? Logiquement, la réponse à cette seconde question commande la réponse à la première (1).

L'ordre logique de ces questions ne correspond pas à l'ordre chronologique dans lequel elles se sont posées aux réformateurs liégeois. S'il ne faut pas s'en étonner -quelle décision politique pourrait-elle prétendre être linéaire, rationnelle et libre ? -, on peut à tout le moins le déplorer. Le cadre référendaire choisi, faute d'avoir été pesé quant à ses effets sur les finalités du référendum, ne risque-t-il pas d'en altérer les significations ?

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(1) Elle indique également le mode concret de détermination de la population à consulter (utilisation des listes électorales, du registre de la population, du fichier d'utilisateurs d'un service public, etc...).

## I.- LA PROBLEMATIQUE DU CADRE REFERENDAIRE.

L'extension du droit à la participation politique directe de même que le fondement de ce droit détermine partiellement (1) la signification de la pratique référendaire à un double titre.

Elles déterminent en premier lieu la validité des résultats référendaires, compte tenu de la finalité poursuivie. Elles inscrivent ensuite la relation du consulté au consultant dans un système de normes, de valeurs, de contraintes respectives confortant plus ou moins l'une ou l'autre finalité.

### 1°) Les critères de la validité des résultats référendaires.

La validité des résultats d'un référendum qui constituent une mesure d'une variable déterminée par l'objet du référendum (2) peut s'apprécier selon un double critère : logique et pragmatique.

La mesure a-t-elle tout d'abord un sens comme indicateur d'un concept ou d'une variable ? L'utilité des résultats d'un référendum repose sur une hypothèse implicite, à savoir : l'existence d'une relation de causalité entre une attitude, une opinion à propos de l'objet du référendum et son expression au travers des réponses aux questions du référendum. L'attitude de l'individu consulté à propos des conditions de distribution d'un service, par exemple, détermine-t-elle le choix de la réponse qu'il donne à la question posée ? existe-t-il un lien de causalité entre l'expérience personnelle de l'individu consulté ou celle de ses "autres référents" et la réponse donnée ? Ce lien de causalité est-il suffisant -problème d'appréciation du risque politique que pourrait constituer un lien trop faible- pour que les gouvernants prennent en considération l'opinion exprimée ?

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(1) Les autres choix quant à la mise en oeuvre de l'institution référendaire sont également susceptibles de modifier cette signification. Il suffit par exemple de penser au libellé des questions.

(2) Concrètement, cette variable peut être par exemple l'attitude ou l'opinion de l'individu à propos de la création ou des conditions de la mise en oeuvre d'un service public destiné à fournir un service déterminé aux administrés.

La mesure permet-elle ensuite de distinguer les individus dont on sait par ailleurs qu'ils sont différents ? La validité pragmatique de la mesure que constituent les résultats du référendum sera d'autant plus grande que la réponse des individus reflète les attitudes, les opinions, dont les gouvernants espèrent être informés à l'exclusion de tout autre élément.

La pratique des sondages d'opinion publique a engendré un nombre impressionnant de recherches empiriques sur les conditions de validité des résultats d'enquête. Mutatis mutandis, les réserves exprimées à propos des sondages d'opinion s'appliquent aussi à la technique référendaire (1).

La définition aussi exacte que possible de l'individu ayant un champ d'expérience personnelle ou sociale pertinent est donc à l'évidence un prérequis de la validité logique et pragmatique des réponses au référendum.

2°) L'extension et le fondement du droit à la participation :  
l'individu concerné.

L'individu consulté doit disposer d'un champ d'expériences personnelle ou sociale pertinentes. Encore faut-il qu'il s'y réfère... L'attitude ou l'opinion en rapport avec l'objet du référendum doit pour cela présenter une certaine "saillance" (2) au moment du choix référendaire. De multiples gradations sont possibles tant pour le caractère plus ou moins relevant de l'expérience personnelle ou sociale par rapport à l'objet du référendum que pour le degré de saillance de cette expérience.

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(1) Remarquons toutefois que, pour les partisans de la technique référendaire, l'information obtenue est nécessairement supérieure quant à sa validité logique et pragmatique à celle obtenue au travers des sondages d'opinion, car la situation de choix dans laquelle le référendum place l'individu n'est pas coupée de la réalité, contrairement à ce qui se passe.

(2) La "saillance" est définie comme étant "l'importance de l'objet focal pour la personne", notamment dans la circonstance de la prise de décision: (W. Scott, Attitude measurement, in G. Lindzey and E. Aronson. The Handbook of social Psychology, Addison - Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, Massachusetts. vol. II, p. 209).

En d'autres termes -ceux utilisés par les auteurs du contrat de législature, il ne s'agit pas de consulter n'importe quelle collection d'individus mais la population concernée.

Comment identifier et délimiter cette population ? Pareille question repose en fait celle du titre en vertu duquel l'individu se voit reconnaître le droit de participer.

La relation entre l'individu et son système politico-administratif s'inscrit dans un système de normes et de valeurs. Celles-ci définissent un certain nombre de rôles tant du côté des gouvernants que de celui des gouvernés. Chacun des rôles des gouvernés est susceptible de fonder le droit du gouverné à la participation.

Parmi ces rôles, celui du citoyen est le plus souvent évoqué, quoique réservé à la relation politique, voire même électorale entre gouvernants et gouvernés. Le citoyen est titulaire d'un rôle de pouvoir. "Le citoyen, c'est l'homme qui pense, non celui qui mange" (1). A ce titre, il jouit d'un certain statut qui lui confère des droits et des responsabilités. Il intervient -ou est censé intervenir- dans l'élaboration de la règle politique par le biais de sa participation.

Dans sa relation avec l'ordre administratif, le citoyen devient sujet. On parle désormais de lui à la voix passive : il est un administré ou encore un assujetti. Quoi de plus démocratique d'ailleurs tant que l'administration, subordonnée elle-même au politique, exécute fidèlement les décisions politiques, fruits de la volonté du peuple ? Le principe de la subordination de l'administration a vécu, si tant est qu'il ait jamais existé. L'extension des tâches de l'administration liée à l'évolution même du changement social - lieux communs de la science administrative - ont élargi son autonomie et rendu par là-même urgente la prise de parole de l'administré.

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(1) G. Burdeau, Traité de Science Politique, T. III, La Dynamique Politique, L.G.D.G., 1968, p. 374.

Celui-ci ne se confine plus dans son rôle d'assujetti. On parle désormais de l'administré en terme d'usager, captif ou non, d'usager-client, et même de client tout court (1).

Chacun de ces rôles correspond à une situation différente de l'administré par rapport à l'administration et vice-versa. L'assujetti se transforme en usager pour devenir finalement client, en passant par toutes les catégories intermédiaires, au fur et à mesure que le pouvoir discrétionnaire du consommateur de service public et le degré de substituabilité de l'offre augmentent.

Cette diversification des rôles de l'administré face à l'administration est l'expression d'une variété de plus en plus grande de situations juridiques. Mais elle est surtout le résultat de la prise en compte par l'administration de son statut sociologique, c'est-à-dire de ce que l'administration apporte ou estime devoir apporter à la société. A cet égard, le passage du statut d'administré à celui de consommateur de service public est significatif de ce que la frontière entre le secteur public et le secteur privé devient de plus en plus floue et de ce que dans un grand nombre de cas les mécanismes de l'offre publique se rapprochent de plus en plus des mécanismes de l'économie de marché (2).

Dans le cas particulier de l'administration locale, le caractère privilégié du fondement territorial de la gestion communale explique l'existence d'une troisième catégorie de rôles : celui d'habitant. Celui-ci présente des aspects plus ou moins variés selon qu'à la qualité de résident viennent s'ajouter des pratiques sociales dont la détermination est liée à la localisation de l'objet (travail, loisirs, consommation d'équipement, etc...).

En conclusion, le titre auquel l'individu est concerné par l'objet du référendum est variable. Il est lié à trois catégories de rôles : citoyen, administré ou encore habitant. Le choix de l'un de ces rôles pour définir la population concernée suppose que le contenu du rôle retenu comme critère implique un champ

(1) Cfr. R. Lauffer et A. Burléau. Management public. Gestion et légitimité, Dalloz gestion, Paris, 1980, p. 80.

(2) Tel est le cas lorsque le secteur public ne détient pas un monopole ou n'agit plus comme un service public pur en se fondant sur son pouvoir de contrainte. Cf. M. Saïas et J.P. Léonardi, Service public et service public, Revue Française de gestion, 1977, 2, p. 12-13.

d'expérience personnelle ou sociale, à la fois suffisamment pertinent et saillant pour orienter la réponse de l'individu consulté. Si tel n'était pas le cas, la validité logique et pragmatique des résultats référendaires serait sérieusement mise en question. Quelle serait, à titre d'hypothèse, l'incidence d'un défaut de validité logique et/ou pragmatique sur l'efficacité de la technique référendaire, en rapport avec ses finalités ?

3°) Les conséquences d'un défaut de validité sur la réalisation des finalités du référendum.

Au plan de la finalité politique, à savoir : la réceptivité du système politique, c'est-à-dire la responsabilité personnelle des gouvernants à l'égard des gouvernés, celle-ci nous paraît devoir être affectée par une délimitation erronée de la population concernée. Mais encore ? Une délimitation erronée peut pêcher par plusieurs côtés : elle peut se traduire soit par une surinclusion soit par une sous-inclusion de la population concernée. Nous ne mentionnerons que pour mémoire l'absence totale de concordance entre la population concernée et la population appelée à la consultation, une telle hypothèse nous paraissant peu plausible étant donné que le concept de population-cible n'est pas absent du champ cognitif des responsables politiques.

Les conséquences de la sous-inclusion ou de la surinclusion de la population concernée sur la réceptivité du système politique nous paraissent être déterminées au terme d'un processus complexe. Ainsi, par exemple, le degré de consensus au sein de la population concernée quant au fondement de la participation pourrait être pris en considération.

En effet, l'extension du droit à la participation aux ressortissants étrangers - les "immigrés" - sera plus ou moins bien accueillie par les ressortissants belges concernés selon que ceux-ci sont favorables ou non au droit de cité des étrangers. L'origine nationale des immigrés, leur statut social, leur pourcentage dans le périmètre administratif concerné sont autant de facteurs qui influenceront le degré de ce consensus.

Un exemple intéressant de la réaction de la population concernée à ce qui a été perçu comme une sous-inclusion des personnes à consulter, nous est donné par les résultats du sondage d'opinion mené à Grenoble à propos du référendum proposé à la population de la commune de Grenoble sur un projet de tramway, projet concernant en fait une grande partie de la population de la région urbaine. A l'issue du sondage, on a pu constater que 77 % des personnes interrogées estimaient que la consultation aurait dû être étendue à l'ensemble de l'agglomération (1).

Au plan de la finalité technique, on peut formuler sans grand risque l'hypothèse suivant laquelle un défaut de validité logique ou pragmatique des résultats, imputable à une délimitation erronée de la population concernée ne plaiderait pas en faveur de l'efficacité d'un tel outil de gestion. Les acteurs politiques risqueraient d'être bien mal informés sur la demande sociale ou encore sur l'état des soutiens et des résistances. Quant au second aspect de la finalité technique de référendum, à savoir : la production de soutiens ou la suppression de résistances, les conséquences d'une délimitation erronée nous paraissent être liées à la publicité inhérente au référendum. Les conséquences de l'inclusion ou de l'exclusion d'un segment de la population seront d'autant plus désastreuses que ceux dont les acteurs politiques recherchent le soutien la considèrent comme plus injustifiée.

## 2.- LE CADRE REFERENDAIRE, AU CONCRET.

Les auteurs du projet de réforme ont posés un certain nombre de choix significatifs quant au cadre référendaire, c'est-à-dire à l'extension et au fondement du droit à la participation.

### 1°) L'extension du droit à la participation.

Deux options fondamentales posent les limites que peut atteindre, mais ne peut dépasser, le droit à la participation.

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(1) Rapport français aux XIIèmes Journées d'Etudes Juridiques Jean Dabin, La participation directe du citoyen à la vie politique et administrative, 14-15 février 1985, pP. 49 -52.

Le droit à la participation est tout d'abord fonction de l'objet du référendum. Il se définit donc cas par cas. Les individus à consulter peuvent constituer une partie plus ou moins étendue de la population de la ville de Liège, entité administrative.

Une telle orientation a une double signification, à la fois sociologique et politique. Elle admet que l'ensemble de la population liégeoise ne peut être concerné par n'importe quel objet de référendum. L'hypothèse inverse ne serait envisageable que si l'on se trouvait en présence d'une "cité communautaire", collectivité à l'échelle humaine dont les membres se connaîtraient directement, immédiatement et où tous seraient concernés par les mêmes pratiques sociales de l'espace résidentiel.

La seconde signification est politique, voire électorale. L'orientation choisie - après quelques hésitations - exclut du droit à la participation tout qui n'est pas résident dans le périmètre administratif de la commune et a fortiori tout individu non inscrit sur les listes électorales de la commune en question.

Les arguments ne manquent pas pour expliquer un tel choix. Argument administratif d'abord : comment délimiterait-on la population concernée ? Si l'on devait dépasser le cadre territorial de la commune, l'individu pourrait prendre la parole non pas seulement en qualité d'administré, d'assujéti, mais aussi en vertu de son statut de consommateur de services publics. Solution séduisante ou réaliste pour certains : les gestionnaires responsables des services publics; les urbanistes qui verraient ainsi reconnaître les fonctions régionales de la ville. Solution utopique pour d'autres qui voient dans les contraintes financières autant d'impossibilités de résoudre le problème complexe de la délimitation de la population concernée.

Argument politique ensuite : les référendums ayant pour objet un problème politique communal, normalement résolu par les mandataires élus exprimant par hypothèse la volonté des électeurs, étendent le bénéfice du droit de cité à des catégories d'individus qui n'en jouiraient pas autrement (étrangers, jeunes).



Les liens qui rattachent ces non-électeurs au cadre spatial de la commune ne sont-ils pas proches, sous l'angle fiscal notamment, de ceux qui unissent les électeurs à leur commune ?

Argument électoral au sens large peut-être : pourquoi "gaspiller" des ressources financières et humaines, déjà insuffisantes, au bénéfice de la légitimation des acteurs politiques des communes périphériques ? Ici intervient la dialectique du rapport du centre avec la périphérie. Cette dialectique est particulièrement pertinente comme élément d'analyse des rapports entre la commune-centre, la ville de Liège, et les communes périphériques, qui forment ensemble l'agglomération liégeoise (1).

2°) Le titre du droit à la participation : habiter un quartier de la ville de Liège.

Les réformateurs liégeois ont, dans l'état actuel du projet, décidé du critère suivant : serait admis à la consultation tout qui (2) réside dans un ou plusieurs quartiers de la ville, compte tenu de l'objet du référendum. Ainsi donc, le droit à la participation pourra se limiter aux habitants d'un quartier ou au contraire s'étendre à l'ensemble des quartiers, c'est-à-dire à la Ville de Liège.

Les deux termes du critère retenu - habitant et quartier, pris tant isolément que conjointement nous paraissent mériter quelques réflexions quant à leur signification.

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(1) La fusion des communes réalisée en 1976 a abouti dans le cas de Liège à un résultat qui n'est cohérent que du strict point de vue électoral. La ville de Liège a été fusionnée avec huit communes environnantes (230.000 habitants) tandis que les autres communes de l'agglomération (les communes traditionnellement socialistes) ont été regroupées en six nouvelles communes, issues également de la fusion (comptant au total 209.100 habitants). L'agglomération de Liège reste ainsi plutôt un conglomérat de sept communes différentes, la restructuration intervenue ne tient pas compte des régions urbaines au développement et au fonctionnement desquelles la ville-centre participe.

Tout individu habitant un quartier déterminé se sent-il concerné par l'objet du référendum, à l'exclusion des individus habitant d'autres quartiers, par exemple limitrophes ? La réponse est affirmative pour les tenants du critère retenu. Ceux-ci souscrivent par là même à l'hypothèse suivant laquelle le fait pour un individu de résider dans un quartier est soit lié soit à l'origine de certaines de ses caractéristiques qui expliquent qu'il se sente concerné par l'objet du référendum.

Hypothèse intéressante à titre de point de départ d'une démarche scientifique, mais hasardeuse comme assomption (1) fondant une démarche praxéologique.

En effet, la relation qui s'établit entre le fait de résider dans un quartier et celui de se sentir concerné par une pratique sociale du quartier au point d'exprimer son opinion sur cet objet lors d'un référendum (2) n'est pas simple, mais suppose au contraire un processus complexe. Le point de départ de ce processus pourrait être le fait de résider dans le quartier - appartenance objective - et le point d'arrivée, le sentiment d'être solidaire avec ce quartier, l'intérêt pour son avenir que suppose la volonté de participer à la décision. Cet intérêt ne s'explique que par

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(1) Il s'agit, tout au moins, dans l'esprit de l'auteur de l'assomption, d'"une proposition que l'on croit vraie et que l'on accepte, sans spécifier aucune preuve à l'appui... la proposition peut être regardée, soit comme évidente par elle-même, soit comme suffisamment établie par l'expérience universelle". (A. Lalande, Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie, P.U.F., Paris, 1951, p. 87).

(2) Cet objet sera plus ou moins proche de l'individu selon que les décisions prises au terme du référendum sont plus ou moins relevantes quant à la satisfaction de ses besoins individuels. En simplifiant grossièrement la question, on peut répartir les décisions en quatre catégories selon leur plus ou moins grande proximité par rapport au sujet :

- 1.- Les décisions qui ont des effets touchant particulièrement le sujet, qui se trouve ainsi personnellement concerné.
- 2.- Les décisions touchant l'intérêt général sans que le sujet soit plus particulièrement visé que les autres.
- 3.- Les décisions n'affectant pas les intérêts personnels du sujet, mais ceux d'une minorité dont il ne fait pas partie.
- 4.- Les décisions qui n'ont pas de répercussion directe sur les habitants de la commune, tout au moins au niveau de la perception du sujet.

Il est clair que dans l'esprit des réformateurs, l'auto-réalisation de l'individu "homo-politicus" implique la participation de l'individu à ces quatre catégories de décisions.

l'attachement de l'individu à son quartier ou à sa ville (1). Les deux dimensions ne coïncident pas nécessairement. Si l'appartenance objective d'un individu à un quartier, une ville peut être déterminée par une tierce personne, compte tenu d'un certain nombre de critères - logement, activité professionnelle, etc...- l'attachement subjectif est celui qui est ressenti par le sujet du fait de la présence de facteurs objectifs -logement, activité professionnelle, etc...- choisis par lui et évalués dans son propre cadre de référence.

De nombreuses recherches, aussi bien dans le domaine de la sociologie urbaine - analyse des banlieues-dortoirs ou des nouveaux grands ensembles par exemple (2) - que dans celui de sociologie politique (3) mettent en évidence la complexité du problème (4).

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- (1) Attachement subjectif au quartier dans l'hypothèse d'un référendum impliquant les populations d'un ou plusieurs quartiers, attachement subjectif à la ville dans l'hypothèse d'un référendum concernant la population de l'ensemble de l'entité administrative.
- (2) Cf. par ex., J.Cl. Chamboredon, et M. Lemaire, Proximité spatiale et distance sociale, Les grands ensembles et leur peuplement, R.F.S., XI, 1970, pp. 3 à 33; H. Lefebvre, Les nouveaux ensembles urbains, R.F.S., 1960, p. 186 à 201.
- (3) Cf. notamment A.R. Alford, Sources of Local Political Involvement, A.P.S.R., 1968, n° 4, pp. 1197-1199, R. Putnam, Political Attitudes and the local Community, A.P.S.R., 1966, n° 3, p. 644.
- (4) L'incidence de facteurs tels que la durée de résidence, le fait d'être propriétaire ou locataire de son logement, la présence à proximité de parents, l'utilisation d'équipements collectifs, etc... a été étudiée.

Le second terme du critère, à savoir : le quartier, soulève également un certain nombre d'interrogations tant théoriques que pragmatiques.

Au plan théorique, la sélection du critère "habitant d'un quartier" repose sur un postulat: la concordance de la signification et des limites données aux quartiers par les auteurs du découpage territorial avec celles que leur prêtent leurs habitants respectifs.

Bien entendu, ce postulat ne peut fonder la plausibilité du lien entre l'appartenance objective à un quartier et l'attachement subjectif à ce dernier que s'il correspond à une réalité observable.

Se pose donc la question du sens et de l'objet de la démarche qui aboutit au découpage territorial en quartier. Le sens de la démarche pourra-t-elle être scientifique ? S'agissant de la recherche d'une formule optimale, celle-ci pourra-t-elle être dégagée en dehors des contraintes politiques par exemple ? L'objet de la démarche : quelles sont les questions que se poseront les acteurs politiques ? Celles-ci sont-elles pertinentes quant à l'hypothèse à tester ?

Les connaissances scientifiques acquises dans des disciplines telles que la sociologie urbaine ou la sociologie politique peuvent guider les acteurs politiques dans leur démarche. La signification d'un quartier est-elle la même pour tous ses habitants ? Dans la négative, une pratique privilégié ou dominante du quartier peut-elle être dégagée ? Dans l'affirmative, son choix comme critère de définition de la consistance et des limites du quartier peut-il se justifier en termes de minimisation de l'erreur ? Dans la négative, quelles sont les pratiques à retenir pour délimiter les quartiers et selon quelle modalités procéder ?

Au plan pragmatique, les réponses à ces interrogations conditionnent la validité des résultats référendaires et donc la réalisation des finalités de ces dernières.

Elles déterminent en même temps le champ possible de l'objet du référendum. Les habitants d'un quartier vivant ce dernier exclusivement comme un lieu de logement ne se sentiront guère concernés par un référendum portant sur un objet touchant à l'identité symbolique de cet espace -destruction ou réfection d'un monument historique, d'un terrain de pétanque fréquenté par un "troisième âge" fortement représenté dans un quartier "populeux" !

Le quartier idéal, ensemble où sont réunies toutes les activités de l'individu existe-t-il ? Existerait-il même, serait-il vécu selon un mode qui évoque singulièrement la cité communautaire (1) ?

Rien n'est moins sûr : comment pourrait-on concevoir que les habitants du quartier, aux caractéristiques individuelles et sociales plus ou moins hétérogènes, vivent à l'unisson leur quartier comme une unité spatiale fonctionnelle répondant à des besoins de subsistance, comme une unité d'interaction sociale préformée et comme une unité culturalo-symbolique d'identité collective (2) ? Nous ne prendrons qu'un exemple pour illustrer l'irréalisme de pareille hypothèse : celui de la pratique sociale des équipements collectifs. "C'est en prenant en compte, dans chaque cas de figure, la situation définie par la distance physique combinée avec les deux aspects de la distance sociale qui vient d'être évoquée [les modalités de l'usage de l'espace propre à chaque catégorie et la spécification sociale des pratiques correspondants aux différents équipements] sans négliger l'analyse de tout ce qui "marque" socialement un équipement - la clientèle qui le fréquente, les caractéristiques sociales du quartier où il est situé - que l'on peut établir complètement les conditions réelles de la pratique" (3).

Que faire alors ? Qu'ont fait les promoteurs de la réforme liégeoise ?

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(1) Cf. H. Lefebvre, op. cit., p. 189.

(2) Cf. H. Hunter, Loss of Community, A.S.R., 1975(5), p.538.

(3) M. Pincon-Charbot et P. Rendu, Distance spatiale, distance sociale aux équipements collectifs en Ile-de-France : des conditions de la pratique aux pratiques R.F.S., 1982(4) , p. 683.

Le quartier est manifestement une région synthétique, c'est-à-dire une portion de "territoire formé par la superposition et la combinaison de plusieurs régions spécifiques" (1) (2). La superposition des régions spécifiques peut se faire sur la base de la définition que donnent les habitants d'un quartier au travers de la signification que ce quartier revêt à leurs yeux. La définition de la région est dans ce cas spécifique à chaque habitant. Elle est de même le produit de la superposition opérée par l'habitant lui-même des différents découpages réalisés sur la base des critères de décomposition qu'il estime pertinents (espace de logement, de loisirs, de relations sociales, etc...).

C'est le sens de la démarche initiée à Liège par les promoteurs de la réforme. Une enquête par questionnaire a été réalisée, dans un premier temps, auprès de quelques 1.500 associations liégeoises ayant des objets fort diversifiés. Cette enquête aurait dû être suivie par une consultation de comités, d'associations, d'habitants de quartiers, d'une part, et de spécialistes urbains (sociologues, géographes, historiens, etc...), d'autre part. Au terme de ce processus d'échange, une carte aux frontières encore flottantes aurait dû être proposée à la population. Cette initiative a tourné court après l'échec de l'enquête par questionnaire, échec imputable à des blocages organisationnels et politiques. Toutefois, l'un des enseignements que l'on peut tirer des résultats obtenus par cette enquête est que si tous les répondants issus du même quartier s'entendent sur son noyau, il n'en va plus de même à propos de ses limites.

La superposition peut se faire à partir de la définition de plusieurs régions spécifiques - des quartiers - définies à l'aide d'un seul critère - répartition spatiale des équipements - (un découpage par type d'équipement), les limites naturelles ou construites, l'homogénéité de la composition sociale des habitants, etc...

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(1) (2) P. Moran, L'analyse spatiale ou science économique, Paris, Ed. Cuyas, p. 33

Telle a été l'orientation, finalement choisie après l'échec de la première démarche. Mais une fois encore, les résultats du nouveau découpage territorial ne font pas l'unanimité entre les deux partis de la majorité ni même au sein du parti socialiste.

La détermination de régions synthétiques pose de nombreux problèmes : choix de critères, sort à réserver aux zones qui ne se trouvent pas englobées dans les tracés. Aussi le blocage de la réforme sur la question de la délimitation des quartiers n'est guère surprenant. Il l'est d'autant moins que la délimitation des quartiers est à la base de la formation de conseils de quartiers, un enjeu politique jugé important par tous les acteurs politiques. Le quartier est ainsi devenu pour l'instant une balle que se renvoient les partis politiques -essentiellement le parti "écolo", porteur de la réforme, et le parti socialiste- en se fondant sur une lecture différente des travaux des spécialistes urbains consultés.(1).

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(1) La situation se trouve encore compliquée par le fait que le discours critique du parti socialiste est nuancé par la dimension "centre - périphérie" des quartiers auquel ce discours s'applique. En effet, si les quartiers découpés dans le territoire de l'ancienne ville de Liège (non-fusionnées) ne sont contestés que dans leurs limites, ceux qui se rapportent aux anciennes communes périphériques ne font pas l'unanimité quant à leur taille jugée parfois trop exigüe.

## C O N C L U S I O N S.

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Le référendum local : un autre droit de cité ? Sans doute. La participation directe, correctif du système de représentation élective, et l'extension de cette participation aux non-électeurs apportent deux éléments neufs au droit de cité : à son sujet et à son objet.

Le référendum local : un nouveau droit pour l'administré Certes, mais encore faut-il que celui-ci, devenu usager ou même client ait le nouveau droit de cité. Le statut de consommateur de services publics cède ainsi le pas devant celui d'habitant.

Le référendum : une utopie communautaire ? Peut-être. Deux éléments nous le laissent en tout cas supposer. Un droit à la participation directe fondé sur le statut d'habitant d'un quartier plutôt que sur celui de consommateur de service public. Un quartier qui dans son devenir sera un ensemble idéal concentrant les activités de l'homme et lui permettant de se réaliser en tant que "homo politicus".

Ces différents aspects de la finalité du référendum seront-ils rencontrés par la pratique référendaire ? On peut se le demander. Les résistances politiques, les blocages organisationnels, les contraintes liées à l'absence de ressources financières et humaines font que le processus décisionnel est vécu par les deux partenaires politiques selon un mode conflictuel. Parviendront-ils à dépasser leurs désaccords, leurs incohérences internes ? Le référendum local est à ce prix. Encore faudrait-il que tous les acteurs politiques le veuillent : tous et autant. Cela ne semble pas le cas.





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T H E   E N D   O F   D U T C H   B O L S H E V I S M

*Caja 6*

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## 1. Introduction

The Dutch communist party itself claims to be founded in 1918, when the Social Democratic Party changed its name into Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN). In our opinion, however, the Social Democratic Party can well be regarded as a Communist Party, when we take into consideration that it resulted from a split within the Social Democratic Workers Party (SDAP) in 1909 after a fight which concentrated on three issues which have haunted both communist and socialist parties since.

First issue was the role of the trade unions in the organization of political strikes. Second issue was the role of parliamentary work and in particular the significance of ministerial responsibility of the SDAP. Third issue was that of imperialism.

It is definitely wrong to say that the SDP took in alle three respects a "leninist" stand. Such a claim is apriori absurd because many of the positions associated with Leninism were at the time of the split not yet elaborated by Lenin himself. Nevertheless, the general outlook of the "Marxist opposition" in the SDAP was such that after the split the SDP logically drifted towards the bolshevik position. H. Gorter, for example, took Lenin's side in the 1912 Basel Congress of the Socialist International.(1) A. Pannekoek developed in Berlin in collaboration with Rosa Luxemburg ideas on imperialism and mass-action, and criticized Kautsky.(2)

The SDP can indeed be described as "Luxemburgist". Its protagonists became internationally known because of the polemics with Lenin, who criticized the party in his "Left-Wing communism - an infantile disorder":

Dutch Tribunists who were unlucky enough to be born in a small country with traditions and conditions of highly privileged and highly stable legality, and who had never seen a transition from legality to illegality, probably lost their heads, and helped to create these absurd inventions."(3)

And these "absurd inventions" were critical remarks on the dictatorial leadership of the bolsheviks, the rejection of parliamentary methods and of the right on national self-determination.(4) Four years earlier Lenin had used a more positive tone:

"Comrade Gorter, in his excellent pamphlet 'Imperialism, war and social democracy', wrongly rejects the principle of self-determination of nations, but correctly applies it, when he demands the immediate granting of, 'political and

national independence' of the Dutch Indies and exposes the Dutch opportunists who refuse to put forward this demand and fight for it."(4a)

The specific historical circumstances in which the Dutch communist party was created had had a lasting influence upon the international orientation of the party, even though its bolshevisation in the twenties seemed to cut off the roots of Dutch Marxism completely. Nevertheless, two aspects of the 'Dutch Marxist school' remained a latent force in Dutch bolshevism: syndicalism and internationalism.

## 2. The beginning of autonomy, 1958-1963

The history of the CPN after 1945 cannot be understood without the history of the trade union movement and especially the history of the "United Federation of Unions" (EVC). The EVC had been founded directly after the liberation with the purpose of replacing the old catholic, protestant and social-democratic unions and thus creating unity in the trade union movement. At first, this initiative was very successful, because the prewar unions, and especially the social-democratic one, had lost much credit as a result of their lenient attitude towards the German authorities during the first years of the German occupation. In contrast, the CPN had gained much confidence (and more than 10 % of the votes in the first post-war elections) due to its heroic role in the resistance. The CPN took a leading role in supporting the new-born EVC, organizationally as well as ideologically.

Both catholic and social-democratic leaders, however, saw the danger of a united, communist oriented trade-union and re-erected their prewar catholic and social-democratic unions. With the help of the government, the Marshall Aid and the Cold War offensive they succeeded in recapturing the lost political ground and by 1950 the EVC had lost its general support and, even worse, its heterogeneous leadership. From then on the EVC had become a communist led union in the narrow, sectarian sense of the words.

By 1955 this was realized by some of the communist leaders and in 1956 P. de Groot launched an internal campaign to liquidate the EVC and to call for a renewed unity in the trade-union movement. By doing so he had to face the opposition of those who maintained a position in the EVC. This opposition was liquidated in a classical stalinist way. The main opponents were expelled and afterwards unmasked as "agents and liquidators".

This was done in a report "The CPN during the War"(1958), which argued that those who opposed the party-leadership in 1957 had also been the leaders of the illegal party who, after 1943 had tried to sell out the communist resistance to the London government. The London government in turn was accused of supporting the Anglo-American anti-communists who had tried to come to an armistice with Germany. The leadership of the party after 1943 had done nothing else than follow the policy of the CPSU, which, after the liquidation of the Comintern, had tried to convince their Western allies of their cooperative attitude towards 'bourgeois-democratic' regimes.(5)

During this internal conflict the old EVC-leaders looked for international support in the 'World Federation of Trade Unions' of which the EVC was still a member. This was a rather unique position, which the EVC shared with the French CGT and the Italian CGIL. The EVC-leadership was indeed able to get some support, which worried in particular secretary-general Paul de Groot, and made him all the more careful to monopolize the international relations of the CPN. The relations with the CPSU and with the SED became strained and this 'exploded' in November 1960 at the Moscow World Conference. When the Sino-Soviet Conflict came in the open through the interventions of Teng-Tsiao-Ping and, more bluntly, of Envers Hoxha.(6)

After a furious denunciation of Hoxha by Dolores Ibarruri, the delegations of all parties rose to applaud her defense of the Soviet position except for the delegations of China, Albania, Indonesia and...the Netherlands.(7)

The Dutch delegation had already taken an autonomous position in a contribution to the Conference. Rather than a political support for the position of the Chinese Communist Party, this behaviour should be interpreted as a support for some elements in the speech of Hoxha, above all Hoxha's criticism of the CPSU's arrogance and unscrupulous interventions in the affairs of smaller non-ruling CP's. The activities of the World Federation of Trade Unions and the CPSU hadn't been easily forgotten by the leaders of the CPN.

After 1960 the CPN consolidated its autonomous position within the international communist movement. The CPN tried to steer a middle course between China and the Soviet Union and to compromise between the Soviets and the Chinese. During the Cuban missile crisis, for example, the CPN supported the Soviet solution of the conflict, and got, in return, Soviet approval for their neutrality policy.(8) In spite of the policy of neutrality and autonomy, the CPN

remained ideologically tied to the Soviet Union, above all the rank-and-file members of the party. In 1961 for example, the CPN distributed 10,000 copies of the CPSU-program, in which the economic prospects of the Soviet Union were said to be so promising that the stage of communism could be reached in 1981.(9)

### 3. Autonomy, 1963-1967

In 1962 and 1963 the Sino-Soviet dispute aggravated and on 18 July 1963 Paul de Groot held a speech before the party committee in which the position of the CPN was elaborated. Typically, the executive committee was not consulted by De Groot. After his speech the party committee unanimously decided to accept it as the party line. The next day it was published in the party's newspaper (De Waarheid). The future opponent of the new party line, Friedl Baruch, happened to be in Moscow at that time, and was given insight in the documents which were being exchanged between the Chinese and Soviet Party. On coming home, he decided to criticize the new line, which he thought to be anti-Soviet. His position remained a minority position. In 1964, after being re-elected in the party committee but not in the executive committee, he was suspended from the committee and, in 1966, subsequently expelled from the party.(10)

Was the position of De Groot anti-Soviet? The conflicts between China and the Soviet-Union were, according to De Groot, "in essence conflicts between socialist states over economic questions, over power relations within the socialist world and within the international communist movement."(11) According to De Groot, the policy of the Chinese leaders was such that debates and ideological struggle was unavoidable. However, political debates should proceed in a comradely atmosphere, without ferocity and racist overtones. Although De Groot did not openly accuse the Soviet leaders of racism -he accused the imperialists of launching racist attacks against China- the message was clear. The arguments which were subsequently used to criticize the Chinese made clear that theoretically the Soviet position was still supported.

Especially, on the central Chinese argument -the overriding importance of the anti-imperialist struggle in the 'periphery' the answer was clear. After having praised the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle of the Chinese and Indonesian comrades, De Groot went on to say:

"But the center of the general crisis of capitalism nevertheless lies in Europe and the principal force in the struggle

for socialism is the working class in the European countries, socialist and capitalist."(12)

Most interesting in De Groot's speech was the overt reliance on the concept of national interest. He argued that the CPSU could not be denied the right to base its policy on the interests of the Soviet state. Accordingly, the CPN should also base its policy on the Dutch national interest.

"Therefore we sympathize with the international policy of the CPSU and not with that of the CP of China, or Albany, or Jugo-Slavia. The CPSU has supported the policy of the CPN for Dutch neutrality; that is in our national interest and therefore in the interest of our party!"(13)

The position of the CPN could -at least at that time- hardly be called pro-Chinese. In 1964, at the 21st Congress, the Chinese policy was still denounced and the leader of the pro-Chinese group in the Party, Ch. Bischof, was expelled.

The policy of the CPN at that time can indeed be called autonomous, and was primarily directed against interventions from others, i.e. from the CPSU, in the internal affairs. That's why individual contacts with other communist parties were strictly prohibited. The CPN did not participate in international festivals like the "Fête de l'Humanité". Even holidays in Eastern European countries were forbidden.(14)

The policy of autonomy of the CPN seemed to go hand in hand with an autonomous position of the executive committee vis-a-vis the party committee. The monopoly of the party secretariat over international affairs, a characteristic of all communist parties since their bolshevisation, had reached a culmination point.

The rupture with Moscow, which was based upon the concept of national interest, had also an international aspect. This was the longstanding and intimate relationship with the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI. Not only had the PKI been founded by a Dutch communist (Henk Sneevliet), during the interwar years the Indonesian comrades were supported wholeheartedly, and for example nominated on an equal footing with the Dutch comrades on the lists for parliamentary elections. Also after the war was the anti-colonial struggle of Indonesia supported, and, unlike for example that of the PCF, the anti-colonial record of the CPN was impeccable. After the war, the relations between the PKI and the CPN remained close and the opinions of the PKI-leaders had great weight in the deliberations within the CPN.

The PKI was more sympathetic to the Communist Party of China than to most European CP's, both for ideological and for practical reasons. The Chinese emphasis on the anti-imperialist struggle and on the role of the peasants was more akin to the experience of the PKI. Besides the PKI was of course interested in good contacts with its big brother in Asia. The PKI did not support the Soviet attacks on the Chinese party. The position of the PKI no doubt did influence the policy of autonomy of the CPN in the sixties. The Suharto-coup and the reaction of the Soviet Union did strengthen the 'anti-Soviet' tendencies within the CPN-leadership. The CPN was indignant about the reaction of SED-leader Hermann Matern who did nothing but blame the PKI for having chosen 'a Chinese strategy', and comparable comments in the 'Unita':

"By such treatment of occurrences, reality is overlooked and everything is absurdly reduced to the question whether 'Moscow or Peking will triumph'..."(16)

Moscow was criticized by the CPN because it received the Indonesian minister of foreign affairs Malik in October 1966.(17)

The policy of autonomy of the CPN was also felt in the World Peace Council, which supported the establishment of the non-proliferation treaty. The CPN and its front organisation the Dutch Peace Council did not support that treaty, because "it would only create illusions" and it would only help the United States and the German "revanchisten" in Bonn.(18) In fact, proliferation would go on, with or without such a treaty. The discussion took a very unpleasant form and finally, in 1969, the Dutch Peace Council was liquidated.(19) This was an illustration of the fact that the CPN had reached a position of complete isolation within the international communist movement.

It was no surprise, at least not to insiders, that the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops in Tschecho Slovakia in 1968 was explicitly denounced in a "Manifesto". The text was very sharp and published 5 days after the invasion, on 26 August in "De Waarheid". Non-communist parties, which criticized the invasion were called hypocrites in the Manifesto, and the CPN refused to support demonstrations and other political activities against the invasion.(20)

More surprising perhaps was the strong criticism of the policy of the PCF during the events in May 1968. Students should not be considered as children of the bourgeoisie, but as potential allies of the workers, suffering from similar oppression and struggling against the same enemy.(21)

The policy of autonomy was in fact a *conditio sine qua non* for a movement 'out of the fortress' in the Dutch society itself. A dialogue was started with progressive catholic and protestant intellectuals. International commotion was created, for example, by an interview with professor Schillebeekx.(22). And A. Schaff's theory on 'alienation' was discussed in the party press. During the first half of the seventies many student militants became member of the party.

#### 4. Isolation, 1967-1975

By 1967, when the CPN held its 22nd Congress, international relations were in a nadir. In the preparatory documents it was said:

"Also after the elimination of the renegade Krutschev from the leadership of the CPSU, friendly relations with the CPSU were made impossible by interventions and intrigues from that side, mainly through collaborators in the GDR and Tsjecho-Slovakia, systematically burrowing among party members against the policy and the leadership of the party. They form cliques and try to launch sneer-campaigns against the CPN with the help of reactionary newspapers."(23)

The CP of China was also accused of such activities but in much friendlier wording. Moreover while five years earlier it was said that the mistakes of Krutschev hampered the struggle against Chinese dogmatism. Now Chinese dogmatism "has only hampered and strained anti-revisionist struggle in the international movement".(24)

In the same document the CPN leadership expressed its wish to re-establish friendly relations with the CP of China, and that of Cuba and it was suggested that friendly relations with the Vietnamese and Korean CP's, and that of Israel (Mikoenis) did already exist. Finally it was mentioned that the relations with the Rumanian CP had been extended.

Effectively all foreign relations had been cut off, no delegations were sent to congresses of other parties and the conference of communist parties in Karlovy Vary 1967 was boycotted, just as the "consulative conference" in Budapest 1968.(25) The 22nd Congress also decided to nominate Paul de Groot as honorary member of the party committee for life.



From 1967 onwards the CPN can be seen as a communist party with a Maoist inclination, united internally but isolated in the international communist movement. It attracted the most activist elements in the student movement, paid a lot of attention to the student's demands and their syndicalist struggle. However apart from the ideological and logistic support during the 1969 occupation of the administrative centre of the University of Amsterdam, there was also a critical escort of the student movement. Especially when the students stressed the more anti-parliamentary and radical aspects of their struggle, for example referring to the writings of Anton Pannekoek, and the contemporary Johannes Agnoli and Andre Gorz, the CPN was ready to correct them. Such ideas, it was said, belonged to the past and were spread by the reactionary press to lead the students astray. Spokesmen on the student movement within the party were up till 1972 still the old guard or their studying children.(26)

In 1972, at the 24st Congress, the number of students among the delegates was still a mere 18, but in 1975 the number of student delegates jumped to 69. from table I it can easily be seen that between 1972 and 1975 an enormous shift has taken place in the social composition of the of the congress. The manual workers representation declined while the student, teachers and academic representation jumped from a mere 36 in 1972 to 141 in 1975. This trend continued after 1975. In 1977 the 'educational field' was represented by 138 delegates, somewhat less teachers and students, but now many university lecturers. At the same time a brand new occupational group jumped to the fore: the welfare workers formed in 1977 nearly 10 % of the delegates. The pattern is clear enough: after 1970 students enter the party and by 1975 they form, together with the teachers nearly a quarter of the delegates. By 1977 they have outnumbered the manual workers.

Tabel I

	1967	1970	1972	1975	1977	1980
Number of delegates	436	437	432	545	485	489
Building workers	94	77	77	66	-	23
Metal workers	67	87	61	69	-	36
Printing trade	39	27	21	15	-	-
Dockers	-	6	16	-	-	-
Factory workers, a.o.	-	17	21	-	-	30
(Manual workers)	(200)	(214)	(196)	(169)	(130)	(89)
Office Workers "Services"	35 -	39 55	43 26	64 20	31 -	22 -
Agrarian sector	-	4	-	4	1	-
Teachers	-	3	9	53	37	65
Academic professions	8*	3	9	20	47	28
Students	7	16	18	69	54	27
Artists	7*	3	7	7	5	-
Civil servants	-	-	-	9	21	30
Shopkeepers	10	3	9	3	9	-
Nurses	-	-	-	11	10	27
Welfare workers	-	-	-	17	43	42
Party workers	-	-	-	9	-	-
Journalists**	-	18	24	25	27	19
Housewives	28	-	-	-	-	30
Without occupation	-	-	-	62	-	31
Unemployed	-	-	-	-	-	20
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	22	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>448</b>

\* In 1967 these categories were taken together

\*\* These journalists were all working for the party paper and should be considered as party workers

(Sources: "Politiek en Cultuur", 1968:2; 1970:119; 1972:334; 1975:241; 1978:107; "Verslag 27e partij congres van de CPN, 1980:167)

This can also be seen in the age composition of the congress delegates. Till 1972 the age composition is fairly stable. The age group between 18 and 25 contains some 55-60 delegates. But in 1975 this number nearly doubled to 105. The next age group also nearly doubled between 1972 and 1975. Together, these two age groups formed the majority of the delegates after 1975.

Does this mean that by 1975 the conception of the CPN has altered dramatically and moved to a more Euro-communist position? Far from it. Rather than breaking up the stalinist isolation in which the party found itself, the new generation of student activists was absorbed, at least for the time being, into the existing party-structure and marxist-leninist party-culture.

Tabel II

Age distribution of delegates

	1967	1870	1972	1975	1977	1980
Number of delegates	436	437	432	545	485	489
Number of women	-	67	69	90	83	133
18-25	55	57	58	105	72	****
26-35	-*	98	110	199	231	****
36-45	-*	105	110	79	74	****
46-55	-*	120	95	94	63	****
56-65	47	47	51	42	63	34
above 65	10	7	8	8	7	11
(unknown)		(3)**		(17)**		

\* 26-40= 138, and 41-55= 186

\*\* This number is not explained in the documents

\*\*\* 18-30= 189, 31-40= 171, 41-55= 84

The international position of the CPN contributed 'ex silentio' to its success in the first half of the seventies. The fact that the party was not allied to 'Moscow' made it difficult to make the 'Gulag' a political issue within the party. Both pro-Soviet as anti-Soviet partisans could live in peaceful co-existence. The Soviet-Union was typically a non-issue in the party debates. The primary goal of the leadership was not to have the party split along the lines of the Sino-Soviet conflict. This meant that each

individual member could have his/her own interpretation of the conflict and judge the Soviet-Union accordingly, under the condition that the issue was not taken up to the Congress. Nobody was obliged to defend the Soviet-Union, although it was not allowed to support the 'dissidents' either. Furthermore, the intermediate position of the party left little room for Maoist or Trotskyist groups, which were so successful in France, Germany and Great Britain. Although Maoist groups had some impact between 1969 and 1972 they remained very small indeed. Only the KEN, a Maoist group, recruited some students, and laid the basis for the very tiny "Socialist Party".(27)

In fact a Maoist line was being elaborated in the publications of the 1969 founded scientific bureau of the CPN (IPSO) headed by grand old Paul de Groot. In a publication of the proceedings of the 1970 London conference of Western European parties on multinational corporations, the autonomous position was expressed in criticism on the contributions of the French and British parties.(28) In 1971 the publication of "Stalin contra Hitler" was in fact no less than a rehabilitation of Stalin.(29)

The pro-Moscow group of Baruch, on the other hand, could of course not count on any support among the radicalized students. The only serious competitor of the CPN was the PSP, the pacifist socialist party, which in a sense was politically closer to the student movement (30), but lacked the workers constituency which made the CPN attractive in the eyes of the 'workerist' students. That the PSP was a potential competitor of the CPN was well realized by the CPN leadership who attacked the PSP violently, the more so because part of the old EVC opposition had gone over to the PSP. The stalinist and sectarian character of the CPN found its overt expression in these attacks. "Renegades" were supposed to work with the police by presenting wrong and harmful theories to the students. Such was the opinion, for example, about G. Harmsen, who was expelled in 1957. In 1971 his activities in the party were described as follows:

"As a member of the CPN, being active in the schooling he tried to separate theoretical knowledge and practical struggle, but he was soon unmasked and dismissed. After that he hanged about in a more and more degenerating PSP."(31)

Afterwards, when Harmsen received a chair in Eastern-European philosophy, he was called a "Nato-professor".(32) In 1972 it was suggested that "De Groene", a progressive weekly, was financed by anti-communist circles to defend a "Nixon-line"(33). Such

allegations, however, did not seem to withhold students from entering the party and becoming enthusiast militants.

As stated above, this was due to several factors which coincided for some time.

- 1) The consolidation of the positions of the student movement.
- 2) The increased militancy of the trade unions and the apparent succes of the party-line vis-a-vis the trade union movement.
- 3) The organizational strength of the party in relation to the strength of other radical groups.
- 4) The non-identification with the Soviet-Union.
- 5) The fact that the social-democratic party (PvdA) was fully unable to provide answers to the vindications of the student movement, with respect to the democratisation of the university, the theoretical debate on socialism and the anti-imperialist struggle. In 1970 the labour fraction in parliament still defended the bombing of North-Vietnam. The PvdA was in a deep crisis.(34)

## 5. Electoral support

After the Second World War the CPN, which had been no more than an electoral dwarf before that war, suddenly appealed to many voters. In the national elections of 1946 the party got more than ten percent of the votes. In 1945 the communist paper *De Waarheid* had been the largest paper with a circulation of more than 300,000. However, the communists slowly lost their electoral support, under circumstances which were quite similar to that in other countries. Despite the party's opposition against the colonial war in Indonesia, for which the labour party was also responsible, the CPN did not make persistent inroads in the social democratic constituency. On the contrary, in the 1948 election they lost more than two per cent, and after that time the communist electorate slowly crumbled, although not as quick as is often suggested. In 1956 the CPN still gained nearly 5 per cent of the votes, and it was not till after a verocious internal fight, which ended in a split, that the electoral support fell to a mere 2.4 per cent.(35) The party only slowly recovered, but the recovery was steady: in each new election the CPN regained a seat until in the 1972 parliamentary elections it became the fourth party, with seven MP's, behind the Labour Party, the Catholic Party and the Anti-Revolutionary (protestant) Party. It had the same number of MP's as the traditional protestant CHU. Although in the provincial elections of 1974 the CPN lost considerably (from 4.5 to 3.5 per cent) this was not taken as a sign of a rupture in this trend, and the party campaigned in the 1977 election with the far reaching slogan "Van Agt eruit, the CPN erin": the catholic prime minister, Van Agt, should leave the cabinet, while the CPN should enter it. Although many members and adherents did not agree with the latter part of the slogan, very few foresaw the electoral disaster of 1977.(36)

Tabel III Results of parliamentary elections, 1946-1983.

	MP's	(%)
1946	10	10.6
1948	8	7.7
1952	6	6.2
1956	7	4.8
1959	3	2.4
1963	4	2.8
1967	5	3.6
1971	6	3.9
1972	7	4.5
1977	2	1.7
1981	3	2.1
1982	3	2

(Source: C. van der Eijk and B. Niemoller, Electoral Change in the Netherlands, Amsterdam 1983)

After the 1977 elections a party struggle was launched by Paul de Groot. (37) His defeat would eventually pave the way for the defeat of stalinism within the party and of the old leadership. We will come to that later, but first analyse the integration of student militants in the party organization and the relationship between CPN and student movement.

## 6. The student movement

The student movement started in the Netherlands with the foundation of the Studentenvakbeweging (SVB) in 1963. The initiator, Ton Regtien, was a student from Nijmegen and had been inspired by the French UNEF and its definition of students as "jeunes travailleurs intellectuels", who, being dependent on state support, should organize themselves in a student syndicate to defend their material interests.(38) At the same time, the SVB attacked the archaic structures of the Dutch universities and the very conservative student fraternities which dominated social and political life of the students. Dutch universities until the sixties were still modelled after the academic tradition of a past century. They were anachronistic institutions which were by no means fit for modern higher education where at least half of the student population did not come from traditional academic and bourgeois families. These students were dependent on state support. Furthermore, the number of students doubled between 1964 and 1971, and the number of students in social sciences even tripled (39).

De SVB was extremely succesful both in its syndicalist strategy and in its attack on the archaic university structures. While the economy was booming, the scholarship system expanded rapidly. The mouldered academic structures collapsed under the attacks of the rapidly growing SVB, applauded by the press, a large part of the public, and, last but not least, by the social-democratic political elite, who had, as students, suffered themselves from the arrogance of student fraternities and the despotism of old fashioned professors. Most important, however, was the need to modernize the universities, to democratize them, as it was called. Sooner or later the difference between what the students understood as democratisation and what the educational authorities had in mind, had to come in the open, even though neither of them had a very clear concept of what they wanted. Under the influence of the Provo movement in 1965/ 1966, the student movement rapidly radicalized, while the influence of French, German and American radicalism was strong. Especially the May 1968 events resounded in Holland, and by that time academic democracy was defined as 'one man one vote'. A conflict with the administration of the (relatively progressive) University of Amsterdam led to the occupation of the administrative center (de Maagdenhuisbezetting), May 1969.



By that time the students had lost the support of the press and of the Labour Party, which now supported the clearing of the Maagdenhuis by a massive police force. The only party which supported the students wholeheartedly was the CPN. Communist workers constructed an airbridge between the besieged Maagdenhuis and the adjacent university library; their wives collected rolls and tobacco for the occupants. In the parliament, communist MP's stood up for the rebels. ( 40)

It should be stressed here that the strategy of the CPN vis- a-vis the student movement was radically different from that of the PCF, who scoulded the students as 'fils de papa'. (41) This different line was not without difficulties imposed on the rank and file, using classical democratic-centralist methods. (42) By that time none of the student activists had yet entered the party. With a few exceptions, communist students were only those who came from communist families. ( 43)

After May 1969 the SVB broke up and a myriad of Maoist, Troskyist, anarchist and communist factions tried to control the local and national student organizations, resulting in a complete breakdown of these institutions. (44) It was not till 1971 that the student movement recovered from this fragmentation and in the proces of recovery the CPN played an important role. From then on, many student activists who wanted to continue the syndicalist line opted for a party card. Such a card, however, was not always easy obtained. Student leaders were generally barred from the party for some years. Ton Regtien, for example, was not admitted because, it was said, he had in his 1969 book on the student movement introduced the ideas of Andre Gorz. (45) Such student leaders retained, in spite of this, friendly relations with the party, often participated in party work and continued to call for support for a party from which they themselves were barred. Especially after the convocation of a number of leading students to vote communist in the 1971 elections many students applied for membership. Between 1972 and 1977 membership of the CPN increased with 4.354 (46). Our estimate is that in that period some 7000 students applied for membership. Subsequently, the 'lower echelons' of the student movement were enrolled in the party, but, being without leadership, they had no defense against the stalinist mode of control within the party. Worse, many of them rose to positions in which they were supposed to "guide" the student movement in the right direction, while the more creative and prominent militants were paralyzed by waiting for the party card.

Thus bureaucratic centralism within the party and interventions in the student unions were typical of the period 1972-1977.( 47)

However, the influence of the CPN should not be taken only negatively. The period in question was one of consolidation of power positions which had been gained during the upswing of the "revolutionary sixties" and the CPN was an important vehicle for such consolidation since the communist party knew better than the students what it meant to loose a battle and had a long experience of syndicalist struggle. Furthermore, the party played an important role in extending the struggle into the field of health service and primary education.

In judging the relationship between CPN and student movement one should never forget that by 1971 the struggle of the students had become a defensive one. For one, because in 1970 the catholic minister of education, Veringa, had proposed a university reform which went so far that many socialist professors opposed it as too radical. One of them commented that in a country where the student movement had been relatively weak, the legislative concessions had gone excessively far (48). These reforms were gradually dismantled in a concerted action of the ministry of education and a conservative university lobby (49) Secondly, in the field of syndicalist action proper the students could only slow down the pace of deterioration of the standard of living of the student population which was inflicted upon them during the economic crisis.

## 7. Students in the party organization.

Those students who entered the party mainly on the basis of workerist sentiments, must have been slightly disappointed. Firstly, the party encouraged the students to be active in their own field, at the university. And as far as they were encouraged to do party work this was done in the local branches which were regionally organized. The organization in 'cells', based on industry or trade had been abolished in favour of an organization based on neighbourhood and living. These 'afdelingen' were run predominantly by pensioners and women, while the active workers were organized separately in 'enterprise groups'. Students were asked to do organizational work for the communist daily, "De Waarheid", i.e. raising money, distributing the paper and campaigning for new subscriptions. The circulation of De Waarheid expanded from 1972 to 1980 with 1000 to 2000 subscriptions per year except for 1974, when it expanded only slightly, and 1977, when there was a slight decline. (50) University teachers were induced to engage in syndicalist struggle but never approached in their capacity of intellectuals, neither in the context of their university work, nor as party intellectuals. The scientific bureau of the party (IPSO), headed by grand old Paul the Groot, invited some younger intellectuals, but only those who had a formal education in natural science. Social scientists and historians were effectively barred from theoretical work. At a regional level, in Groningen, the situation was slightly different. Under the popular leadership of Fre Meis not only the student leaders were invited to take part in party work, but also university students and teachers were encouraged to do researchwork. This research should support the struggle of the workers and included detailed investigation of labour conditions in local industry and the possibilities for regional development. Groningen, therefore, was atypical of the general party line, created a more stable alliance between students and workers and remained a stalinist stronghold for a long time to come. (51)

In general, however, the party remained aloof from the theoretical discussions on marxism, which were engaged at the universities during the seventies. Such discussions were organized by others, such as the Socialistische Uitgeverij Nijmegen (SUN), which started as a student publishing house but soon professionalized and was until the eighties quite successful in introducing the 'French discussion'

(Althusser, and later Foucault). The SUN was attacked with stalinist arguments. A strongly anti-intellectual climate remained dominant within the party, with the result that party intellectuals refrained from theoretical debate altogether, or separated their intellectual activity from their party activity. Be it as it was, the party had little influence on scientific discussions. Its influence was mainly negative. Negative in two ways: it did nothing to stimulate these discussions, and the party interfered negatively when its position was (supposed to be) at stake. The party's influence has often been overestimated: it wanted, and in fact could only use its organizational power to prevent declared 'enemies of the party' from getting university nominations on the ticket of representing the student movement. Such cases were rare. The party line was primarily damaging its potential influence within the universities.

So far we discussed the advantages of the massive entrance of student members for the party. But what did the party give in return? In structural terms the effectivity of students who became a member of the party increased. The party organized their student members in 'student groups' where syndicalist strategies were discussed, and tactics were developed. The unified interventions of the party members in the student unions were meant to increase the power of these unions ( this was, of course contested by non-communist members) but it certainly increased the influence of the communist members within the unions. A related appeal of the party was its historical experience with syndicalist and socialist struggle. The CPN was regarded as a revolutionary party fighting for a better society. Even in its distorted, stalinist form, the experience and knowledge of elder party cadres were often very useful in the struggle waged against more conservative groups within the university staff. Even in the field of theory and research itself the views of the party, which were anathema in the academic discussions, formed for many students a very stimulating alternative to the rigidly positivistic and apologetic social sciences. A third factor in the appeal of the CPN was its heroism in the Second World War. The elder members often had been active in the Resistance in the Spanish Civil War. Many students felt they could learn from such persons, admired them and were proud to have a comradely relation with such distinguished heroes. The more so because those communist militants had been and still were undervalued and maltreated by the rest of society(52). A fourth attraction for the students was the hatred for social-democratic hypocrisy with which the students were confronted in their struggle against professors,

faculty boards and the ministry of education. Within the university some of the students' worst enemies' were important members of the labour party, while at the same time the social democrats were needed as coalition partners. A fifth factor of communist appeal was the sense of belonging which resulted from an active membership. This sense of belonging not only existed at the level of ideology, in the way Aron suggests, but also, and may be even more so at the social level, where students came into contact, often for the first time, with working class culture. The culture of sharing, cosiness and familiarity contrasted sharply with the middle class culture of possessive individualism, formalism and containment in the nuclear family.

## 8. The workers.

As elsewhere the communist party had its strongholds in traditional industries: in the port of Amsterdam, the ship yards, heavy metal, the building trade and the board factories in Groningen. In the modern industries, and especially in the large multinationals, their influence was very small indeed. The restructuring of industry which started in the sixties met with resistance in the backward industrie, and this resistance was organized by the CPN. This meant, however, that the communist-lead struggles were mainly defensive.

The CPN had to confront another difficulty, which was more specific for the Dutch labour relations. After the party had liquidated its 'own' trade unions, the EVC, in 1958, communist workers were induced to join the social democratic unions. This, however, was easier said than done. For one, because these unions tried to prevent communist workers from joining, by erecting formal and informal barriers. In fact, the only way to join these unions was to conceal the membership of the party, but this strategy was not open to the well known communists at the shop floor. At the same time, and partly as a result of this, many rank and file members flatly refused to join these anti-communist 'traitor unions' and continued to organize themselves along the old syndicalist lines, organizing also non communist workers outside the 'official' unions in so-called 'action committees'. Especially in Groningen and in the ship yards these 'action committees' flourished, causing great trouble for the corporatist unions. In the building trade the old communist dominated EVC union (ABWB) even continued to exist. The leadership of the communist party had to steer a middle course between the official line of working within the large social-democratic unions and the line of the 'action committees' which organized often the more anarchist and radical workers, but also, and at the same time, those communists who were not admitted in the social-democratic unions. This strategic problem divided the workers within the party, the above mentioned 'middle road' was in fact a zig-zag course which was also used, to complicate the matters even more, to crush opposition in the party. In short, workers organized in 'action committees' always ran the risk of being accused of not following the party line and being anarchistic, whereas those who held a - always precarious - position in the unions ran the risk of being scolded 'reformists' who yielded to the trade union leadership.

An example of the first tendency was the 1966 revolt of the building workers who were not organized in the official trade unions. When the latter, in collaboration with the employers, threatened to punish them financially for not being unionized (at least not in the 'proper' unions) the communists organized a demonstration in front of the union office, in which a worker died. The rumor spread that he was killed by a police bullet. When 'De Telegraaf', a reactionary paper, wrote that he died of a heart attack (which was true), the workers smashed the windows of the paper's offices. (53) De CPN denounced the riots as organized by the Provo's (who did indeed participate) and took, in secret, disciplinary measures against the party members who had led the demonstration.

In 1970, a strike broke out in the docks of Rotterdam, this time led by a Maoist group, but again directed against the policy of the social democratic union. The Maoist action committee was condemned and when the strikers were in a deadlock, because the employers were unwilling to give in to the demands, the party intervened successfully by sending the charismatic Fre Meis, who negotiated a compromise. (54)

These examples show how the party was most successful when the workers revolted against the corporatist trade union structure, but at the same time did not want to attack the trade unions frontally. The party was in practice radical reformist rather than revolutionary.

The communists were successful in forcing the unions in a more radical stance, but did so mainly from outside. When, for example the union of metal workers, after merging with some smaller unions into "Industriebond NVV" radicalized under the leadership of Arie Groenevelt, this was not due to internal pressure of communist cadres, since they were still excluded and chased after. (55) Only in the teachers union (ABOP) and the civil servants union (ABVA) the party made some progress, mainly through its influence among (university) teachers, welfare workers and nurses. (56).

In Groningen, again, the situation was different. The position of the official unions was weak both in the agrarian sector and in the board industry. Communist organized action committees were strong and 'hegemonic' as they organized also students and were broadly supported by the Groninger population. They organized at the end of the sixties a number of successful strikes (57), but could not prevent the dismantling of the board industry (58).

To sum up, communist workers were in the beginning of the seventies still predominantly active outside or in the margin of the official unions. They successfully defended the interests of the non-unionized workers and attacked the corporatist labour relations from outside. This certainly forced the unions into a more radical position. But, on the other hand, the union leadership had the communists in a hold: since the party line was to enter the unions, the party could not take an outright anti-union position, while the individual communists who had entered the union were committed to the democratic centralism within the union.(59) Thus, participation in action committees was a ground for expulsion from the union. The communist position in labour relations was therefore one of structural ambivalence, which was reflected in the internal organization of the party and created discontent and frustration among the active workers. Apart from this structural ambivalence, the fact that the party had its strongholds in those industries which were to be dismantled in the seventies meant that its position in industrial centers was tendentially undermined. Together these factors contributed to a decline of the traditional basis of the party. A decline which, in my view, was in the circumstances inevitable.

The party's declining industrial basis and its strategic ambivalence towards the social democratic unions were in the first half of the seventies hidden from the eye by the appeal it had on radical youth. The influx of student militants strengthened the party organization and extended the circulation of "De Waarheid" with more than 1000 new subscriptions a year(61).



## 9. Breaking with the past

This apparent succes of the CPN came abruptly to an end when in May 1977 the CPN fell from 4.5 to 1.7 per cent in the national elections. This dramatic electoral defeat was first ascribed to the hyjack of a train in the same month by a group of Moluccans, behind which sinister reactionary forces were hidden (De Waarheid, May 26). Paul de Groot obviously had inspired such analysis, as demonstrated in a long article published in de Waarheid of June 15.(62) Shortly afterwards De Groot's analysis shifted somewhat. In a long article published in De Waarheid of August 2, he argued that the electoral defeat of the party had been caused by lack of revolutionary spirit of the party leadership which had allowed the party to be taken over by students and civil servants and had lost contact with the manual workers. De Groot called for a rebolshevization of the party, along with restoration of democratic centralism in its most rigid forms. The party should concentrate on the organization of the unemployed. In that same article he pleaded for restoring the relations with Moscow and launched a sharp attack on Eurocommunism. Finally, he attacked the leadership of the party for its leniency towards revisionism and its passivity in the class struggle. In secret De Groot prepared new party statutes and during the summer he tried to organize a group of young communists to take over, just as he had done in 1958. This time, however, he overplayed his hand. The central committee(63) stood firm, and after a long and carefully orchestrated 'discussion' in the party, De Groot was ousted from the scientific bureau and stripped of his 'honorary membership for life' of the central committee.(64)

However, the victorious central committee accepted in practice some of the proposals made by De Groot, especially those in the field of international relations: friendly relations with the Soviet party were restored and a succesful initiative to campaign against the N-bom was launched. But, in spite of the enorm success of the N-bom campaign, opposition against the pro-Soviet line grew. When, for example, Joop Wolff visited Vasil Bilak, while being 'on holiday' in Czechoslovakia(65), this caused indignation, and so did the attacks on Orlov and Sacharow.(De Waarheid May 27, 1978).

A conflict broke out when two party members translated the report of the Piller commission of the central committee of the CP of Czechoslovakia under Dubcek on the political processes and rehabilitations in that country from 1946 to 1968.(66) When the report was circulated in the party, they were threatened with expulsion. In reaction to that more than 200 members from all over the country signed a

petition to the central committee to prevent such expulsion. It was a first sign of 'horizontal' organization, including members from many different districts, based on the old network of student militants. The party reacted in a classical stalinist way with lies and threats, but, although the whole party bureaucracy was mobilized, it did not succeed in restoring the democratic centralist order.(67) The two dissidents were not expelled and neither were the organizers of the campaign. Thus, by the summer of 1979 it became clear that the traditional methods of discipline had failed and the leadership tried to accommodate to the opposition by shifting to a more neutral position in international affairs and by allowing some discussion in De Waarheid in the preparation of the 27th congress of June 1980. Such leniency, however, could no longer contain the opposition, which organized itself not only on the issue of the party's international relations but also, and increasingly so, on internal democracy. It expressed itself in the 'bourgeois' press(68) and organized in august 1980 an 'own' mini-conference in Witmarsum (69) from where a solidarity campaign with the Polish workers was initiated.

#### 10. The feminist opposition

It was, however, the feminist opposition which was to give the final blow to the traditional party structure. They succeeded where all former opposition had failed. Why? The anti-stalinist opposition was too diverse, while the party's experience with such opposition had a long history. In all cases the opposition did not dare to organize itself for fear of being accused of fractionalism, or -such as was the case in 1958- organized itself secretly, using the same methods as the party leadership. Because the latter could, in general, count on a loyal bureaucracy, its position was strong and the only possible winning strategy of such opposition boiled down to a palace revolution, leaving the party structures intact.

The anti-soviet opposition at the end of the seventies had been able to curb the pro-soviet policy, it was also able to liberalize the internal discipline of the party, but the party bureaucracy remained intact. Hence the centralist structures remained.

It were the women who finally confronted the party with a radically new opposition which disorganized the party, bureaucracy by working both from within and from without, by demanding the right to organize separately as women, and to unite at the congress of 1982 under the banner of

equal representation of men and women at the party congress and in the central committee.(70)

How was this possible? In the first place because of the reasons mentioned above. The anti-stalinist opposition had done some ground work. The feminist movement was relatively unknown to the party cadres. Feminist themselves could easily unite under the penetrating slogan of equal representation. But there was something in the structure of the party which added to these factors. The party had, since 1946, its own women's organization, the Nederlandse Vrouwenbeweging (NVB), which organized, apart from a few non-communist women, many a wife of party cadres. The NVB position had always been ambivalent. On the one hand, it was the only women's organization which during the fifties and sixties defended the rights and interests of working class women, but on the other hand it was a typical front organization, for years and years effectively lead by the Dutch Passionaria, Annie van Ommeren--Averink. Within the party, on the other hand, the NVB was looked down upon, with typical and deep rooted male chauvinism. Within the party, women played an important role in the daily routine of the 'afdelingen' but the higher echelon's were dominated by their husbands. The central committee was a men's world and those few women elected acted accordingly. The female part of the new student generation massively refused to be contained in the NVB, and became active in the party, while being forced to neglect the feminist issue. So, for diverse reasons, the feminist issue was a non-issue, both in the party and in the NVB. Female party member who raised the issue in the party were referred to the NVB, while in the NVB the recent feminist debates and demand were qualified as elitist and bourgeois.(71) When, however, the women in the party refused to accept this catch-22, not only the party was in trouble, but also the NVB. And when the party allowed feminists platforms, this created an ideological crisis within the NVB. The more so, because the feminists, although they attacked to NVB-line, they did not attack the NVB-women, but, on the contrary, tried to win them for their cause by inviting them at the feminist platforms.(72) The gulf between the women of the workers and the working women appeared not as large as the leadership had reckoned with, and, more important, by 1980 the representation of workers (let alone their wives) was small (see table I). Male dominance in the communist party (expressed, for example in the fact that female party workers earned ( even) less than their male colleagues) turned against the party system as such. The feminists profited from the experiences of their sisters who had struggled for equal opportunities in the Labour Party, and, at the 28th party congress not only a large part of the central committee was filled with females of the 1968

generation, but also the chair of the party was taken over by a woman, while of the three remaining communist MP's two were female, one of which a militant lesbian. Traditional party structures crumbled and the party culture radically changed. (73)

This change was a result of a coalition between the feminists and the young party cadres which had been only superficially stalinized. In this coalition the feminists provided the ideological ammunition while the party workers provided the organizational support necessary to 'take over' the party. This time fractionalism was not as easy to attack because it disguised itself as women platforms or even 'consciousness raising groups'. Besides, those female party workers who tried to contain the feminist tendency by participating in these platforms pleading for moderate and 'realistic' demands were themselves carried away by the feminist issue. Furthermore, the demands were also difficult to counter because the feminist just wanted 'more women in the central committee'. After this had been accomplished at the 28th congress of November 1982, an ideological struggle was launched in the preparation of a new party program which was to replace the old program of 1952. In a extremely intense and bitter discussion in the party which took more than a year a new program was accepted which lacked nearly all elements of the marxist-leninist ideology. The very notion of a party ideology was rejected in favour of the concept of a 'program party'. As a compromise with the old guard marxism was called 'a source of inspiration', but so was feminism. (74) For the bolsheviks, who were under attack, it was not easy to fight back because of the impending accusation of being male chauvinist. Besides, the pro-Soviet and syndicalist tendency, which became overnight oppositional, suffered from three structural weaknesses: Strategically they could not decide whether to become an organized opposition within the party (thereby contradicting its own adherence to the principles of democratic centralism and conforming to the enemy who had attacked this very principle) or leaving the party and forming a new communist party. In fact the pro-Soviet and syndicalist opposition split on this issue. Although the distinction was far from clear, when at the extraordinary congress of January/February 1984 marxism-leninism was replaced by marxisme-feminism, it was the pro-Soviet opposition that formed a new party, while the syndicalist opposition remained in the party. One can also discard this distinction and say that the Groningen district remained in the party (because they could still rule their own district with the traditional iron fist), while the opposition in Amsterdam left the party to form the Union of Dutch Communists (VNC). The two fractions were unanimous in their attack upon the "Waarheid", which, on the whole supported the anti-stalinist and feminist tendency since 1981 but also tried to become more independent from the party,

claiming a 'journalistic independence'. When journalists of the Waarheid started a campaign to strengthen relations with the other radical socialist parties, PSP and PPR, and participated in a platform which called for a new political formation of the left (75), the syndicalist and pro-Soviet opposition openly campaigned against the party paper. Old party cadres suspended their subscription and in Groningen the distribution of the Waarheid was sabotaged. This brought the paper at the brink, since it was not yet properly accepted as an independent left wing paper by the non-communist left, while it was already boycotted by the traditional cadres who had carried the paper both organizationally and financially through the Cold War. The bolshevik opposition organized itself in the "Horizontaal Overleg van Communisten (HOC)" and started a journal, "Manifest". The circulation of "De Waarheid" dropped from 30.000 in 1979 to 15.000 in 1984. (76)

Politically the bolshevik opposition was caught in the dilemma of having to defend the Soviet system (at the very moment that the Polish workers, or rather their oppressors, smashed the last illusions about socialism in the socialist countries) or to attack the feminists in the party. These had been the two main issues in the party struggle and on both issues the bolshevik opposition was on the defensive. In fact a group of Amsterdam workers who tried to evade this dilemma by taking a narrow syndicalist position was crushed between the two positions. Socially the position of the opposition was still more gloomy, because it was of course unable to prevent the decline of the traditional industries from which their workers affiliation used to come.

In short, the victory of the feminists and anti-stalinists seemed inevitable but at the same time it was a Pyrrhus victory. During the party struggle the anti-stalinist rank and file left the party massively or became 'paper members', thus creating an interesting paradox. At the very moment the party liberalized, the members who had always pleaded such liberalization lost interest. How to explain this paradox?

In a way one could say that a non-bolshevik communist party is a *contradictio in terminis*. With the bolshevik discipline there was also the mobilization and enthusiasm which had been so characteristic of the communist parties. In the process of destalinization the party lost its radicalism which had appealed the generation of the sixties. As a social democratic formation the tiny CPN could not compete with its large 'sister' which now absorbed the disillusioned communist militants.

The process of social-democratisation had been a long and creeping process at least from 1970 onward, but its pace accelerated with the influx of students and welfare workers,

especially after these groups began to occupy positions in the state apparatus. They provided the party not only with new expertise but also with an administrative or 'technocratic' perspective. This structural development expressed itself politically when, in 1970, the communists accepted two posts of elderman in the Council of Amsterdam. In 1975 also in Groningen and Zaandam communist eldermen were nominated. These positions made it possible to recruit communists in the local state apparatus, with the result, among other things, that the expert opinion of such communist civil servants became more influential within the party. Thus the power of the technocrats increased while at the same time the relation between party organization and parliamentary work became looser. The situation in which the party (leaders) decided what their representatives in parliament and in other councils had to say and to vote for was reversed and became more like the typical social democratic party structure. This was expressed, for example in the refusal of the new MP's to donate their salaries to the party, as was the rule in the communist party. For all practical purposes the destalinisation of the parties not only meant feminisation but also social-democratisation of the CPN.

## 11. Racism and migrant labour

Like in other Western European countries migrant workers were recruited from Mediterranean countries since the beginning of the sixties. By 1977 the number of registered foreign workers amounted to 185000. By that time, the amount of Antillian and Surinam people (with a Dutch passport) was estimated 134000.(77) The CPN opposed the recruitment of foreign workers and regarded their presence, like the Dutch government, at least till 1979 as a temporary phenomenon. These foreign workers could, according to the party's statutes, not become members of the CPN. This rule, abolished at the 28th party congress, resulted from the stalinist idea that foreigners were always potential agents of foreign governments. Thus the relations with foreign workers was in a classical communist way restricted to contacts with their respective CP's. In a way this reflected the initial perspective of the foreign workers themselves who predominantly organized themselves along party lines of the country of origin. Especially with workers from countries with strong and well established communist parties such as those from Italy and Spain the contacts were good and the CPN did indeed represent these workers in the Dutch political arena. However, for those workers who did not come from countries where the

communist party formed a stable political force, problems arose. Those workers were not allowed to become a member and neither were there any other institutionalized means of communication. There existed, however, not only organizational constraints which hampered contact between Dutch communists and foreign workers in Holland. The emphasis on the Dutch identity of the CPN as an ideological shield against the cold war allegations that the communists were a fifth column in Dutch society, effectively weakened internationalism in the party culture. In fact, the party pretended to defend Dutch interests rather than working class interests alone, and by doing so became open to chauvinist sentiments. This is one of the reasons why the party was unable to recruit among the Antillian and Surinam left who did not think it a revolutionary duty to march behind the Dutch flag. The Dutch road to socialism tended therefore to become a road of Dutch communists. Fortunately the CPN did not follow the PCF in a ethnocentric and even racist policy, but its discours remained highly ambivalent. Till the eighties anti-racism was more often than not confined to fighting anti-semitism and recalling the glorious past of the party during the Second World War and in its fight against colonialism. As the race issue became more urgent the pressure within the CPN to do something about it mounted and in the eighties the struggle against racism became one of the principle goals of the new CPN. During the extraordinary congress in 1984, it was decided that "the CPN regards the struggle against exploitation and oppression, based on class, gender, and race, as its revolutionary task"(78). And, for the first time in the history of the Dutch party, the black members united themselves at the end of 1984 in a caucus called "the black communist". This new line received some publicity because one of the communist councilers in Amsterdam is a leading woman in the black movement and the Amsterdam municipality itself emphasized the fight against racism. The new perspective within the party is, however, still weak. In the preparation of the 29th congress, for example, the central committee still opposed the demand that foreign workers should have the right to vote in parliamentary elections. Officially it was said that there were 'legal problems', but informally it was argued that a foreign constituency may, because of loyalties to the governments of the countries of origin, jeopardize national independence.( 79) At the 29th Congress, in March 1985, the Central committee was outvoted by a large majority, even though the 'eminence grise', Marcus Bakker defended the central committees position. By voting a foreign delegate in the central committee and demanding full voting rights for foreign workers the congress made a historical decision.(80) This relatively new issue may well become important in the ongoing party struggle because it cuts across the cleavage between 'new' and 'old' communists. Both tendencies pay at least lipservice to the importance of

this issue (although there exist disagreement on strategic matters between these tendencies), and the black communists themselves tend to adhere to neither one of them and take an independent position. Such crosscutting cleavages may of course increase the turbulence within the party, but it may also reunite opposing factions. In the mean time, however, electoral support has, according to the polls, declined to a mere one per cent. The end of bolshevism may well have implied the end of the communist party altogether.

## 12. Conclusion

Historical circumstances made the syndicalist and internationalist tendencies within the CPN particularly strong. Paradoxically this created a break with the Soviet Union and lead to an independent but internationally isolated position in the sixties. In turn this position made it relatively easy to support the student movement and attracted many new student members.

Contrary to what one would expect, these new members were integrated with remarkable success in a stalinist party structure. Difficulties arose when in the economic crisis the decreasing support among the working class became painfully evident in the electoral disaster of 1977. A bid for renewed bolshevization of the party and rapprochement towards the Soviet Union failed, because the new party cadres were no longer recruited from the working class and politically unwilling to accept Soviet guidance. The anti-Soviet opposition, however, was not able to do more than liberalize the party discipline and to force the leadership to take a more neutral stance towards the Soviet Union. It was the feminist movement that won over the party cadres and delivered a final blow to the democratic centralist structures of the CPN. It meant the end of Dutch bolshevism and, paradoxically, not only many bolsheviks but also many anti-stalinists left the party. Did they prove that a non-stalinist communist party is a contradiction in terms?



## NOTES

- (1) H. de Liagre Boehl, "Herman Gorter", SUN, Nijmegen, 1973, pp. 80-85;  
Fr. de Jong, 'De Hollandse school in het Marxisme', "De Waarheid. Bijlage ter gelegenheid van de honderdste sterfdag van Karl Marx", 5 March, 1983.
- (2) De Liagre Boehl, 1973,
- (3) V.I. Lenin, "Collected Works", Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 42
- (4) De Liagre Boehl, 1973, p. 191
- (4a) V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol 22, p.151
- (5) A. Koper, "Onder de banier van het stalinisme", Van Gennep, Amsterdam, 1984; see also F. Claudin, "The communist movement. From Comintern to Cominform", Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1975
- (6) L. Marcou, "L'internationale apres Staline", Paris, 1979, pp. 95-117
- (7) The delegation consisted of Paul de Groot, Theun de Vries, Tjalle Jager and Jaap Wolff
- (8) The Soviet Union would not, in case of an armed conflict, direct its missiles on our country (Declaration after Dutch delegation had visited Moscow in 1961)
- (9) Rob Milikowski, 'De autonome politiek van de CPN', in Komma. Tijdschrift voor politiek en sociaal onderzoek, II, 2, 1979
- (10) F. Baruch, "Links af/ naar rechts", Kruseman, Den Haag, 1967; see also Politiek en Cultuur, 1968, pp. 45-48
- (11) P. de Groot, 'Over de geschillen in de communistische Wereldbeweging', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1963, p. 378
- (12) Idem, p. 282
- (13) Idem, p. 286
- (14) This rule has only been strictly applied for members of the party committee. The rank and file continued to travel to the Soviet Union.
- (15) J. Morrien, "Indonesie los van Holland", Pegasus, Amsterdam, 1982

- (16) Joop Morrien, 'De staatsgreep van de generaals', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1966, p. 214
- (17) De Waarheid, 15 October 1966
- (18) Jaap Wolff, 'De discussie over het verdrag over de niet spreiding van kernwapens', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1967, p. 170
- (19) Gerard Maas, personal communication
- (20)
- (21) A. de Leeuw, 'De radicale studenten en het testament van Marx', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1968
- (21) Fr. de Jong Edz., "Macht en tegenspraak", Ambo, Baarn, 1981
- (22) 7 January, 1966
- (23) Politiek en Cultuur, 1967, pp. 36-43 and 84-88
- (24) Politiek en Cultuur, pp. 521-522
- (25) 'De opvattingen van de CPN over internationale discussie en internationale conferenties', in Politiek en Cultuur, March, 1969
- (26) G. Schreuders, 'Buitenparlementair en anti-parlementair', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1970, pp. 10-18; J. Wolff, 'Studentenbeweging belangrijke factor in strijd voor socialisme', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1970, pp. 102-109
- (27) G. Harmsen, "Nederlands Kommunisme", pp. 283-301
- (28) "Multinationale ondernemingen; moderne roofburchten in Europa", IPSO, Amsterdam, 1971, pp. 7-13
- (29) "Stalin contra Hitler. De Soviet Unie in de Tweede Wereldoorlog", IPSO, Amsterdam, 1971, pp. 12, 13
- (30) The PSP was the first to organize Vietnam peace marches in Amsterdam
- (31) Sylvia Schreuders, 'Afbraakpolitiek en studentenbeweging', in Politiek en Cultuur, 1971, 495
- (32) De Waarheid,
- (33) De Waarheid, 1972

(34) Alexander de Roo, "De Partij van de Arbeid in beweging", M A thesis, University of Amsterdam, 1982  
of G. van Benthem van den Bergh, Democratie en Socialisme ,  
in Socialisme en democratie, 1969

(35) See Koper, 1984.

(36) Iets over verkiezingsonderzoek

(37) De Groot's attack was prepared at the scientific bureau (IPSO) in collaboration with Jurrie Reiding.

(38) H. Kijne, Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse studentenbeweging. SUA, Amsterdam, 1978

(39) W.S.P. Fortuyn. Kerncijfers 1945-1983 van sociaal-economische ontwikkeling in Nederland. Kluwer, Deventer, 1983: p.171.

(40) H. Kijne, 1978

(41) A. de Leeuw, 1968

(42) Oral communication Jaap Wolff.

(43) Personally I know of a member of the communist student organization "Perikles" who was suspected to be an agent just because he wanted to become a member without having a communist family background or a communist girlfriend.

(44) Frits de Jong Edz. Macht en Inspraak. AMBO, Baarn, 1981

(45) oral communication.

(46) Documentatie bij de stellingen van het 26ste congres van de CPN, deel 3.

(47) See Paul Damen, Vakbond en voorhoede. Machiavelli Mededelingen Bulletin 8, (Jan,1979).

(48) H. Daalder (ed.) Universities, politicians and bureaucrats, CUP, Cambridge etc.:

(49) Organized around the Journal "Wetenschap en Democratie".

(50) Oral communication Gerard Pothoven.

(51) Groningen always had been a somewhat separate district comparable with the Northern districts of the British CP.

(52) Especially those who had participated in the Spanish Civil War and those who had refused to fight the colonial war in Indonesia. The former were for a long time without passport, the latter were imprisoned together with the Dutch collaborators and war criminals.

(53) See G.Harmsen/B.Reinalda, Voor de bevrijding van de arbeid. SUN, Nijmegen, 1975:p.373.

(54) Idem, p.384.

(55) The radical Arie Groenevelt was strongly anti-communist.

(56) Till 1973 the ABVA did not allow communists to become member. By 1976, however, de chairman of the ABVA university group in Amsterdam was a communist.

(57) 100 Jaar uitbuiting in de strokanton. SUN, Nijmegen, n.d.

(58)

(59) Centralism has been very strong in Dutch unions, especially between 1945 and 1970. See John P. Windmuller, Labor Relations in the Netherlands. Cornell University Press, Ithaca N.Y. 1969.

(60)

(61) oral communication Gerard Pothoven. According to Pothoven this expansion starts in 1972 and goes on till 1979.

(62) The article had been sent to Le Monde but was not accepted.

(63) Formally the CPN has not a central committee but a "partijbestuur".

(64) See "Verslag van het 26e partijcongres"

(65) Politiek en Cultuur, april 1979.

(66) Potlაცena Zprava: een onder de tafel gewerkt rapport (vertaald en uitgegeven door Vera Ebels Dolanova en Ed Ebels). The original report has been published by Europa Verlag (1970).

(67) Of the 200 petitioners who were visited personally and urged to withdraw their support only one actually did so.

(68) E.g. Hans Broekhuis and Jacques Zeelen in De Volkskrant of May 3, 1980 and various articles in the Haagse Post.

(69) "Verslag van een conferentie, oktober, 1980.

(70) "Verslag van het 28ste partij congres"

(71) See for an interesting analysis of the NVB, Jolande Withuis, Opoffering en heroiek. De NVB in de Koude Oorlog. Socialistisch-Feministische Teksten 8 (1984): 65-106.

(72) A study on feminism in the CPN is in progress. See for a critical internal evaluation: Heksentoe, Over strategie en structuur van CPN-vrouwen. Amsterdam, 1984.

(73) Especially the ideology of 'feminist organization' which was supposed to consist of non-oppressive discussion and decision making, made inroads in to the party culture.

(74) Partij program van de CPN. CPN Brochurehandel, 1984: p.15. The theoretical basis of this program can be found in: A.Benschop, Voor een vrijheidslievend en democratisch communisme. Brochurehandel CPN, 1984. See also Paul Lucardie. De recente programmatie vernieuwing van de CPN. Jaarboek DCP, 1985.

(75) De "doorbraakgroep" was formed in 1983.

(76) See De Groene Amsterdammer, 27 february, 1985. Figures presented here are not consistent with those given by Gerard Pothoven.

(77) Netherlands Scientific Council of Government Policy. "Ethnic Minorities", The Hague, 1979.

(78) see note (74).

(79) CPN ledenkrant februari 1985. Beschrijvingsbrief 2, 29ste Congres. p.7.

(80) See De Waarheid March 4, 1985.



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A NEW FACE OF SWEDISH COMMUNISM

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## INTRODUCTION

When looking at the history of the Swedish Communist Party, there are two occurrences that stand out as of special importance. First, we have the fact that the foundation of the party in May 1917 preceeded the Octoberrevolution in Russia. Secondly, there is the factional battle in the mid-sixties that ended in a defeat for "the men of 1929", i.e. a small group which had been the leaders of the party almost since 1929.

At first, the party's name was Sveriges socialdemokratiska vänsterparti (SSV, Social Democratic Leftparty) and it was by no means a communist party. It was a left-wing socialist party composed of anarchists, syndicalists, humanists and all kinds of socialists that raised objections to the centralism and militarism of the Social Democratic Party (SAP). It was not until 1929, after its third disruption (in 1921 and 1924 two minority-groups left the party and joined SAP after a couple of years), that the Swedish Communist Party adopted Leninism entirely. A grand majority of the partycadre dissociated themselves from the Comintern and founded a new party. But the International got their Swedish Bolsheviks, a small group unswervingly loyal to the Soviet Union and to CPUSSR.<sup>1</sup>

Right up to the begining of the sixties, Sveriges kommunistiska parti (SKP, Communist Party of Sweden) obediently acted in accordance to the outlines laid down by Kremlin. But that is not the subject of this paper, although it is most important as a background to the

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix C.

transformation of the party in the mid-sixties. Instead, I will concentrate on the last two decades in the history of the Swedish Communist Party.<sup>2</sup>

The period of transition, 1962 - 1967

In september 1962, the Swedish people elected local authorities. The election was held in the shadow of the global political crises of Cuba and Berlin, and it ended up in a defeat for the communists.<sup>3</sup> In spite of that, their chairman Hilding Hagberg concluded that it had been a victory for the political left and for the working-class; the Social Democrats remained in power.

This lack of self-criticism provoked the rank-and-file of the party. A lot of well-known communists called for renewal of the party. At the next party congress in january 1964, Hagberg was forced to resign from office. He was replaced by C.H. Hermansson, the editor-in-chief of the main party organ, Ny Dag (New Day), and member of the executive committee since 1946.

Thus, the new chairman was associated with the old regime. In spite of that, he was accepted by those who advocated change. When elected, C.H. Hermansson was a compromise between traditionalists and their critics. But very soon, he became the leading represent of the

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<sup>2</sup> The analysis draws heavily on my dissertation, Hermansson 1984. When I am not referring to other sources, you will find the full argument there.

In "Kommunismen i Sverige - ett temanummer", Meddelande från arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek 24-25, you find a complete list of research and writings on Swedish communism up to 1982. Since then, Svante Ersson, Department of Government at University of Umeå, has published a study on the electoral variation of the Communist parties in Western Europe.

<sup>3</sup> See below, appendix A.

new major faction within the party, the modernists.<sup>4</sup> Under the direction of Hermansson SKP passed through a most dramatic change within a few years.

Most notable, the party changed its name at the 21st party congress in spring 1967. The old name SKP, associated to the Comintern era, was replaced by Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna (VPK, the Left Party Communists). There was also a radical change in the composition of both the central committee and its executive.<sup>5</sup> All but two of the members of the executive committee that were elected in may 1967 by the new central committee had never before been members of that inner-circle. Hermansson was elected for his 9th period, but the average member of the executive committee had an experience corresponding to 1.6 earlier periods. This figure may be compared to 6.6 periods, the average for the executive committee that was elected in 1961, immediately after the 19th party congress. The table below illustrates that the same group had retained the top-positions during the postwar era, and that it now suddenly was replaced by a new generation of activists in the mid-sixties.

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<sup>4</sup> Hermansson 1965. Those who called for a renewal of the party are usually divided into three factions. Apart from the modernists there were a left wing, which urged for a return to classical Marxism-Leninism and later developed into the Pro-Chinese group Kommunistiska förbundet marxist-lenisterna (KFML, the Communist League of Marxist-Leninists), and a right wing, which wanted a closer collaboration with the Social Democratic Party.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix B.

Table 1: The composition of the newly elected executive committee

The age of a member of the executive committee is defined as the number of earlier periods which the newly elected has been in possession of this office.

		PARTY CONGRESSES														
No		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Year		1944	46	48	51	53	55	57	61	64	67	69	72	75	78	81
Average age of ex.com.		2.7	3.4	3.3	4.3	4.4	5.6	5.6	6.6	3.9	1.6	1.8	2.7	3.4	3.2	2.9
Number		9	9	12	12	10	11	11	11	11	7	9	9	9	9	7

Source: Hermansson 1984:353.

The renewal of the Communist party was also manifested in other ways. The ideological orientation of the modernist faction radically differed from the old ideology of the party, which still had its advocates among the traditionalists. In tactical matters, the two factions recommended different outlooks both with respect to national and international affairs. The Swedish Communist Party had always been loyal to the Soviet Union. To defend the centre of the international proletariat was a consequence of its interpretation of proletarian internationalism. In the fifties it combined this with an almost unconditional support to proposals of the Social Democratic Party. The purpose of this "friendly pushing" of SAP was to gradually force it in a leftist direction.

The modernists reacted against both these elements; the party ought to be independent both in domestic and international politics. Nationally, the Communist party had to present itself as a real alter-

native to the Social Democratic Party, they claimed, and found support from the small left wing. Internationally, the problems were focused to the dispute between the Soviet Union and China, and, supported by the even smaller right wing, the modernist faction advocated neutrality.

Apart from this, there was a more basic change in the ideology of the Swedish Communist Party. Since the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, every ideological document was characterized by some variant of a Popular Front strategy.<sup>6</sup> But when adopting a new party programme and a new statute in 1967, the Left Party Communists abandoned everything which resembled the classical themes of that strategy. These two documents represented a radical break with the Comintern and the Cominform tradition.

The break can be analysed in terms of a well known topic of dispute in the history of Marxism. It concerns the very foundation of a socialist ideology. Is it founded on ethical principles, as Bernstein once put it, or on a scientific theory, i.e. Marxism, as was claimed by Kautsky? While still embracing the Comintern ideology, this question did not give rise to serious problems, since its most essential component was a universal theory of revolution based on "scientific" judgement.

When abandoning the Comintern ideology, the Swedish communists started to show more interest in normative commitments. They declared the desirability of a peaceful road to socialism and they adopted the idea of a democratic revolution. The catalogue of social rights setting its mark on the description of socialist society was also a manifestation of this normative trend.

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<sup>6</sup> SKP adopted new programmes in 1944, 1953 and 1961.

But the communists continued to emphasize empirical considerations. These were still more important than the moral claims. For many years, deciding on the possibility of a peaceful road to socialism was conceived of as the crucial problem. At most, adherence to political democracy was a matter of finding a suitable way to achieve socialism. And promises that the socialist state was going to guarantee its citizens plenty of new substantial rights were still founded on the notion of the superiority of socialism. According to the Swedish communists, the socialist mode of production would make it possible to achieve real democracy. This was not conceived of as mere Utopian promises. The Soviet Union was put forward as empirical evidence of the truth of scientific socialism. In the Popular Front ideology, the transition to socialism was described in terms of an empirical theory of revolution, and in its account of socialist society the stress was laid upon the possibility of implementing the ideals of rationality and justice, not on the ideals per se.

In the middle of the sixties, the central point of ideology shifted even more; empirical science was now clearly replaced by ethical principles. When adopting modernism, as the new ideology usually is called, the Communist party committed itself to political democracy. Its ideology gained a touch of humanism; severe criticism was levelled against bureaucracy, centralism, and all kinds of injustices. In the new statute the compulsory reference to democratic centralism was removed. Instead it contained some paragraphs which gave the impression of an anti-centralistic and ultra-democratic party organization. According to the modernists themselves, this renewal was not an instance of revisionism. They considered themselves just as good

Marxists as any of the traditional communists. And, because of the discovery of the writings of the young Marx, there was at the same time indeed a change in the picture of Marx himself.

However, the new ideology was disputed within the party. While the traditionalists adhered to the old Popular Front ideology, the left wing wanted a return to the empirical approach of the Comintern ideology, i.e. orthodox Marxism-Leninism. The right wing, on the other hand, claimed that the party ought to be still more emphatic about the problems of democracy and the ethical ideals of socialism. Although the party ideology contained more moral statements than ever before - perhaps with the exception of the left-wing socialist period preceding the Comintern era - they were not satisfied.

While fighting the extremist groups to the left and to the right, the modernist and the traditionalist faction entered into a cease-fire. After having lost the power, the traditionalists at first rallied round the new party leaders. Thus, a broad majority supported the adoption of the new party ideology. However, the situation soon changed. Just over a year after the party congress in May 1967, their common enemies had left the party. The left wing founded a new pro-Chinese organization named *Kommunistiska förbundet marxist-leninisterna* (KFML, the Communist League of Marxist-Leninists), and the right wing, which was a less integrated group, joined the Social Democratic Party.

#### A new era of Swedish communism. 1968 and beyond

Although the modernist revolution of the Swedish Communist Party marks the beginning of a new era in Swedish communism, there are certain aspects which remains very much the same as before.

Most obvious, the Communist party is still a small party in comparison to the big reformist party, whose hegemonic position in the Swedish labour movement never has been threatened. On the other hand, the Left Party Communists has been very successful in its efforts to stand out as the sole representative of the radical left.<sup>7</sup>

The communists' vote at the general elections since 1970, has been about 5 per cent of the total, i.e. approximately a tenth of the socialists' vote. This is fairly well in line with the average for the communists during its entire history. As to party membership, Hermansson was able to stop the decreasing trend in the beginning of the seventies. Starting from a position just below 15,000 members, the Left Party Communists rose to slightly more than 18,000 in 1981. However, in recent years the membership has once again begun to fall. At the party congress in January 1985, the central committee reported 16,761 partymembers for 1/1 1984. These figures mean that the ratio between members and voters is about 0.05 for the Communist Party. This is very low in comparison to other Swedish parties. Thanks to a lot of collectively joined members, the Social Democratic Party comes out with a ratio of 0.45, but the bourgeois parties also succeed the communists with good margin.<sup>8</sup>

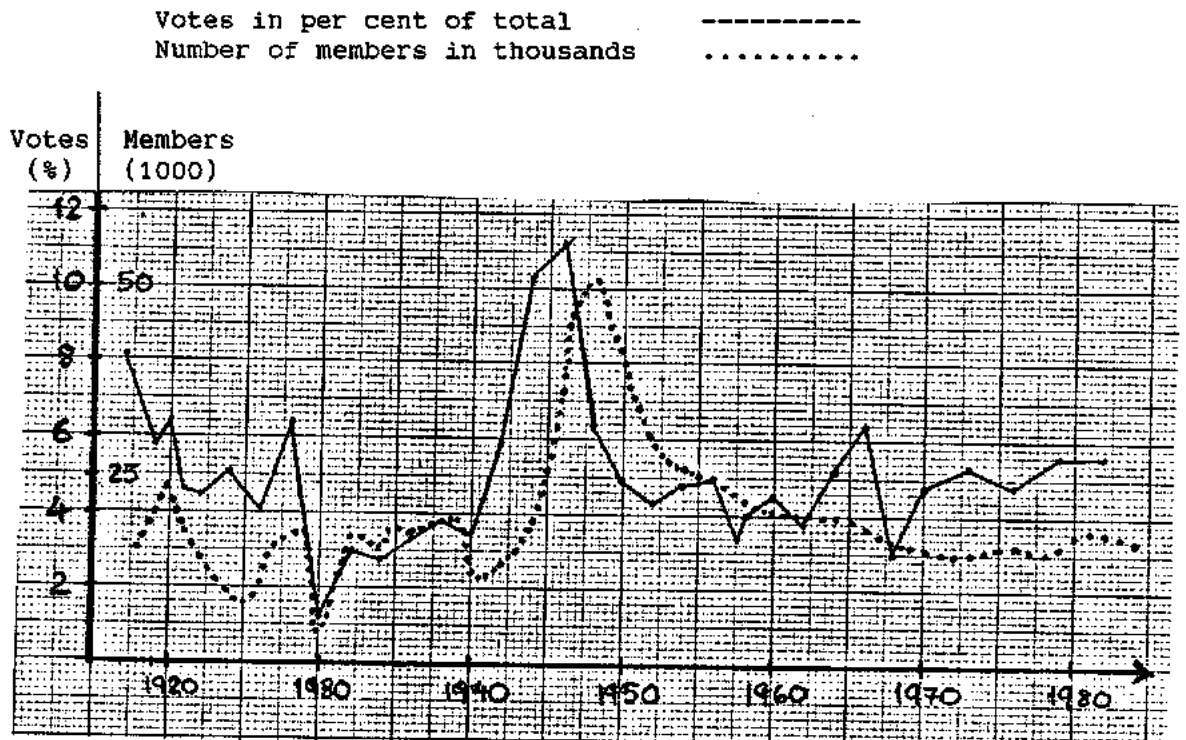
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<sup>7</sup> Cf. appendix A.

<sup>8</sup> Their ratios are about twice or three times as high as the communist ratio. See Back & Berglund 1978:96.



Figure 1: The development of membership and vote



Sources: See appendix A and Hermansson 1984:350.

When talking about the influence of the Communist parties, it is common to raise objection against the figures above. It is argued that election results and membership numbers are bad measures of communist influence in society, since these parties constitute a new kind of political party. A Communist party is an avant-garde, and as such it exerts its influence by infiltration and control of other organizations, in particular the trade unions. However, the picture of insignificance remains when account is taken to this argument.

Most trade unions within Landsorganisationen, the peak organization for manual workers, are strongly connected to the Social Democratic Party. Except for some local unions, organizing among others dock and shipyard workers, the communists have not been able to influ-

ence the policy of any national trade union since the metal-worker strike in 1945.' The miners' strike in 1970 was a spontaneous action from the workers; the Communist party and other leftist organizations "representing" the Swedish proletariat mainly played the part of spectators.

As in other countries in Western Europe, there was a rise of leftism after 1968. It was the time of birth for a lot of leftist groups aiming to re-establish the true Communist party or to fight against the American imperialism in different parts of the world. This movement among youth, especially students, had a great impact on the cultural and political climate in Sweden in those years.<sup>10</sup> When measuring their space in the debate, these groups for solidarity and restoring of Marxism-Leninism had an influence far exceeding their numerical strength. But, this was not due to the Left Party Communists. Although it was never really threatened by "the abysmal(infernal) left", the Communist Party found itself on the backwater of DFFG, the joint groups for solidarity with the liberation front in Vietnam, and the organization behind a magazine called Folket i Bild/Kulturfront (People in pictures/cultural front). Both of these were oriented towards the pro-Chinese group KFML.

What has then changed? In which respects does the period from 1968 represent something new, that makes it reasonable to talk about a new phase in the history of Swedish communism?

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<sup>9</sup> Korpi 1978:268-299 gives an indication.

<sup>10</sup> It is uncertain if this movement had any impact on the Swedish electorate. The Swedish electoral studies have put a doubt on the existence of a "left wave" among the voters as a whole. But a representational study, Holmberg 1974, indicates that it had a significant influence on the politicians within all parties. And several policy studies show that it really was a leftist trend in governmental policy.

### A new ideology

In describing the ideological development of the Swedish Communist Party it is useful to distinguish five different periods.<sup>11</sup> As indicated above, a short period of left-wing socialism preceded the Comintern ideology, i.e. Leninism. After the dissolution of the Comintern, the Swedish communists adopted a Popular Front ideology, essentially in accordance with international tendencies.<sup>12</sup> This period was not entirely homogeneous, but apart from marginal shifts, e.g. problems concerning the attitude towards the Social Democratic Party, it lasted until the mid-sixties. It was followed by a short period of modernism, an ideology inspired by the New Left but also resembling the left-wing socialism of the pre-Comintern period. Through the rebirth of Leninism, another change was initiated in 1968. During this last period, VPK has elaborated a new ideology, usually labeled Neo-Leninism.

The new party ideology resembles orthodox Marxism-Leninism in its choice of main subjects and emphasis. In the party programme adopted by the 23rd congress in October 1972 - revised in details by the congresses in 1981 and 1985 - the stress is laid upon the classical themes of communism. It talks about "proletarian internationalism", a term that was carefully avoided by the Communist party during the modernist era. And as in the Comintern programme from 1928, the notion

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<sup>11</sup> Lindkvist 1982 and Hermansson 1984.

<sup>12</sup> The decline of Leninism began in the middle of the thirties, but not until 1944 the shift of party ideology was terminated. Initially, the Popular Front strategy included nothing but a conception of the defence against fascism. But at the end of World War Two, this idea had been developed into an entire ideology. The Russian revolution and the Soviet Union were no longer seen as universally valid examples of development but as cases marked by conditions specifically applicable to Russia.

of the leading role of the Communist party is a core element in the strategy for reaching socialism. But unlike Leninism proper, the leading role is viewed as a commitment for the party, rather than a prescription for those who want to overthrow capitalism. The fourth paragraph in the party programme reads as follows:

Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna is a part of the Swedish labour movement. It was developed in the struggle of the working class.

The party commits itself to take part in and develop every movement which promotes the interests of the working people. It fights every reduction of and struggles for any increase of the democratic rights of the people: national independence; the right to elect by general and equal vote the people's representation, which appoints and rejects government; the liberties of organization, meeting and demonstration; the right to strike; the freedom of opinion, speech and press.

The main task of the party is to permanently unite the movement among the working people with socialism. Its bases is scientific socialism, the revolutionary theory of Marx and Lenin. It seeks to adapt this theory, develop it and amalgamate it with the struggle of the Swedish working class.

The party strives to organize in its ranks all those who want to work for a socialist Sweden. Its aim is that the struggle of the working class and the people, guided by the ideas of revolutionary socialism, shall lead to victory over capitalism and to a classless society.<sup>13</sup>

And without using the term in the statutes, the notion of democratic centralism is once again cited as the organizational principle for the party. However, as pointed out above, this attachment to orthodox Marxism-Leninism is but a matter of subject. As far as the content of the statutes is concerned, it does not correspond to anything specific for a communist party. The recent statutes are much more "centralistic" than those from 1967. In comparison to the modernist era, the executive committee and other central instances do have a lot more power today. But that says more about the decentralism of

<sup>13</sup> Party programme (1981), par. 4. Before 1981 the sentence in italics was read: "The party organize the most conscious part of the working class."

the former statutes. As was said before, they were almost ultra-democratic.

Another example of this Neo-Leninist orientation is the dropping of the conception of a peaceful and parliamentary road to socialism. This was a constitutive element in both Popular Front ideology and modernism. And had it not been for the traditionalists, who advocated the thesis in the documents from the conferences of World Communism at Moscow in 1957 and 1960, the "peaceful road" would have been altogether excluded. As a compromise the following passage was added:

It is in the interest of the working class and the majority of the people to carry out the socialist change in society in a peaceful way, without armed struggle or civil war. But the ruling class will defend its privileges by all means at hand and will not give them up by free will. The relations of strength in the class struggle decide whether big business can be forced to accept the liquidation of its political and economic power without armed resistance.<sup>14</sup>

The old strategic conception - a popular front led by the communists will transform the society in a peaceful and democratic process by means of the parliament - was replaced by a new one, resembling the strategy developed by the Comintern during the twenties. Because of the heavy concentration of production and capital in Sweden, the Left Party Communists does not view any strategy that includes an anti-monopolistic stage preceding socialism as realistic.<sup>15</sup> The conclusion is that, when the big bourgeoisie has been defeated, capitalism itself has at the same time been overthrown.

The power of big business can be broken only with the support of a conscious and energetic majority of the people. Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna is working to develop and

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<sup>14</sup> Party programme (1981), par. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the strategies elaborated by the French or Finnish Communist Party, or any strategy founded on the usual analysis of State Monopoly Capitalism. Such strategies are a common feature of the Pro-Soviet communist parties, i.e. APK in Sweden.

secure this majority through comprehensive economic, ideological and political struggle for the interests of the people. In this struggle the basis of a new political power develops which is expressed in a revolutionary government.

Such a government is a necessary instrument in the struggle of the working class to break the domination of big business, neutralize its instruments of political power, abolish its economic power and open the road for people's power, for a socialist democracy.<sup>16</sup>

As in classical Leninism, this strategy is founded on a conception containing a one-shot attack on capitalism. However, contrary to Leninism proper, it operates within a democratic framework. And again, this indicates the relevance of "Leninism" as well as the prefix "Neo".

Furthermore, since the late sixties, VPK has taken great interest in Marxist theory and emphasized it as a science with universal validity. But, unlike the Marxism-Leninism of the Comintern period, it does not promulgate general prescriptions for the claims and actions of the Communist party. It is used more as a conceptual scheme, and hence as a means of logically structuring the party's arguments. The Swedish Communist Party of today has designed an ideology with a national character. It includes a strategy elaborated by the Swedish communists themselves. And more than ever before, they present a Swedish road to socialism. In addition, the vision of future socialist Sweden is an original one. It is presented with a Marxist scientific approach, but it has only a few distinctive traits in common with the picture of existing socialist countries. VPK carefully stresses that its vision of the future is a Swedish brand of socialism.

Thus, the ideological development of the Swedish Communist Party since the Comintern contains a stable core. Throughout, it has accentuated the specific national conditions of Sweden. In spite of other

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<sup>16</sup> Party programme (1981), par. 24.

differences, Popular Front ideology, modernism and Neo-Leninism all have this point in common. The aim of the Communist party has always been to find a formula for a national communism. It has consistently tried to present communism in a Swedish way.

Nevertheless, the ideological change in the late sixties may be seen as a reaction against modernism and against the trend of increasing normativism in the party programmes. Once again the Swedish road to socialism became a subject of prediction rather than one of prescription. And though the Soviet Union did not pass as the Promised Land, the Left Party Communists still judged it to be a socialist country. Defining socialism as a particular mode of production permitted a great many differences in its political system. At least in theory, socialist countries could include both democratic and authoritarian governments. When adopting Neo-Leninism, VPK took a position almost as extreme as that of the Comintern; Communism was based on Marxism, which was conceived of as a science rather than a collection of ethical principles.

The Left Party Communists did not, however, abandon the modernist attitude towards political democracy, at least not officially. Although initially Neo-Leninism did not give priority to democratic aspects, there was no change of opinion as compared to the modernist period. Later on, especially in the eighties, VPK has increasingly been engaged in safeguarding human rights and political democracy, emphasizing their crucial role in the development of socialism. On the other hand, the resurgence in this area cannot be characterized as a return to an ethical socialism compatible with modernism. As in classical Marxism-Leninism, empirical considerations constitute the central point of its ideology.

These conclusions rest on the very main topics of a communist ideology, its picture of the future society and its theory of revolution. There are other, more peripheral, ideological novelties. At the beginning of the seventies, the Communist party suddenly changed its attitude towards the peaceful use of nuclear power. The Swedish Communist Party, as well as the Pro-Soviet communists within APK, has always been a true advocate for the development of the forces of production. As a contrast, VPK of today is a part of the ecological movement that opposed nuclear power in the national referendum in 1980. Together with the Centre party (formerly the Agrarians), the Communist party constitute the green block in the parliament.

Finally, there are, of course, elements of continuity in the ideological development. The writings of C.H. Hermansson, focused on the monopoly capitalism and the concentration of capital,<sup>17</sup> are a good example. The changes may be exemplified by another well-known name. Göran Therborn, an academician by profession, started in 1966 as an outside critic, representing an anti-authoritarian branch of the New Left.<sup>18</sup> Later on he became the most outstanding spokesman of scientific Marxism-Leninism as of Louis Althusser,<sup>19</sup> which was the theoretical source of influence when the Communist party developed its new ideology at the beginning of the seventies. And today, while still a pleader for scientific Marxism, Therborn argues for an almost reformist strategy that pays regard to the bourgeois democracy.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, he is at the moment a member of the programme committee of VPK.

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<sup>17</sup> Hermansson 1943, 1959, 1962, 1971, 1979 and 1981.

<sup>18</sup> Therborn et.al. 1966.

<sup>19</sup> Therborn 1973 and 1976.

<sup>20</sup> Therborn 1980:238-282.



A new cadre

Contrary to the ideological change in the mid-sixties, the transition from modernism to Neo-Leninism was not preceded by a shift in power within the party.<sup>21</sup> The former modernist faction deserted the young Marx in favour of Lenin overnight. Neither the withdrawal from the original Neo-Leninism towards a position closer to modernism as to the commitment to democracy and emphasis of ethics, has its explanation in the replacement of C.H. Hermansson by Lars Werner as party leader in 1975. Werner had been the vice chairman for many years, and his base of power equals that of Hermansson. C.H. Hermansson is today something of a grey eminens in the party. He is still a member of the parliament and up to 1981 he was a member of the executive committee.

However, this does not mean that everything has been harmonious within the party since 1968. The youth association was involved in the exegetical disputes on Marx and Lenin more than the party itself. Of course, this had some repercussions on the internal life of the party. But except for the 22nd party congress in 1969, it was a matter of pretty innocent problems. Instead it was the traditionalist faction, which constituted the real problem for the party leaders. The conflict was brought into the open when C.H. Hermansson harshly criticized the intervention of Czechoslovakia in august 1968. The former chairman Hagberg insisted on his resignation, claiming that criticism of the Soviet Union and its Communist party were irreconcilable with Marxism-Leninism. From then on, the traditionalists formed a fraction within the party with the local communist newspaper Norrskensflamman (Northern flame) as a mouthpiece. Initially, they were quite influential in the northern part of Sweden, Norrbotten, which

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. appendix B.

always has been a stronghold of communism. But when the conflict went into a split and the traditionalists founded their own party, APK, in 1977, it did not hurt VPK that much. In average they were older than party members in general, and most traditionalists already had left VPK before the split. They were simply not in life. According to VPK itself, just about 3,000 of its members left the party and joined APK. As a lot of new members were joining VPK at the same time, it could in fact report growth in membership for the period 1977 - 1979.<sup>22</sup>

However, the split had some important implications for the composition of the party cadre. Very briefly, it fastened the transformation that had going on for long time.

Historically, the bases of the Communist party have been the mining districts, the waste and some of the mill-villages in Norrbotten, Västernorrland, Gävleborg and Värmland, and the two biggest cities, Stockholm and Gothenburgh. In sociological terms, the typical member of the Communist party clearly was a proletarian. But when speaking about the bases of Communism, it is common to distinguish between two kinds of proletarians.

In schematic terms ... the old Communist rank and file were either 'working-class aristocrats' or victims of isolation and relative deprivation.<sup>23</sup>

This pattern may to some extent be explained by circumstances during the break-away in 1917. The party district of Norrbotten collectively decided to leave the Social Democratic Party and join the new party.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> VPK Kongress 1981. Verksamhetsberättelse.

<sup>23</sup> Tarschys 1977:136.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. the map on Sweden in appendix D.

In the mid-thirties, there were about 17,000 party members and half of them lived in Norrbotten, Västernorrland and Gävleborg. The two big cities did not counted for more than a fifth. Today, the geographical distribution of the cadre is more in accordance with that of the population as a whole. Stockholm is by far the largest district with a fourth of all the members.

Table 2: The geographical distribution of communist party members

	Norr- botten	Väster- norrländ	Gävle- borg	Stock- holm	Gothen- burgh	Other distr.	(N=100%)
1933 nov	37	11	9	7	7*	29	15530
1935 dec	32	10	8	8	10*	32	17153
1974 1/1	17	5	5	26	8	39	15338
1977 1/1	14	5	5	23	9	44	15461
1978 1/1	10	5	5	26	8	46	15010
1981 1/1	10	4	5	26	7	48	18157
<b>Communist votes</b>							
1948	9	6	7	23	12	43	241178
1982							
<b>Population</b>							
1941	3	4	4	14	8*	67	6370538
1981	3	3	4	18	9*	63	8324139

\* including Bohuslän

Concerning the proportion of women in the cadre, there has been a steady increase. It was 17 % in the mid-thirties, 26 % in 1974 and today, it is getting near 40 %. These figures are easy to find in the regular congress reports from the central committee. But as to other sociological characteristics of the party members, it is harder to give a discription of the development.

There is a statistical survey of the party members made by the party itself in 1974. Although, we can not know for certain how different categories were defined, this survey indicates that the Communist party still in 1974 was to be characterized as a working-class party. At least, that was the main conclusion made by the party itself. The survey also shows that the average age in the cadre was rather high. About 40 % of the members in 1974 had joined the party more than 25 years ago. But as early as 1974, it was possible to grasp a new tendency. As the members recruited in the fourties were beginning to die away, the growth in membership were going to produce a very fast rejuvenation of the party.

Table 3: The 1974 membership survey

OCCUPATION	
Workers	55
Salaried employees	11
Entrepreneurs	2
Students	4
Housewives	6
Pensioners	22
Sum (N)	100 (12,321)
YEAR OF ENTRANCE	
- 1920	1
1921 - 1930	4
1931 - 1940	12
1941 - 1950	27
1951 - 1960	12
1961 - 1970	18
1971 - 1974	27
Sum (N)	101 (10,337)
UNION MEMBERSHIP	
LO (Workers)	84
TCO (Salaried employees)	13
SACO (Academics)	3
Sum (N)	100 (6,932)

Apart from this, there is no data on the entire cadre. If we want to analyse the changes of the party, we have to rely on less valid data. In that case, the reports on the delegates at the party congresses may be useful. When comparing these reports, we get an indication on the transformation of the entire cadre.

Not surprising, a delegate at a party congress is a man rather than a woman. The females of the Communist party have always been underrepresented at the party congresses. However, in recent years their proportion at the congress has been almost as large as that of the party members.

Table 4: The sexual composition of the party congresses

	1953	1961	1964	1967	1969	1972	1975	1978	1981	1985
Males	91	87	91	85	87	79	71	64		
Females	9	13	9	12	13	21	29	36		
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100		
N	328*	327*	368*	286*	231	254	322	313		

Note: Figures indicated by \* include members of the central committee.

As everyone has suspected, the party activists of today are significantly younger than those of the sixties. The average age of a delegate was approximately 44 years in the sixties. Today it is well below 40 years. Furthermore, while the congresses in the sixties were dominated by delegates which entered the party during the growth period in the forties, an entire new generation of activists has gradually captured the dominating positions in the seventies. At the 1969 congress the average party age of the delegates was about 22 year, and 1981 it was less than 9 years.

The figures on the union membership of the delegates also distinctly indicate a change in the social base of the activists. In the late sixties (1969) more than a fourth (26 %) of the delegates stated that they were unorganized. Today (1981), this group counted for 3 %. At the beginning of the seventies, there was a large majority (75 %)

by those who were organized, which stated they were members of LO, i.e. the labor union. In 1981 the other unions, notably those of the salaried employees and the academics, counted for a majority.

Table 5: The composition of the party congresses II.

	1972	1975	1978	1981	1985
<b>AGE</b>					
0 - 19	1	1	1	0	
20 - 29	16	20	20	20	
30 - 39	20	32	43	49	
40 - 49	26	14	16	18	
50 - 59	27	21	15	11	
60 - 69	10	9	5	3	
70 -	1	2	1	0	
Total (%)	101	99	101	101	
(N)	(215)	(250)	(322)	(313)	
<b>YEAR OF ENTRANCE</b>					
1917 - 29	3	2	1	0	
1930 - 39	10	7	4	0	
1940 - 49	28	22	12	4	
1950 - 59	17	13	7	6	
1960 - 69	28	22	14	7	
1970 - 77	14	34	61	59	
1978 - 81	-	-	-	23	
Total (%)	100	100	99	99	
(N)	(212)	(250)	(322)	(313)	
<b>UNION MEMBERSHIP</b>					
LO (Workers)	58	57	50	47	
TCO (Salaried employees)	14	17	25	31	
SACO/SR (Academics)	4	11	12	16	
Other unions	1	2	2	2	
Unorganized or no answer	23	13	9	3	
Total (%)	100	100	98	99	
(N)	(231)	(254)	(322)	(313)	

To sum up, a typical member of the Communist party is quite different today in comparison to the sixties. Formerly, he was - of course, it was a male - about 45 years old, and he had entered the party twenty years ago, i.e. in the mid-fourties. Furthermore, he was occupied in heavy industry, e.g. a pulp-mill in the central of Sweden or a mine in the far north. Nowadays, he may also be a she, and he or she is less than 40 and joined the party a few years ago. He may be a worker, but as likely she may be occupied within social care, health or education.

#### A new electorate

In 1970, Sweden changed its political system. The old two-chamber parliament was replaced by a new one with only one chamber. And a barrier against small parties was introduced. The parties had to overcome 4 per cent of the total votes, if they were to get representation in the parliament. Although, the Communist party only got 3.0 % at the general election in 1968, it succeeded to pass the barrier two years later. And since then, the communists' vote has been fairly stable around 5 %.

However, this does not mean that the Communist party has had a stable electorate. On the contrary, the core of stable communist sympathizers is in fact rather small, and the electoral studies have showed that a significant part of the communist electorate consists of voters having the Social Democratic Party as their first preference. Their primary purpose is to back up a Social Democratic government, and they realise that the possibility for their own party to defeat the bourgeois parties is depending on the communists ability to reach



the parliament.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, in some respects there has been a dramatic change in the electoral bases of the Communist party. In his Kommunismen i Sverige (The Communism in Sweden) from 1954, Sven Rydenfelt concluded that the Communist party found its greatest electoral support in two different types of areas. There was "industrial communism", but also "waste communism". The Communist party had a lot of sympathizers in the mine-district in Norrbotten and in some places dominated by heavy industry. But apart from that, there were several villages in the waste or wilds, where the Communist party almost reached a majority position. The communists still have electoral strongholds in those areas. But, in recent years, they have got some new strongholds. Today, the Communist party has captured a quite good position at the universities.<sup>26</sup>

The working-class still constitute a significant, though decreasing, part of the entire as well as the communist electorate. However, the proportion of workers is larger outside than inside the Communist party. Today, the communists' share of the working-class votes is about the same as the party's share of the total votes. And you have to look at salaried employees, especially those who are occupied with care, education and culture, or students if you want to find a group with notably high communist vote.

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<sup>25</sup> The following pages are based on the results from the Swedish National Election studies 1956 - 1982. The results from the 1976, 1979 and 1982 studies are reported in Petersson 1977, Holmberg 1981 and Holmberg 1984.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Petersson 1981:38f.

Table 6: Communist vote and occupation (old classification)

SOCIAL GROUPS	1956	1960	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982
Workers	72	65	69	46	51	51	39	41	30
Salaried employees	-	8	12	33	21	17	22	41	41
Other groups	28	27	19	21	28	32	39	18	29
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	14	26	67	39	91	98	103	141	131

Table 7: Communist vote and occupation (new classification)

PERCENT COMMUNISTS	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982
occupational groups						
Industrial workers	2	6	6	5	5	5
Other workers	1	4	6	5	5	4
Salaried employees, low	2	1	2	3	3	5
Salaried employees, middle	2	3	3	5	8	8
Salaried employees, high	2	3	1	3	3	4
Small businessmen	0	1	3	2	5	3
Farmers	1	1	1	1	0	0
Students	5	11	18	8	19	11
occupational sectors						
Agriculture	1	2	1	3	1	2
Production	2	6	4	4	4	5
Cirkulation	1	3	5	3	3	3
Reproduction	2	3	6	8	12	10
Administration	1	1	0	3	4	4
Entire electorate	1	4	4	4	5	5

You may observe the same phenomena if you look at Communist sympathizers within different educational groups. Formerly, the Communist party attracted those with low education more than well-educated. Today, the reverse is true.

Table\_8: Communist vote in different educational groups

EDUCATION	1956	1960	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982
Low	2	2	3	1	4	4	3	4	4
High	0	0	1	2	5	8	9	10	8

Note: High means at least "studentexamen".

Apart from these changes with respect to social class and education, there is another trend in the Swedish electorate. Before the modernist revolution, the Communist party found most support among the old voters. Nowadays, the correlation between age and Communist vote goes the opposite direction.<sup>27</sup> And the communists' share of the first time voters has radically increased since the mid-sixties.

Table\_9: Communist vote in different age groups

AGE	1956	1960	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982
- 39	1	1	2	2	5	6	6	10	8
40 - 59	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	3
60 -	1	3	3	1	2	3	3	2	2
First time voters	0	0	0	2	11	12	9	11	7

I have concentrated on the social changes of the communist sympathizers. To be sure, they have changed in other ways too. Their attitudes are not the same as before. For example, there are survey-data from the electoral studies of the 1973 and 1976 national elections that indicate a change in the communists' attitude towards domestic affairs in the Soviet Union. There was a significant increase in negative respondents, and in 1976 they constituted a

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<sup>27</sup> Holmberg 1984:76.

majority of the communist sympathizers.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the ideological change of the party documents corresponds to a similar trend in the opinion of the communist electorate.

### Summary

At the party congress in 1964, the party leader Hilding Hagberg was forced to resign office. Although, he was replaced by a well-known name in the party, C.H. Hermansson, this occurrence marks the beginning of a new era of Swedish communism. Of course, the replacement of chairman does not explain everything that followed. The rise for leftism among youth after 1968 was not at all a product of the Communist party's activity.

However, the replacement initiated a generational shift in the leadership of the party that had some very important consequences. It prevented a development as in Denmark and Norway, where left-wing socialist parties have become a political force at the expense of the Communist parties. Thereby, the Swedish Communist Party was the only real alternative for the radical youth in the beginning of the seventies. Furthermore, it contributed to a gentle solution of the "Finnish" problem. The pro-Soviet traditionalist faction was gradually turned out of the party. Thereby, when coming to a split in 1977, they were too few to hurt the party.

The ideological development of the Swedish Communist Party since the mid-sixties may be characterized as a repeat of its earlier history. The content of modernism was very much the same as the left-wing socialism of the pre-Comintern period. The Neo-Leninism of the late sixties and the early seventies resembles Leninism proper, though

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<sup>28</sup> Petersson 1982:53.

there are some very important differences. And as with orthodox Leninism, Neo-Leninism has gradually been revised. Today, the Communist party is once again putting emphasis on democracy and other ethical principles. The development of the cadre parallels that of the electorate. The old supporters are replaced by a new generation of communists. In comparison to the old one, it consists of more women, more youth, more well-educated and less workers. Thus, the Swedish Communist Party has changed a lot with respect to its ideology as well as its cadre and electorate. Concerning these aspects, we do have a new face of Swedish communism. But, do not forget, its year of birth was 1964 and not 1968.

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## APPENDICES

- A. The Communist Party and the general elections
- B. The turnover rates in the party-executive bodies
- C. A historical map of the Swedish left
- D. Sweden subdivided into counties, e.g. electoral districts

A. The Communist Party and the general elections

The rates for the Swedish Communist Party (SSV, SKP, VPK) as a percentage of the valid votes, of the socialist block and of the radical left in the parliamentary elections (R) and the local government elections (K).

Election	The rates for the Communist party		
	valid votes	socialist block	radical left
1917 R	8,1	20,6	100
1919 K	5,8	16,0	100
1920 R	6,4	17,7	100
1921 R	4,6	10,5	59
1922 K	4,5	11,5	71
1924 R	5,1	11,0	100
1926 K	4,1	9,5	100
1928 R	6,4	14,7	100
1930 K	1,2	2,6	30
1932 R	3,0	6,0	36
1934 K	2,8	5,7	41
1936 R	3,3	6,2	43
1938 K	3,8	6,8	67
1940 R	3,5	6,1	83
1942 K	5,9	10,5	98
1944 R	10,3	18,1	98
1946 K	11,2	20,1	100
1948 R	6,3	12,0	100
1950 K	4,9	9,2	100
1952 R	4,3	8,5	100
1954 K	4,8	9,2	100
1956 R	5,0	10,1	100
1958 R	3,4	6,9	100
1958 K	4,0	7,9	100
1960 R	4,5	8,6	100
1962 K	3,8	7,0	100
1964 R	5,2	9,9	100
1966 K	6,4	13,2	100
1968 R	3,0	5,6	100
1970 R	4,8	9,5	92
1973 R	5,3	10,7	91
1976 R	4,8	10,0	94
1979 R	5,6	11,3	93
1982 R	5,6	10,9	98

Source: Sveriges officiella statistik, Allmänna valen.



B. The turnover rates in the party-executive bodies

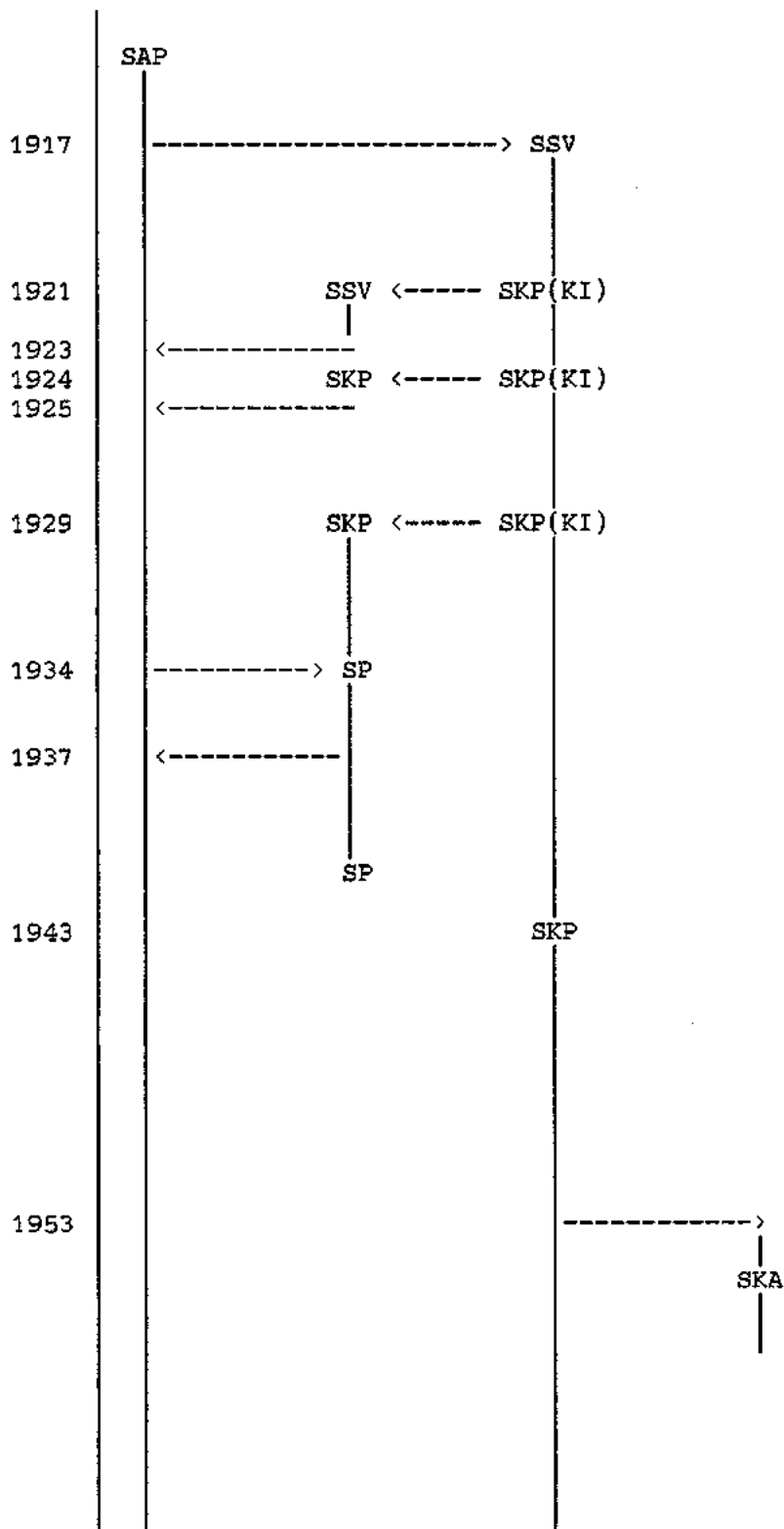
The share (%) of reelected members is calculated from the old composition.

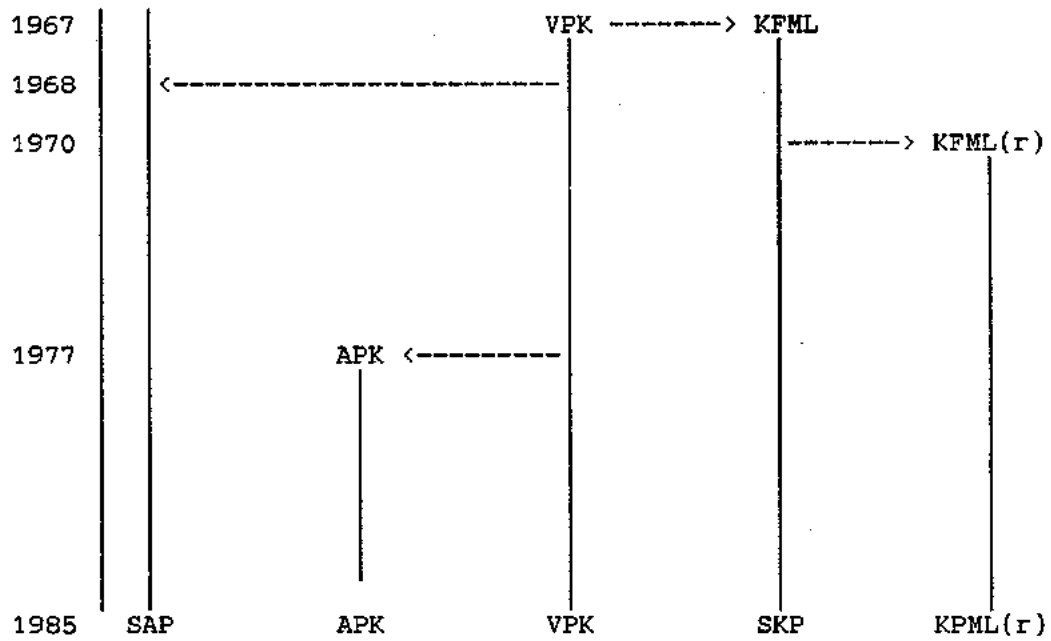
The share (%) of newlyelected members is calculated from the new composition.

Congress		Executive committee			Central committee		
Year	No	Re-elected	Newly-elected	Number	Re-elected	Newly-elected	Number
1944	12	89	11	9	64	36	25
1946	13	89	11	9	72	28	25
1948	14	100	25	12	92	23	30
1951	15	100	0	12	87	13	30
1953	16	67	20	10	80	20	30
1955	17	90	18	11	93	20	35
1957	18	73	27	11	94	27	45
1961	19	100	0	11	82	18	45
1964	20	55	45	11	76	24	45
1967	21	18	71	7	38	46	31
1969	22	57	56	9	71	37	35
1972	23	78	22	9	74	26	35
1975	24	78	22	9	69	31	35
1978	25	78	22	9	69	31	35
1981	26	56	29	7	63	37	35

Sources: Annual reports and minutes of the congresses and the central committee.

C. A historical map of the Swedish left

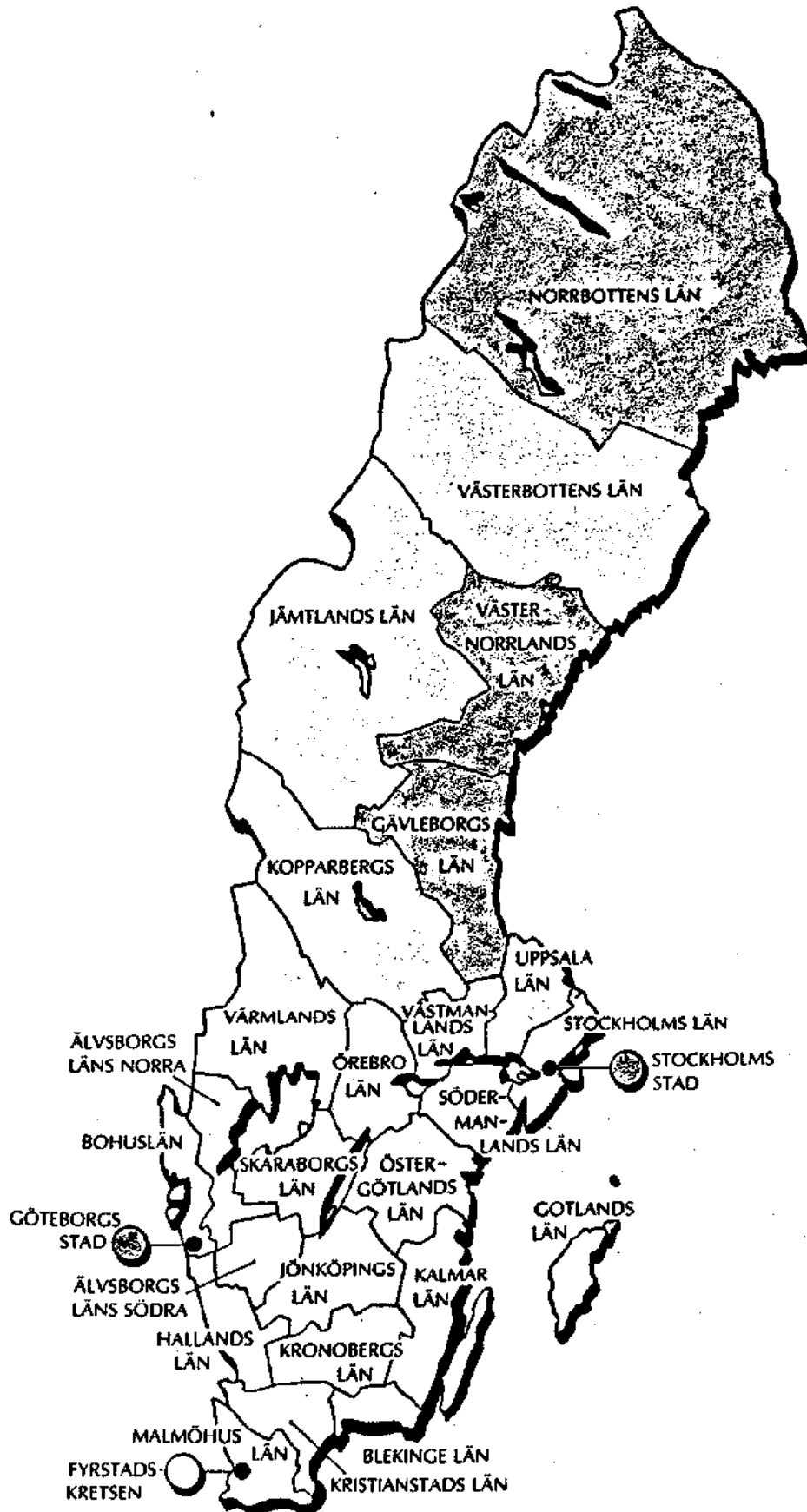




Remarks: SAP - Social Democratic Party  
 SSV - Social Democratic Left Party  
 SKP(KI) - Communist Party of Sweden  
 (section of the Comintern)  
 SKP - Communist Party of Sweden  
 SP - Socialist Party  
 SKA - Communist Workers League of Sweden  
 VPK - Left Party Communists  
 KFML - Communist League of Marxist-Leninists  
 APK - Labour Party Communists  
 KPML(R) - Communist Party of Marxist-Leninists  
 (the revolutionaries)

D. Sweden subdivided into counties, e.g. electoral districts

The shadowed areas indicate the stronghold of the Communist party.



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CARRILLO'S CONTRADICTIONS: THE PARTIDO COMUNISTA DE ESPAÑA, 1964 - 1982

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## CARRILLO'S CONTRADICTIONS: THE PARTIDO COMUNISTA DE ESPAÑA, 1964 - 1982

Karl Marx, adapting Hegel's famous apophthegm, once remarked that the events and characters of history repeat themselves, the first time as tragedy and the second as farce.<sup>1</sup> For the Spanish workers' movement, perhaps the tragedy lay in the leadership of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) between 1879 and 1925 by Pablo Iglesias, while the farce came in the shape of Santiago Carrillo's stewardship of the Partido Comunista de España (PCE) between 1956 and 1982. Iglesias, an austere autodidact notorious for his limited comprehension of Marxist theory and antipathy towards intellectuals, was essentially always a pragmatist: he represented the incarnation of the division within the PSOE between simplistic revolutionary rhetoric and ever more reformist practice. Moreover, his autocratic intolerance of those who opposed him contributed in no small measure to the poverty of Marxist theory in Spain, an ideological heritage to the workers' movement which remained unalleviated by the time of Santiago Carrillo's rise to prominence within the PCE.

Carrillo, though, was himself no theorist. Despite the fact that he is best known outside Spain as a leading formulator of "eurocommunism", he is, by his own admission, better understood as a pragmatic political activist rather than as a Marxist theoretician. However, Carrillo shares more than just this with Iglesias, for he was equally mistrustful of intellectuals and equally concerned to keep them from key leadership positions in his party. Further, Carrillo shares with Iglesias the unenviable trait of actions failing to match words, although in his case reformist rhetoric masked decidedly non-reformist personal political practice in the PCE. Just as Iglesias is central to an understanding of the early Spanish socialist movement, so too the development of Spanish communism since the mid-1950s must be seen in the context of the fundamental role played by Carrillo.



The comparison, though, should not be taken too far. At root, Iglesias remained a fundamentally honest, moralistic man. "El Abuelo", as he was known, may have lacked incisiveness and political nous, but he more than made up for this in sincerity. Carrillo, on the other hand, is an altogether more sinister - and intriguing - character. Not the least remarkable feature of his leadership of the PCE was the fact that through the use of essentially Stalinist tactics he managed to preside over the marked liberalisation of a Communist Party which, more than most, had mortgaged its soul to the Soviet Union under Stalin. Thus, between the mid-1950s and the mid-1970s, the PCE moved from rigid mimesis of Moscow to a position in the vanguard of what came to be known as "Euro-communism". Indeed, the PCE achieved renown as a most outspoken critic of the CPSU. Ultimately, however, it was the contradiction between liberalisation and Carrillo's concern to maintain his own pre-eminent position which led to the effective collapse of the PCE in the post-Franco era.

Such has been Carrillo's influence that the history of the PCE since his accession to the leadership is in effect the history of his contradictory political machinations. The reasons for this, though, are paradoxical: firstly, Carrillo's major benefactor, mirabile dictu, was General Franco. By constant references to the communist menace, Franco ensured that the PCE leadership-in-exile would vicariously derive prestige for a threat which, though real, was always exaggerated. This imparted to the PCE leadership an inflated view of its own efficacy. However, it must be acknowledged that the communists were the major opposition force to the dictatorship. Consequently, their leader assumed a particularly prominent role in the context of Spanish politics during the Franco regime. This, in turn, leads to the second paradox, which is that Carrillo's visibility was enhanced by exile and clandestinity. Because the militants in Spain had to operate undercover, and because party leaderships rather than members are anyway virtually always the focus of

critical attention, Carrillo stood out. Furthermore, since he was able to dominate, through his understanding of the exigencies of Leninist democratic centralism, the much-reduced PCE in exile, he was able the more easily to pose as the central figure within the communist movement. The collective internalisation of this belief in Carrillo's centrality by the communist movement ultimately engendered the third paradox: Carrillo's authoritarian domination of the party machinery allowed a significant degree of liberalisation to take place in all areas of the PCE except the leadership. Thus, when Franco died, Carrillo returned to Spain to lead a party which, although remaining illegal, was arguably potentially more important than at any previous time in its history. His central role in achieving its legalisation, however, confirmed the generalised belief in his own indispensability to the PCE. Ultimately, this was to be disastrous for the party: Carrillo's refusal, or inability, to adapt his political style within the PCE to the needs and tenor of Spain's nascent democracy was the major reason for the collapse of the party. It is for this reason that the figure of Carrillo must underpin any study of contemporary Spanish communism. <sup>2</sup>

## I

Through his anticipation of the currents which were to emanate from Khrushchev's 1956 "Secret Speech" to the XX Congress of the CPSU, and his skilful exploitation of the growing division between the "old guard" leadership of the PCE, and the more dynamic jóvenes, Santiago Carrillo had managed to establish his position within the leadership of the PCE by the mid-1950s. However, while this was confirmed de jure in 1960, when he took over the mantle of secretary-general from Dolores Ibárruri ("La Pasionaria"), it was not until the expulsions of Fernando Claudín and Jorge Semprún from the PCE in 1964 that the chain-smoking Carrillo demonstrated his readiness and aptitude for manipulating the party apparatus in order to protect his own position.

Such manoeuvres were to recur throughout his reign as secretary-general, and increasingly called into question the sincerity of his professed liberalising intentions.

The start of Carrillo's ascendancy coincided with the PCE's acceptance in the summer of 1956 of his policy of "National Reconciliation", a move to facilitate alliances with other non-Communist opposition forces to the dictatorial Franco regime. This marked a radical shift away from the intransigence which had marked the PCE under its former leaders, and bolstered Carrillo's conviction that "National Reconciliation" would promote a national alliance against Franco. This alliance would in turn bring down the regime through a national general strike. In fact, successive efforts to sponsor such a strike turned out to be dismal failures, and marked the beginning of the divergencies between Carrillo and party militants who were more closely in contact with the political situation within Spain. <sup>3</sup>

Two events in particular highlighted this. On 5 May 1958 a day of "national reconciliation", convoked by the PCE, had minimal effect, while the Huelga Nacional Pacífica (National Peaceful Strike) of 18 June 1959 was even more of a disastrous failure. Both, though, were presented as major successes by the Paris-based leadership of the PCE; in both planning and execution, the misgivings of the organisers in Spain, Jorge Semprún, Simón Sánchez Montero and Francisco Romero Marín, as well as of Fernando Claudín and Ignacio Gallego, had been ignored. It was the combination of the policy of the HNP, together with the interpretation of it, which led Claudín and Semprún to reflect on the inadequacies of the official PCE line. They were also alarmed at the way in which Carrillo was beginning to manifest signs of replicating the very shortcomings that he had earlier criticised the "old guard" for: subjectivism, sectarianism, and isolation from the realities of the interior. <sup>4</sup>

Another source of contention between Carrillo and Claudín concerned their respective interpretations of Stalinism, and of events surrounding the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. With regard to the former, Carrillo felt Khrushchev's "self-criticism" on behalf of the CPSU had been sufficient, whereas Claudín felt a deeper analysis had to be made of the contradictions within the Soviet system which had allowed Stalinism to develop. On the question of Hungary, Carrillo laid all the blame on "agents of imperialism", while Claudín held that these "agents" represented a popular revolutionary insurrection against a Stalinist dictatorial regime. In meetings of the PCE Politburo Claudín found himself isolated as members closed ranks behind Carrillo.<sup>5</sup> This marked the start of Carrillo's concentration of power into his own hands; indeed, between 1956 and 1964 Carrillo's wishes were opposed only once in the Central Committee, when he was refused permission to travel clandestinely to Spain.

At the VI Congress of the PCE, held in Prague in January 1960, it was decided in moves which suggested a certain opening of the party to allow looser conditions of membership in order to commit the PCE to becoming a mass party, and to replace the Politburo by an Executive Committee, expanded in size to fifteen members. While this was off-set by the creation of a five-member Secretariat, which in later years was to help institutionalise Carrillo's dominance, it did provide for the possibility of the PCE in Spain becoming more open. To the party's great cost, this was never matched in the leadership. The VI Congress also reaffirmed the line of "National Reconciliation", a move not well received by some party militants in Spain, as demonstrated by the two letters sent to the Executive Committee by Javier Pradera, expressing doubts about the leadership's view of affairs in Spain. Pradera's views were dismissed as the vacillations of a young intellectual, and Semprún was charged with rebutting his comments. By this stage, however, Semprún already had his own major doubts about PCE policy.<sup>6</sup>

Carrillo was aware of increasing discontent, both within the Paris-based leadership and within Spain, with official PCE positions. Concerned at the growing readiness of Claudín and Semprún in particular to challenge his views, especially over the interpretation of strike movements in Spain during 1962, he suggested that they should outline their objections formally. It is probable that in so doing, Carrillo was consciously setting a trap: once a formal statement of criticism had been made, its authors would lay themselves open to accusations of fractional activity. This is precisely what happened. It remains a mystery, though, why Claudín of all people, an experienced militant with an intimate knowledge of the inner workings of communist parties, should have walked into such a trap. His own claim that he was fed up with party meetings, although perfectly plausible in itself, is a rather lame explanation. <sup>7</sup>

Claudín's criticisms, supported by Semprún, were first systematically aired in his report presented to an Executive Committee meeting on March 27, 1964. The central issue of this report concerned the stage of economic development Spain had reached, and how this related to the necessary tactical adjustments for the transition to socialism:

"In essence, in Spain it has to be decided whether Spanish capitalism has reached a phase in which there is no further possible radical transformation other than socialism, or whether a [bourgeois]'democratic revolution' is still possible, which, without overstepping the boundaries of capitalism, will resolve determinate anti-feudal and anti-monopoly tasks." <sup>8</sup>

Carrillo believed that Spain was structurally basically unaltered since the 1930s; that the instauration of democracy would remove power from small oligarchic cliques representing monopoly capital, and that democracy was inextricably linked to a national revolutionary crisis placing power into the hands of non-monopoly forces. Claudín's belief was that a new stage was developing within Spanish capitalism: that changes were taking place in the political forms of the domination by monopoly capital, reflecting the boom which indicated that Spain had reached the stage of "take-off".

Economic progress, argued Claudín, was imparting to the Franco regime a degree of stability which rendered otiose the claims of some members of the party that the dominant classes were in a state of panic. Laying heavy stress on the conservative mentality and genuine desire of many members of the "agrarian bourgeoisie" and middle classes to avoid a return to bloody conflict, Claudín pointed out that the political crisis facing the regime should not be interpreted as a revolutionary social crisis. The political crisis would be resolved through a gradual series of partial economic and political reforms. These developments meant that the need for a bourgeois democratic revolution had been obviated; instead, Spain was economically ripe for the transition to socialism, although the necessary political and social conditions were still far off. With regard to the reservations of those who profoundly desired liberty and progress, but who desired equally peace, Claudín observed that,

"The possibility of strengthening this socialist and marxist tendency, of bringing these forces into the Party or alongside the Party, will depend in large measure on whether the Party succeeds in inspiring confidence in the democratic character of its conception of socialism, and for these people this confidence is strongly linked to the democratic character of the Party itself." 9

This represented a thinly disguised attack on the way Carrillo was running the PCE.

Following Claudín's report, he and Semprún were suspended from the Executive Committee pending a referendum among the party rank-and-file. They were also subjected to a smear campaign, and accused of revisionism and defeatism. Carrillo used the occasion of a speech to a mass rally in Paris on April 19, 1964 - the anniversary of the execution of the PCE militant Julián Grimau, and thus a highly emotive moment - to denounce attempts to split the party. Claudín was provoked into producing an expanded work, which he presented to the Central Committee in December in the hope of re-opening the debate. The heart of this new report was an extended analysis of the June Declaration

of the PCE, which had reaffirmed a commitment to a bourgeois democratic revolution to be initiated by the calling of a general strike. The essential features of what he called the subjectivist approach of the PCE since 1956 were outlined by Claudín as follows: a "catastrophist" interpretation of Spain's economic development, divorced from reality; an overly high assessment of the level of political consciousness of the working class, constantly belied by the facts; an over-optimistic view of the degree of decomposition of the regime, the state, and in particular the armed forces; a permanent vision of an "explosive" political situation.

In fact, Carrillo accepted some of these charges, and had defended himself earlier in the year on the following grounds:

"If in 1939 the party had said: 'We will reach 1964 and there will still be fascism in Spain', what would have happened? . . . They would have thrown us out, and I think with good reason, as massive demoralisers . . . The militants would have said to us: in this case, leave us be, don't ask us for sacrifices, don't ask that we give our lives and our liberty; leave us to wait for better times in which the fight will be worth the pain." 10

While there is certainly some truth in this comment, it in no way justifies the methods Carrillo chose to employ in order to defend his beliefs from challenges. In the event, the fortunes of the PCE after the death of Franco also bore out Claudín's counter claim:

"If the party and the masses realised time and again, over the years, that our predictions did not come true, that this immediate prospect of the fall of the dictatorship (constantly affirmed by us) was not confirmed, the result would be doubt and a lack of confidence in the capacity of a leadership which so repeatedly got it wrong . . ." 11

That both Carrillo and Claudín could be right in their own ways underlines what Preston has called the "dilemma of credibility" faced by the PCE: to hold the faith of the militant rank-and-file would cost the party much of its efficacy, while to acknowledge the reality of the political and economic situation in Spain would emasculate its revolutionary credentials. 12 Carrillo's

attempt to steer between both courses ultimately managed to incur the negative costs of both strategies without any clear advantages accruing to the PCE.

The Carrillo/Claudín schism was a particularly important event in the history of the PCE, for it not only demonstrated the lengths to which Carrillo was prepared to go in order to maintain his leadership of the party, but also removed his most dangerous potential challenger for that leadership. Certainly Carrillo was to face and fight off other challenges, and it is far from clear that it was ever Claudín's intention to usurp Carrillo's position, but none of the subsequent pretenders was to be so well prepared in terms of intimate knowledge of the party apparatus and familiarity with Marxist theory. It is certainly difficult to analyse Carrillo's actions in terms other than those of the logic of power-struggle politics, especially in the light of the fact that he was subsequently to adopt many of the positions defended by Claudín. Indeed, he was later to comment that Claudín had been "right too soon".<sup>13</sup>

A further significance of the schism lies in the fact that Claudín's views have often been seen as an important step along the road towards "eurocommunism". It is thus highly ironic that Carrillo should have engineered Claudín's expulsion, for in later years he was to use the party machinery against those who attacked his own trenchant defence of "eurocommunist" positions. It must be said, though, that never did Carrillo's commitment to "eurocommunism" outweigh his determination to remain leader of the PCE. It merely suited his ambitions in this direction to pose as a defender of those positions which became associated with "eurocommunism".

Claudín and Semprún learned that they had been expelled from the PCE through the party press: it was announced in Mundo Obrero in April 1965. Later in



the year Carrillo published what has been seen as his reply to Claudín and Semprún, Después de Franco, ¿Qué?. In this, while still holding to his view of Spain being a volcano ready to erupt, Carrillo now spoke of his country in terms of its being a western-type monopoly capitalist regime. Further, he now laid stress on the need for a pacific road to socialism, and sought compromise with those sectors of the bourgeoisie in favour of a greater degree of liberalisation within the regime. Although Claudín had persuasively argued that there was little likelihood of an alliance with bourgeois sectors of society until such a time as these felt their economic progress to be hindered, Carrillo now made unconvincing offers to both the Church and the army. The only tangible result of this move was the further disillusionment of communist militants within Spain. <sup>14</sup>

Carrillo has always tried to present the 1964 crisis as an example of free and open discussion in the PCE:

"Starting from the XX Congress [of the CPSU] we have undertaken more open-minded ideological discussions on all the new problems. We haven't sought to hide criticisms addressed to us. We published Claudín's text when he criticised us and, moreover, certain comrades reproached us for doing this." <sup>15</sup>

It is certainly true that Claudín's positions were published in the PCE journal Nuestra Bandera, under the heading "Document - Fractional Platform of Fernando Claudín". Claudín, for his part, has always maintained that his views were presented in an unfair way, claiming that they were badly printed and difficult to read. In fact, both are being disingenuous: neither was Claudín's platform very badly printed, nor, more importantly, was the PCE a forum in which free and open discussion took place in any meaningful sense. <sup>16</sup>

## II

Ultimately, 1964 must be seen as a crucial year in the PCE's development.

Carrillo, however, might not have moved quite so far towards attempted accomo-

dation with bourgeois forces had it not been for the unwitting prompting of the Soviet Union. In 1964 Khrushchev was deposed as leader of the CPSU, and this represented a severe blow to Carrillo, who had begun to identify himself with the Soviet leader. His fall fuelled Carrillo's fears of challenges to his leadership, and thereby indirectly initiated the PCE's progressive distancing from the CPSU. This was to gather momentum rapidly after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Before that date Carrillo had published Nuevos enfoques a problemas de hoy, in which he took the ideas adumbrated in Después de Franco a bit further.<sup>17</sup> Stressing the growing convergence between Spanish reformists and traditional workers' opposition, Carrillo now spoke of the "democratic revolution" as something which would occur at some indeterminate later date. During this period closer links became established between the PCE and the French and Italian communist parties, particularly the former through Roger Garaudy. It is probable that his friendship with Garaudy was a spur to Carrillo's proposal of a new strategic concept: the alliance between forces of work and of culture. This move, a tacit admission that Spain was an industrialised capitalist country, was made without any prior discussion in the Central Committee. Increasingly, PCE policy was being defined by fiat, making a mockery of the supposed opening up of the party.

It is thus not without its irony that Carrillo used the occasion of the Sinyavsky and Daniel trials in 1966 to criticise the Soviet Union and affirm his supposed commitment to a form of socialism in Spain which would be both democratic and pluralist.<sup>18</sup> This heralded the divergencies between the PCE and the CPSU which were to become increasingly outspoken in the 1970s, and which were to be essential grist to the "eurocommunist" mill. In 1967 there occurred a brief, yet significant, polemic between the Soviet journal Izvestia

and the PCE organ Mundo Obrero. As was to be expected, the PCE's sudden unwillingness to give acritical support to the Moscow line offended those militants within the party who saw any criticism of the Soviet Union as an attack on the ideals for which it stood. Herein lay the roots of the next challenges to Carrillo's dominance by Moscow-backed supporters of the Soviet Union.

The hardliners were particularly upset at the PCE's official condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.<sup>19</sup> Carrillo had earlier given his public approval to the "Prague Spring", and was personally slighted by the invasion on account of his having been assured by the Soviets that they had no plans in that direction. This was exacerbated when, at a meeting between PCE and CPSU leaders, Suslov dismissed Carrillo's complaints with the comment that the PCE was just a small party whose interests could not be allowed to interfere with those of the USSR. His response was to announce his opposition to the the invasion on Radio España Independiente, a move which shocked many militants inside Spain as well as two members of the Central Committee: Agustín Gómez and Eduardo García. Gómez and García were further disturbed by moves towards dialogue between the PCE and the Catholic Church which had been gathering momentum in Spain. The major figure in this development was Manuel Azcárate, the former editor of Mundo Obrero who had recently been elected to the Executive Committee. Azcárate was to play an increasingly important role within the PCE as head of its international policy section, and would do much to establish the party's credentials as an independent entity not tied to Moscow. He would also in time fall victim to Carrillo's machinations.<sup>20</sup>

A third development which alienated the pro-Soviets was the elaboration by Carrillo at the end of the 1960s of the "Pacta para la libertad". In some senses this was just a renaming of the policy of "National Reconciliation",

but it went further in that it envisaged the inclusion of dynamic sectors of the high bourgeoisie. This was to move beyond the positions of Claudín, who in fact had warned of the limitations of the proposed alliance, and of the need to avoid playing the game of the haute bourgeoisie.<sup>21</sup> For many militants in Spain, Carrillo's action represented a craven sacrificing of the PCE's revolutionary mission in favour of power ambitions at any price.

There was thus a degree of support for García and Gómez within Spain which augured badly for the leadership. Much more ominous, though, were the signs of increasingly effective activity from sectors of the PCE in the mainland over which Carrillo did not have complete control. Throughout the 1960s, the Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO.) had been steadily infiltrated by PCE militants to the point where they had become effectively a communist trade union. Set up in the late 1950s and early 1960s to oppose Franco's official Syndical Organisation, the CC.OO. had as their goal to grow into an open, mass movement. In 1964 a Provincial Workers' Commission for Metal was founded in Madrid, while in the following year in Barcelona there was organised the Coordinadora Local de Barcelona. By 1967, the CC.OO. constituted a major anti-Francoist movement, and its "marches on Madrid" in January and October of that year involved over 100,000 workers. At the first Assembly of the CC.OO., in June 1967, it was proclaimed that the movement would be an open, unitarian, democratic and independent labour movement. This brought down on the movement harsh repression, with mass arrests and dismissals from workplaces carried out at the government's behest. In such conditions, the experience of PCE militants stood them in good stead to dominate increasingly the movement. With great valour they fought back against Francoist repression, even after the 1969 declaration of a "state of exception" in Spain.

Alongside greater and more effective stirrings of industrial action, there

was also a crisis brewing for the Franco regime through the radicalisation of university teachers in a period when it was becoming possible to talk of Marxism as being the dominant sub-culture within Spain. This was reflected in the growing number of people from the middle classes who were joining the PCE, although it is impossible to arrive at precise figures given the exigencies of clandestinity. However, it can safely be asserted that throughout the 1960s the PCE more and more approached the ideal called for at the VI Congress of becoming a mass party, albeit within the constraining limits of life under a repressive dictatorship. A detailed consideration of the PCE within Spain lies outside the scope of this paper; the important point to note is that these Spanish developments would eventually evolve into the source of serious tensions with the Paris-based leadership when it returned to Madrid after the death of Franco. While Carrillo was able to control the bureaucratic apparatus, the PCE on the ground in Spain became increasingly distanced from him. <sup>22</sup>

Although García and Gómez were almost certainly Moscow-backed, Carrillo had little difficulty in engineering their expulsion in December 1969. <sup>23</sup> Their struggle, though, was taken up by the Civil War hero General Enrique Lister, a man whose prestige lent his attacks on Carrillo much weight. Lister hurled against Carrillo accusations of Stalinist crimes, anti-Sovietism, nationalism and anti-Marxism. The immediate response was daring and provocative: Carrillo courted complete ostracism from the CPSU by re-opening relations between the PCE and the Communist Party of China, as well as supporting Dubcek. The Soviet reply was to allow Polish coal to be exported to Franco's Spain during the Asturian miners' strike of December 1970. In the meantime, Carrillo had convoked an extended plenum of the Central Committee, co-opting twenty-nine new members in order to deny Lister a platform. The veteran general stormed out in protest, and thereafter set up his own rival Partido Comunista de

España (later renamed the Partido Comunista Obrero Español) together with García and Gómez. For a while it looked as though Carrillo may be isolated if the CPSU recognised the new PCE as the official Spanish communist party, but Ibárruri gave her support to Carrillo, and Lister's group was from the outset subject to bitter internal divisions.<sup>24</sup> It must be acknowledged that in using the party machinery in a decidedly dictatorial manner Carrillo had saved the PCE from regressing to a position of tutelage to the Soviet Union.

It is doubtful whether Carrillo had intended that the PCE should move so quickly in the direction that circumstances seemed to be dictating. However, throughout his political career he was always to display the ability to extract advantage from seemingly unfavourable circumstances. Thus, the PCE now became more explicit than ever in its commitment to a pacific transition to pluralist, democratic socialism. Increasingly, it sought to establish contact with other communist parties critical of the CPSU, such as those of North Korea, Japan, Greece, Finland, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and, above all, Italy. Moreover, in 1971 Carrillo, accompanied by Executive Committee members López Raimundo, Álvarez, and Brabo, made an official visit to China, a move which may have had some influence on the decision of the Soviet Union to establish formal commercial relations with Franco in 1972.

As the altercations between the PCE and the CPSU became more vituperative, Manuel Azcárate emerged into the limelight. At the VIII Congress of the PCE, held in France in late summer 1972, he attacked the Soviet Union in strong terms, and then amplified his comments at a 1973 Central Committee meeting. This provoked a fierce response from the CPSU Central Committee journal Partiinaiia Zhizn which published an article harshly critical of Azcárate's report. However, by October 1974 the PCE and CPSU were able to issue a joint communiqué in Moscow noteworthy for Soviet concessions to the recalcitrant

Spaniards. While the joint statement was a "masterpiece of ambiguity",<sup>25</sup> it nonetheless represented a fairly drastic shift in the Soviet position. Two things in particular had induced this change: in December 1973 the hard-line Admiral Carrero Blanco, Spanish premier and right-hand man to Franco, had been dramatically assassinated by Basque separatists; then, in April 1974, the Portuguese dictator Marcello Caetano had been overthrown, thus bringing to an end Europe's oldest fascist regime. These events seemed to confirm the PCE's claim that the Iberian peninsula had the most revolutionary potential of anywhere in Europe, and the CPSU certainly wanted a hand in any sudden change in PCE fortunes within Spain. With the ageing General Franco seriously ill, it began to look as though the PCE stood on the threshold of becoming the major actor in Spanish politics, a view shared by many influential members of the economic oligarchy. Carrillo's heavy-handed manoeuvres in the final analysis looked to be justified as his party seemed the obvious beneficiary of the anticipated collapse of the repressive dictatorship.

### III

As the Franco regime reverted in its death throes to the naked brutality and repression which had marked its birth, the studiously reasonable pronouncements emanating from the PCE leadership inspired confidence in the feasibility of the "Pacta para la libertad". In the summer of 1974, Carrillo launched the Junta Democrática, intended as a widely based alliance calling for the re-establishment of democratic liberties.<sup>26</sup> This, though, was forcibly scaled down from its original conception through the withdrawal of Don Juan, Borbon aspirant to the Spanish throne and father of Franco's intended successor, Prince Juan Carlos. The Junta effectively became a PCE mouthpiece, unable to attract the participation of the PSOE, Christian Democrats, Basque and Catalan nationalists, or even extreme left groups. The only notable Christian Democrat and Monarchist who participated in the Junta was Rafael Calvo Serer,

but his role became increasingly ornamental.

The fate of the Junta should have served as a warning to Carrillo, for it was indicative of the mistrust in which the PCE was still held by those who had never forgiven it for what was seen as its responsibility in losing the Civil War. But lack of participation was also indicative of another problem, one which was to affect Carrillo's relations both with other opposition forces and with his own party: that is, his manifest desire to be at the head of any political transformation in Spain, and to call the shots. What Carrillo underestimated was both the size and composition of non-communist opposition in Spain, and the degree of distance which had grown between the Paris-based leadership of the PCE and the militants within Spain.<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, it could be argued that having laid the groundwork for PCE participation in a genuinely pluralist transition, Carrillo was unable to adapt his own instincts to fit in with this. His internalisation of the Leninist conception of democratic centralism had served him and the party well up to 1974; thereafter, it was to become increasingly both his own and the PCE's albatross.

In response to the Junta Democrática, the PSOE set up its Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática, with basically the same programme. The two bodies were to merge in March 1976 and call for a clear-cut "ruptura" with the Francoist past, but before that important steps had been taken along the path to what became known as "eurocommunism". In July 1975 Carrillo had met with Enrico Berlinguer, leader of the Italian Communist Party, in Livorno. The two of them declared their critical independence from Moscow, and asserted that socialism was consubstantial with democracy. This did not lead, however, to a relaxation of democratic centralism in either party.

The death of Franco in November 1975 caught the PCE remarkably unprepared.



While the Madrid-based party called for strikes and assaults on prisons, the Executive Committee met in Paris and issued an extensive declaration calling for a "democratic rupture" and a government of national reconciliation. Indeed, Carrillo's pronouncements in the months to follow were to become almost extravagantly moderate. This reflected two things: firstly, his concern that the PCE should not become marginalised in the complicated political game which was developing in Spain; secondly, however, it demonstrated a realistic assessment of the instability of the venue in which that game was to take place. It must be acknowledged that ultimately, because he was correct in his analysis, he was successful in achieving the legalisation of the PCE; arguably, the cost was to be the relegation of the PCE to a position of subordination to the PSOE, although this may have been unavoidable.

The atmosphere within the PCE was one of great confidence in the aftermath of Franco's death. Seven years later the party was in tatters, rent by divisions and rapidly losing members, and Carrillo was forced to resign as secretary-general. Much of the responsibility for this must be laid at his door. It is true that Carrillo found himself in an extremely difficult position in early 1976 as it began to look possible that a limited reform of the Francoist political structure may be undertaken with the PCE excluded. But while on the one hand it can be argued that he made several tactically astute moves which ensured, above all, the legalisation of the PCE in post-Franco Spain; on the other hand, it is equally the case that the contradictions between his public pronouncements and his iron-fisted grip on the party machinery cost him both members and credibility.

Already in 1976 there were clear signs of the tension between the Paris leaders and the militants in Spain. Carrillo crossed the Spanish border on 7 February, 1976, heavily disguised and accompanied by his millionaire friend

Teófilo Lagunero. He was met by Pilar Brabo and Jaime Ballesteros, but not, significantly, by Francisco Romero Marín, the PCE leader in Madrid. Over the next few months Carrillo, Brabo, Ballesteros, and Belén Piniés (Carrillo's secretary) were to be virtually inseparable.<sup>28</sup> In retrospect this is understandable, for Carrillo was trying to initiate negotiations to legalise the PCE with Adolfo Suárez, the recently appointed Spanish prime minister charged with responsibility for overseeing the transition to democracy. Such negotiations were necessarily delicate, but by failing to keep the party fully appraised of developments, Carrillo virtually ensured that the Madrid militants would go their own way. Thus, leading figures such as Simón Sánchez Montero, Ramón Tamames, Antoni Gutiérrez and others increasingly acted on their own without reference to Carrillo. Worried at this development, and also concerned at the pace and direction of his negotiations with Suárez, Carrillo decided to force the issue.

In a move which was something of a political masterstroke, Carrillo decided to hold a public press conference in Madrid in December 1976, thereby ensuring his arrest. However, in order to maintain his own credibility as a liberal, Suárez was obliged to release him: this represented a major step towards the legalisation of the PCE. It also re-established Carrillo's primacy within the party. In negotiations with Suárez during the first quarter of 1977 Carrillo affirmed the PCE's "eurocommunism", and agreed to recognise the monarchy, accept the monarchist flag and co-operate in a future social contract. Indeed, by the time the PCE was legalised in April 1977 it was barely recognisable as a communist party, and presented a decidedly less radical image than did the PSOE. Suárez, of course, fully realised that by legalising the PCE he would split the Spanish left and thereby boost the hopes of his own party, the Unión del Centro Democrático (UCD).<sup>29</sup>

In early March 1977, the communist parties of Spain, Italy and France held a rather inconsequential "eurocommunist" summit in Madrid. A few weeks later Carrillo published "Eurocomunismo" y Estado,<sup>30</sup> which has come to be seen as a kind of bible of "eurocommunism". It was perhaps around the issue of the relationship between the theory and practice of "eurocommunism" that the major sources of contention and division within the PCE would crystallise after its legalisation. In some ways, "Eurocomunismo" y Estado can be seen as a particularly apposite expression of the political process Carrillo had first initiated in the PCE in 1956, for its own internal theoretical inconsistencies mirror the contradictions which marked his reign as secretary-general. "Eurocommunism" was never a precisely elaborated strategic, tactical approach expressing the aims and methods of the western european communist parties. The term is more usefully understood as a rubric which covers the response of a number of leading figures in these parties to what was increasingly perceived as the bankruptcy of classical Marxist-Leninist revolutionary tactics in advanced western capitalist societies. This response was formed around three central themes: the assertion that democracy and socialism are consubstantial; the claim that the communist parties in question are fully independent of Moscow; and the belief that the transition to socialism can be achieved peacefully. Thus, the main characteristics of "eurocommunism" were outlined by Carrillo as follows:

"The parties included in the "Eurocommunism" trend are agreed on the need to advance to socialism with democracy, a multi-party system, parliaments and representative institutions, sovereignty of the people regularly exercised through universal suffrage, trade unions independent of the State and of the parties, freedom for the opposition, human rights, religious freedom, freedom for cultural, scientific and artistic creation, and the development of the broadest forms of popular participation at all levels and in all branches of social activity. Side by side with this, in one form or another, the parties claim their total independence in relation to any possible international leading centre and to the socialist states, without ceasing on that account to be internationalist." 31

It was appropriate that some of the major problems with the "Eurocommunism"

of Carrillo should have been exposed by Fernando Claudín in his book Euro-comunismo y Socialismo.<sup>32</sup> Claudín criticised Carrillo for holding to a vision of monopoly capitalism which saw it as antithetical to all non-monopoly fractions of the bourgeoisie, arguing that this perspective failed to acknowledge the "relative autonomy" of the state. By this he meant that the state could fulfil its essential task of ensuring the functioning reproduction of the capitalist system as a whole only through exercising a certain autonomy with respect to any class or fraction of a class among the ruling bloc, a thesis originally adumbrated in Marx's analysis of Bonapartism, and systematically elaborated in the 1970s by Nicos Poulantzas. Claudín further suggested that the "two-stage" strategy for transition proposed by Carrillo (the first stage being to arrive at the phase of "advanced democracy") gave primacy to the political struggle in the form of elections and underplayed the more important social struggle and working class self-organisation. It has often been levelled against "eurocommunism" that it lacks any revolutionary project for overcoming the division of labour, since its concept of socialist transformation is limited to bourgeois categories of economic and political development. Thus it is an essentially "statist" outlook, reflected in the importance attached to the new middle strata - technicians, professionals, intellectuals, service and public sector workers - as the vital social link during the transitional stage to a new system. However, all this goes hand-in-hand in "Euro-comunismo" y Estado with an orthodox expression of the thesis of State Monopoly Capitalism derived from Lenin, which emphasises the moribund character of imperialism and the ripeness of the highly socialised productive forces of capitalism for the transition to socialism.

These problems of theoretical consistency were not nearly so damaging to Carrillo, however, as was the publication of Jorge Semprún's Autobiografía de Federico Sánchez in early 1977. This was a brilliantly written trenchant

attack on Carrillo and the PCE just at a time when the party was trying to present a moderate image for the 1977 general elections in Spain. Semprún, who had operated in Spain under the clandestine name of Federico Sánchez until his expulsion from the PCE alongside Claudín in 1965, argued that Carrillo's adoption of "eurocommunism" was merely tactical, and that basically Stalinist attitudes still continued within the PCE. It was also levelled against Carrillo that he had fostered a "cult of personality" and it was obliquely suggested that he had been responsible for the death of Julián Grimau in 1963. The only positive thing to be said about Carrillo, according to Semprún, was that he had survived the consequences of his mistakes.

Quite what effect Semprún's best-seller had is impossible to gauge, but in the 1977 elections, for all its protestations of moderation, the PCE received a bitterly disappointing 9.3% of the votes cast, while its arch rival, the PSOE became the main opposition party with 29.4%. During the election campaign Carrillo had demonstrated a willingness to sacrifice immediate advantage in the interests of consolidating the democratic process. This will perhaps stand as his greatest achievement. His concern to keep Spain on the rails of democracy led him to concentrate his fire on the extreme right-wing Alianza Popular rather than the UCD or PSOE, and it was these latter two that emerged as the main victors in the election. What would have happened had the PCE presented a more radical image after the death of Franco can only be answered in counterfactual terms; later events, such as the attempted military coup of 1981, suggest that Carrillo's tactics were correct. His mode of implementation, though, was all wrong.

#### IV

Carrillo seems to have become almost fixated with the idea first outlined on the death of Franco that there should be a government of national concen-

tration.<sup>33</sup> Virtually all of his parliamentary interventions were devoted to this theme, and his willing participation in the Spanish "social contract", the Pacto de la Moncloa, was predicated on the belief that it represented the first step towards such a formation. In fact, the Pacto represented an austerity policy put forward by Suárez in order to try to resolve Spain's economic crisis. The idea of PCE participation in such a measure, which seemed to punish the working-class for Spain's economic difficulties, was a bitter pill to swallow for militants who had struggled for so long against Franco. Equally disturbing was Carrillo's unilateral declaration while on a lecture tour of the United States of America in late 1977 that the PCE would abandon "Leninism" in its party statutes.

The tensions within the PCE surfaced openly at the IX Congress, held in April 1978. Importantly, it was at this Congress that relations within the leadership group which had come from Paris began to break down. The central debate was on the question of Leninism, which Carrillo was able to have removed from the PCE statutes by presenting the issue in terms of its being a judgement on his record, and offering to resign should he lose. While Carrillo was able to force this through in the PCE, the question of Leninism or "euro-communism" was to provoke a major rupture with the PSUC, the Catalan branch of the PCE, in 1981. In the meantime, however, the PCE remained committed to a policy of moderation and co-operation with the UCD, despite the burgeoning misgivings of a number of its leaders. In particular they were concerned at the steady loss of membership the party was suffering: from 201,757 members in 1977, the PCE had gone down to 171,332 a year later.<sup>34</sup> Carrillo sought to offset criticism by expanding the Central Committee to an unwieldy 160 members, thereby enhancing the importance and power of the Executive Committee and Secretariat, both of which he still dominated.

For many militants, Carrillo's insistence on moderation was hard to understand: the struggle against Franco, it was felt, should have led to more than collaboration with a right-centrist party. Carrillo, though, was still convinced that the PCE could not risk radical postures, and the escalation of terrorist violence, particularly in the Basque Country, served to confirm his cautionary pronouncements. Arguably, the PCE was more than ever in a Catch-22 situation: if it behaved like a recognisably communist party, there was a very real risk of provoking military reaction (when the PCE was legalised the Minister for the Navy, Admiral Pita da Veiga resigned, and it is rumoured that the Minister for the Army, General Álvarez Arenas, had a letter of resignation refused); if, however, the PCE posed as moderate then it risked alienating its own members. Carrillo went for the worst of both worlds: the external image was moderate in the extreme, but the internal reality displayed all the classic hallmarks of communist activity as pioneered by Lenin and developed by Stalin. In the short-term this could be effective, but when the PCE failed to improve significantly in the 1979 general elections (its vote rose to 10.9%) all the underlying tensions came surging to the surface.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980 exacerbated still further the disagreements within the PCE: many members supported the Soviet action as a blow against imperialism. These pro-Soviets, known as "Afghans", had long been unhappy at what they saw as Carrillo's sell-out to bourgeois interests in Spain. Others in the party, though, felt that Carrillo was not sufficiently committed to the internal democratic practice implied by "eurocommunism". It was this group, which came to be known as the "renovadores", which was to cause Carrillo his gravest problems. Effectively, they charged that having reached Rhodes, Carrillo was unprepared to leap.

In a meeting arranged at the house of the leading economist and PCE Executive

Committee member, Ramón Tamames, on 31 July 1980, a number of leading figures from the party - Carlos Alonso Zaldívar, Manuel Azcárate, Pilar Brabo, Eugenio Triano, Luis Larroque, Enrique Curiel and Manuel Castells - told Carrillo what they thought was wrong. They commented on the loss of the PCE's social and political influence; the loss of precision of its "eurocommunist" identity; the reduction in its internal democracy; the polarisation of its political activity. Carrillo, who had arrived with the uninvited Romero Marín, disagreed vehemently, and stormed out of Tamames' house.<sup>35</sup> After this, the PCE seemed set on a course of inevitable disintegration. As he struggled to hold the party together, Carrillo would revert more and more to the Stalinist instincts of his youth - instincts, some would argue, that had never really left him.

The battlelines which were drawn up as 1980 wore on assumed an at times almost labyrinthine complexity. Disagreements raged between the leadership of the PCE and that of the CC.OO.; between the PCE and the PSUC; and in both the PCE and the PSUC between the "Afghans", the "renovadores" and the Carrillo-backing "oficialistas". There were two key issues which divided the party irreparably: the question of the autonomy of the PSUC, and the direction to be taken by the PCE at its X Congress.<sup>36</sup>

Relations between the PCE and the PSUC had been deteriorating since the start of the transition process in Spain. All currents within the Catalan party were critical of the PCE secretary-general: the "Afghans" and the Leninists, both strong in the CC.OO., were dismayed by PCE participation in the Pacto de la Moncloa. The "renovadores", meanwhile, comprising mainly former members of the Bandera Roja group<sup>37</sup> and university academics, were distressed at what they saw as attempts by the PCE leadership to emasculate the separate identity of the PSUC. In his analysis of the 1979 election results, Carrillo had been particularly critical of the PSUC, accusing it of being "too Catalan-



ist." <sup>38</sup> The situation got worse during 1980. In a series of meetings between the respective leaderships, Carrillo insisted that the PSUC should maintain the same ideology, the same policies and the same organisational methods as the PCE. The PSUC secretary-general, Antoni Gutiérrez, argued in response that Carrillo was presenting a false dichotomy of either complete subservience or else complete independence.

However, in an unexpected development, the V Congress of the PSUC in January 1981 voted to abandon "eurocommunism". Antoni Gutiérrez and Gregorio López Raimundo, secretary-general and president of the PSUC, refused to be re-elected. This provided Carrillo with some diversionary respite from the problems he had been having in the PCE. The "renovadores", committed to putting "eurocommunism" into practice within the PCE, had increasingly been challenging his authority. For instance, at a huge Central Committee meeting on 1 November 1980, a report by Carrillo giving a rather optimistic picture of the state of the party was subjected to a series of criticisms. These came principally from Ramón Tamames, Jordi Solé Tura, one of the PSUC "renovadores", and Roberto Lertxundi, secretary-general of the Basque communists. The main gist of their complaints was that certain individuals, and none more so than Carrillo, exercised far too much influence in the PCE. They were supported by other leading figures such as Pilar Brabo, Antoni Gutiérrez, Tomás Tueros (secretary-general of the CC.OO. in the Basque Country) and Ignacio Latierro.

The response from the Carrillo "apparatus" - Gerardo Iglesias, Anselmo Hoyos, Ignacio Gallego, Santiago Álvarez and others - was that the critics were mainly intellectuals who had a poor understanding of the realities of political life. It is certainly true that there was an idealistic element in the "renovadores'" belief that "eurocommunism" was an uncompleted open process, for if the PCE were to apply their recommendations to the letter it would cease

to be a communist party in any meaningful sense of the word. Nonetheless, between the two extremes there yawned a huge chasm. The degree of polarisation was evidenced by Tamames' public announcement that because of the lack of democracy in the party Carrillo should resign, and the position of secretary-general be replaced by an electoral college. This was to venture into Carrillo's taboo area, and the response was predictably sharp: the PCE leader stated that Tamames quite simply had no idea what he was talking about.

By the end of 1980, it was clear that tensions were building to a crisis which would explode at the X Congress, scheduled for the following July.<sup>39</sup> Carrillo's position at this point looked decidedly shaky. However, two events occurred which helped him briefly reassert his authority. The first, as we have seen, was the decision of the PSUC to abandon "eurocommunism". This allowed Carrillo to argue that what was at stake was the very conception of "eurocommunism", and thus to outflank the "renovadores" on the very issue they had been pushing. The second event was the attempted coup on 23 February 1981 by Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio Tejero Molina. Not only did Carrillo derive much well-merited kudos from his brave refusal to lie on the floor when the conspirators burst into the Cortes, but the whole incident also served to lend major support to his claims that collaboration with Suárez had been justified by the fragility of Spanish democracy.

Able to pose as "more eurocommunist than thou", Carrillo demanded that the PSUC reinstate "eurocommunism" as a minimum condition for participation in the X Congress of the PCE. This tactic, however, was to split the PSUC irremediably. Moreover, the benefits Carrillo had been able to derive from the PSUC issue and the Tejerazo were on the wane as the X Congress approached. In a Central Committee meeting on 5 May 1981, calls for widespread, far-reaching changes in the PCE were made by Pilar Brabo, Manuel Azcárate, Roberto

Lertxundi, Alonso Zaldívar and Ramón Tamames, amongst others. These were rejected out of hand by Carrillo, thereby provoking Tamames to leave the party without even waiting for the X Congress to take place.<sup>40</sup> This was a great surprise to many communist militants, for Tamames was respected not just for his important intellectual achievements, but for his courage and skill in combining an "establishment" university position with clandestine membership of the PCE during the Franco regime. Carrillo's observation on the affair was that the Madrid economist was ingenuous, guilty of facile mistakes, and had no political experience.

In mid-May 1981, 252 Madrid-based militants signed a document expressing commitment to "eurocommunism", and calling for a full discussion of this at the X Congress. Moves to have the document published were quashed by Carrillo, thereby further fomenting discontent within the party. One result of this was that the "renovadores" and the "Afghans" allied against the "oficialistas" to approve a motion calling for the right to form currents of opinion within the PCE. Carrillo hit back by organising the expulsion of the pro-Soviet militant Francisco García Salve, for publishing a virulent attack on "eurocommunism" in his book Por qué somos comunistas. He also criticised Manuel Azcárate for allowing the theoretical organ of the PCE, Nuestra Bandera, to become a platform for fractional positions.<sup>41</sup>

At the X Congress, which started on July 28 1981, Carrillo read a four-hour report, described by Azcárate as the worst he had ever heard from the veteran secretary-general. In it he rejected any chance of currents of opinion being accepted within the party, and affirmed the need for the PCE to maintain its democratic centralism. As ever, he defended the PCE's political tactics since the death of Franco. The opposition to Carrillo's report was led by the Basque communist leader Roberto Lertxundi, who argued that the model

of the party outlined by Carrillo foreclosed any possibilities of its being "eurocommunist". The vote on the report produced a surprise: rather than the traditional unanimity, 64 delegates voted against it, and there were 266 abstentions. While the 689 votes in favour meant that it was easily approved, this was nonetheless indicative of the growing strength of the "renovadores". Further evidence came in the secret ballot to elect a new Central Committee, in which Carrillo came only fifteenth. He was, however, unanimously re-elected secretary-general.

After the Congress, Carrillo embarked on a "clean-up" campaign. The "renovadores" were given only minimal representation on the Executive Committee, while the only non-"oficialista" in the eleven-person Secretariat was Nicolás Sartorius, the CC.OO. leader. Also, Azcárate was deposed as editor of Nuestra Bandera and replaced by José Sandoval. Roberto Lertxundi hit back on behalf of the "renovadores" by deciding that the only hope of progress for the Basque communist party (EPK) would be for it to ally with the leftist Basque grouping Euskadiko Eskerra (EIA). Carrillo applied all his pressure in order to try to dissuade Lertxundi, but only succeeded in effectively destroying the EPK by trying to set up an alternative leadership under Ramón Ormazábal and Ignacio Latierro. Lertxundi and his chief collaborator Mario Onaindía then gave a conference at the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas in Madrid, advertised in El País and supported by many leading "renovadores". Carrillo decided to sanction those members of the PCE who signed a motion at the CSIC meeting in support of the EPK. At an Executive Committee meeting on 6 November 1981, in which Carrillo again threatened resignation if he were not supported, he demanded the expulsion from the Central Committee of those members who had signed the EPK motion, unless they were prepared to present a satisfactory "self-criticism". Their refusal to do so led to the expulsions of Manuel Azcárate, Pilar Brabo, Alonso Zaldívar, Julio Segura,

Jaime Sartorius and Pilar Arroyo. <sup>42</sup>

After this the PCE embarked on a distasteful and highly visible process of hara-kiri. By the start of 1982, the party had lost more than half the members it had in 1977. Meanwhile, the expulsions continued unabated, and indeed became something of a national scandal. Amazingly, in Central Committee meetings in January and February 1982, Carrillo hardly even referred to the internal crisis of the party. This crisis was severely exacerbated by the disaster of the local elections in Andalusia in March 1982, where the communists were decimated by the PSOE. Later in the year, Carrillo's unwillingness to discuss the Andalusian elections led to the proposal from CC.OO. leader Marcelino Camacho that he be replaced as secretary-general by Nicolás Sartorius, who himself proposed that the leadership should perform a "self-criticism". Carrillo once again employed his standard response of offering his resignation, which was rejected by the Central Committee. Thereafter, Camacho left the Executive Committee and Sartorius resigned as vice-secretary of the party. The PCE was thus in no shape for the Spanish general elections called for October 1982. With his party in tatters and his own credibility as a "euro-communist" now non-existent, Carrillo resorted to bitter attacks on the PSOE in the run-up to the election. That the PSOE should have run out such clear victors, while the PCE plummeted to a derisory 3.9% of the vote (over a million votes less than in 1979), finally spelt the end of Carrillo's reign as secretary-general. This time, when he offered his resignation there were few disposed to refuse it. In the words of Fernando Claudín, "the shipwreck of the boat captained by Carrillo could not have been more spectacular, nor more disastrous." <sup>43</sup>

v

In some ways, one hundred years after the foundation of the Partido Socialista

Obrero Español, the Spanish Marxist movement had come full circle. The rigid centralism of the PSOE under Iglesias, which had contributed to that party's slow growth and limited appeal, was mirrored by Carrillo's own rigidity. In the case of the PCE this worked in the opposite direction, reducing a party which had counted on a widespread mass appeal by the end of the Franco regime to an isolationist rump, increasingly irrelevant to the Spanish political process. In a paradoxical manner, the PCE had been more open, with more autonomy for party organisations, under Franco. The return of the Paris-based leadership to Madrid after the dictator's death established an authoritarianism within the PCE which jarred with the desires expressed by millions throughout Spain for the instauration of democracy.

It was at the XX Congress of the CPSU that the phrase "cult of personality" was coined in order to explain the phenomenon of Stalinism. Ironically, that Congress also indirectly provided Carrillo's stepping stone to building his own "cult of personality". The experience of Carrillo and the PCE, however, tells us something about the conditions in which the "cult of personality" can be really effective, for it was only with the return of democracy to Spain that Carrillo's domination of the party began to crumble. Perhaps the rather obvious lesson to be drawn is that the "cult of personality" (always an implicit potentiality in democratic centralism) and democracy are mutually exclusive. That Berlinguer and Marchais, for instance, were unable to dominate the PCI and PCF in the manner in which Carrillo dominated the PCE was largely due to their having to participate in a democratic political process. A second rather obvious lesson is that tactics must be flexible according to circumstances: what served the PCE well up to the death of Franco was no longer valid in post-dictatorship Spain.

Finally, it should be stated that to place such emphasis on one person is

not to express a commitment to methodological individualism as a mode of analysis. Rather, it is contended that Santiago Carrillo was able to attain such a preponderant influence precisely because of the structural exigencies of exile and clandestinity. To fail to appreciate this is to fail to understand how it was that the PCE collapsed so precipitously after the death of Franco. Perhaps the central paradox of the PCE is that Carrillo was more important than he should have been because it was less important than it could have been.

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**L'EVOLUTION DU PARTI COMMUNISTE  
DE BELGIQUE DE 1968 A 1984**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

La technique de la présente note repose sur les quatorze points considérés comme intéressants pour les organisateurs de cette session. Ces sujets particuliers ont été rangés plus ou moins par ordre d'importance décroissante. On pourra ainsi aisément comparer le même point pour différents partis.

Toutefois, avant d'aborder ces aspects particuliers, il convient de donner quelques indications générales, quitte à demander au lecteur d'en trouver la justification dans la suite du texte.

Le mouvement ouvrier belge a souvent été caractérisé par son pragmatisme et son refus, plus ou moins conscient, des grandes discussions idéologiques. Le Parti Communiste Belge n'échappe pas à cette caractéristique. Pendant longtemps, la lutte a été menée, à l'intérieur du Parti, pour pallier cette carence mais, actuellement, la formation théorique des membres du P.C.B. est pratiquement nulle et sauf lors de la préparation des congrès, on ne recourt guère au marxisme. Quelques exceptions sont toutefois perceptibles et nous y reviendrons.

Deuxième aspect essentiel que je retiendrai volontiers aux formations politiques : l'évolution interne des Partis, et singulièrement du P.C.B., ne dépend en aucune manière des affaires internationales. Ces dernières servent de paravents ou de prétextes à soutenir ou à combattre des mouvements internes, mais elles n'en sont jamais la cause. A titre d'exemple, rappelons la déstalinisation qui a secoué presque tous les partis communistes. Lorsque ce problème s'est présenté au P.C.B., celui-ci avait déjà réglé tous ses problèmes internes et la déstalinisation n'a fait que de servir à justifier une situation acquise.

Troisième aspect important dans la compréhension du fonctionnement du P.C.B. : l'auto-discipline des membres du Parti lorsqu'il s'agit de mettre en cause l'unité du Parti. C'est une phrase bien connue : "Veiller à l'unité du Parti comme à la prunelle de ses yeux". Contrairement à bien des propos irresponsables, il ne s'agit pas là d'une discipline imposée mais bien d'un sentiment profondément ancré chez la toute grosse majorité des communistes (même, si actuellement cet attitude perdit du terrain). Cette pratique explique que, vu de l'extérieur, le P.C.B. semble assez immobile. En effet, on ne perçoit que le résultat des discussions. Or, une décision prise avec 40 % d'opposition apparaîtra avec le même aspect que la décision prise unanimement. Ceci explique aussi que les renversements de tendance soient toujours très spectaculaires.

Quatrième point à envisager : la taille réduite et l'isolement du parti communiste. La taille réduite du P.C.B. a pris ces dernières années un tour aigu. Il semble bien que ce parti soit en train de descendre en dessous du seuil pour lequel, même avec la meilleure volonté du monde, on ne peut plus produire un certain nombre d'actes politiques. Cette situation amène le découragement de beaucoup de militants, même parmi les plus chevronnés. On trouve donc l'image classique du serpent qui se mord la queue.

Cette décroissance facilite en plus la mise à l'écart du parti communiste de bien des secteurs politiques et facilite ainsi les agissements de tous ceux qui, à droite ou à gauche, agissent journellement pour la marginalisation du parti communiste : censure dans les mass-média, manipulations des institutions politiques, ... Evidemment, le P.C.B. possède une responsabilité dans ce domaine mais les causes extérieures sont aussi efficaces.

D'autres facteurs, moins spécifiques au P.C.B., entrent aussi en ligne de compte. Par exemple, la transformation progressive d'une majorité des électeurs en clientèle électorale attendant des partis la juste rémunération de leur vote, aggrave la position d'un parti qui ne participe plus au pouvoir depuis 37 ans et qui n'a aucune perspective immédiate d'y accéder. Un autre exemple réside dans les moyens d'endoctrinement dont dispose l'ensemble des mass-média et dont est systématiquement exclu le P.C.B.

Ces quelques remarques préalables sont simplement destinées à éclairer la lecture des notes qui suivent. Nous renvoyons aux conclusions pour une synthèse plus poussée.

## 2. ORGANISATION DU PARTI.

L'organisation du Parti Communiste de Belgique est une pyramide classique : à la base, des cellules et des sections, puis un niveau fédéral, enfin un niveau central avec Comité Central et Bureau Politique.

Le niveau de base du parti ressemble très fort à un treillis : beaucoup de trous et un certain nombre de points forts. Les cellules et sections sont surtout actives dans les trois provinces du Brabant, de Hainaut, de Liège et dans les régions de Gand et d'Anvers. Toutefois, le taux de présence et d'activité est extrêmement variable (mais ceci n'est pas propre au P.C.B.). Actuellement, toutes les organisations subissent une crise des présences et des cadres. Ce qui rend ce caractère très lourd pour le P.C.B., c'est le fait de sa petite taille qui amplifie les moindres manquements.

Le niveau fédéral présente le même aspect mais joue un rôle spécifique dans les petites fédérations. Il arrive en effet qu'en absence ou, devant la carence manifeste du niveau de base, le niveau fédéral se substitue aux absents et maintient la pérennité du Parti.

Le Comité Central est présenté comme l'organe dirigeant du Parti. Comme dans toute structure de ce genre, cette image est assez éloignée de la réalité. Le véritable détenteur du pouvoir est le Bureau Politique. Le Comité Central exerce des pressions, parfois importantes, sur le Bureau Politique, mais c'est bien ce dernier qui définit la ligne politique journalière. On constate d'ailleurs depuis plus de dix ans, une permanence assez sensible dans les organes dirigeants du P.C.B. Par exemple, le Président du P.C.B., Van Geyt, occupe cette place sans discontinuité depuis 1972.

Le seul changement essentiel du point de l'organisation est l'instauration de structures "fédératives" et de leur laborieuse mise en place.

Contrairement à tous les autres partis classiques, le P.C.B. reste encore à l'heure actuelle, un parti national et non deux partis communautaires (un flamand et un francophone). Tout au plus, a-t-il introduit en son sein des structures qui calquent plus ou moins les réformes structurelles de la Belgique. Bien que prévues depuis quelques années, c'est en 1971 que furent réellement développées des structures wallonnes et/ou francophones, flamandes et bruxelloises (c'est à dire à la fois communautaires et régionales). Toutefois, l'application sera très lente. Le congrès de 1982 vit encore des aménagements. Non seulement, le vieux réflexe unitaire est encore très fort, mais l'existence de profondes divergences au sein de l'aile wallonne (et francophone) font que la direction retarde au maximum le développement de ces dispositions (voir point 3).



### 3. EXISTENCE ET ACTIVITE DE FRACTIONS.

Le terme "fraction" est essentiellement utilisé dans les partis communistes par les directions qui désirent se débarrasser d'adversaires ou simplement d'opposants sans devoir mener une campagne de justification trop approfondie.

En dehors de cet aspect polémique, le terme "fraction" d'un parti a un sens bien précis qui correspond à deux aspects conjoints : pour qu'il y ait fraction, il faut à la fois

- des divergences sur le fond de parties importantes du programme politique;
- une organisation propre, différente de celle du parti, souvent accompagnée de moyens d'expression indépendants et d'une vie parallèle à celle du parti (souvent menée au détriment du parti).

Or, c'est cette seconde condition qui n'a jamais été remplie au P.C.B. Si les divergences ont été nombreuses, il n'y a jamais eu d'organisation au sein du parti, différente de celle du parti. Les membres du P.C.B. qui éprouvaient de solides réticences vis à vis de la politique menée par la direction du parti ont choisi entre trois attitudes :

- La majorité a exprimé son désaccord au sein des organisations du parti en respectant, pour l'essentiel, les règles de fonctionnement (pour l'essentiel, signifie ici au moins aussi bien que la direction).
- Un très petit nombre a choisi de s'exprimer en créant une structure à l'extérieur du parti (c'est le cas de René Noël qui, au début et à la fin de l'expérience U.D.P., s'est trouvé en désaccord avec le Parti).

- Un autre très petit nombre a choisi de quitter le parti. Quelques-uns passent dans d'autres formations politiques (Parti Socialiste, Rassemblement Wallon); d'autres restent à l'extérieur de tout parti.

On ne rencontre donc que des divergences, très profondes, mais qui s'expriment dans le cadre de la structure du parti.

Toutefois, il ne faut pas s'y tromper. C'est d'abord et fondamentalement une affaire de personnes et d'exercice du pouvoir. L'accession à la présidence de Louis Van Geyt s'est accompagnée de l'arrivée ou de l'installation au pouvoir d'un groupe de dirigeants essentiellement composés d'intellectuels, membres de services publics et quelques militants ouvriers permanents du parti ou du syndicat. Ils se sont soudés pour exercer et conserver le pouvoir au sein du parti. Ce groupe est essentiellement composé de Bruxellois, Hennuyers et de quelques Liégeois, habitués de Bruxelles. Ce groupe entraine directement en concurrence avec ce qu'on appelle les Liégeois, c'est-à-dire les dirigeants issus essentiellement de la province de Liège. Cette querelle de groupes a perturbé considérablement le fonctionnement du parti, mais les querelles idéologiques qui accompagnent cet affrontement n'expliquent pas la cause profonde des dissensions.

En gros, les deux groupes peuvent se caractériser par les positions idéologiques suivantes :

Le groupe au pouvoir.

- Une conception édulcorée du P.C.B. qui en fait une organisation politique parmi d'autres, qui recherche dans des alliances la solution à ses problèmes.
- Le Parti a de moins en moins d'actions propres; même ce qu'il propose doit passer par d'autres pour être réalisé.
- Un nombre d'étapes de plus en plus grand avant d'arriver, dans la transformation de notre société, à des mesures fondamentales.

- Les résultats électoraux sont des justifications aux positions politiques respectivement défendues.
- Abandon progressif du rôle dirigeant de la classe ouvrière.
- Attitude pour le moins réticente (voir point 4) envers les pays socialistes, spécialement l'U.R.S.S.
- Discordance totale entre les déclarations sur les libertés, par exemple, et les pratiques internes.

#### Le groupe liégeois.

- Maintien du rôle primordial du Parti et de son action propre en toute circonstance.
- Propositions d'actions plus radicales et plus immédiates, notamment face au démantèlement de notre tissu industriel.
- Rôle dirigeant de la classe ouvrière maintenu avec les alliances adéquates (par exemple, avec les intellectuels).
- Refus de placer le problème de la solidarité avec l'U.R.S.S. et les pays socialistes sur le plan de la propagande occidentale mais bien sur celui du concept de classe.

#### 4. ORIENTATION IDEOLOGIQUE DU PARTI SUR LES AFFAIRES INTERNATIONALES.

Une bonne partie des dirigeants actuels du P.C.B. sont d'anciens "staliniens" actuellement aigris par les différentes "révélations" sur les pays socialistes et surtout par leurs propres échecs qu'ils voudraient endosser à d'autres. Par contre, les plus jeunes dirigeants représentent un éventail de tendances assez étendu avec, comme caractéristique commune, une certaine distanciation avec le problème des pays socialistes.

Pour le P.C.B., toutes les questions internationales, y compris les plus essentielles comme le problème de la Paix, sont teintées de la conception qu'il se fait des régimes des pays socialistes.

On peut essayer de retrouver la position du P.C.B. dans le processus suivant :

1. Un problème se pose avec les pays socialistes.
2. Une première position est prise au niveau du Bureau Politique et/ou du Comité Central. Actuellement, il s'agit souvent d'un avis condamnant, en termes prudents, les "atteintes aux libertés" mais qui tient compte de la sensibilité des opposants internes.
3. Il n'y a pas d'autres initiatives au niveau officiel du parti, mais des dirigeants soit isolés soit dans d'autres organisations participent ou lancent des initiatives diverses. Ces initiatives amènent les opposants internes à des réactions.
4. L'évolution de la situation et parfois les divergences entre initiatives (voir ci-dessus) font naître des problèmes et des interrogations qui ne sont ni résolus ni tranchés.
5. La question s'installe alors dans le flou le plus total.

L'Eurocommunisme est un exemple précis de cette situation indécise dans laquelle flotte le P.C.B. De la bouche même du Président du parti, le P.C.B. n'est pas eurocommuniste mais il ne condamne pas l'eurocommunisme. Par contre, lorsqu'on examine en détail les diverses positions du P.C.B., on constate qu'on y trouve à peu près tous les ingrédients qui composent l'eurocommunisme.

## 5. CHANGEMENT DANS LA COMPOSITION SOCIALE DU PARTI.

Il n'existe pas de statistiques fiables quant à la composition sociale du P.C.B. et à son évolution. On peut toutefois noter un certain nombre d'éléments ayant trait à ce sujet.

- A. La proportion de femmes dans les organes dirigeants est toujours infime : zéro au Bureau Politique,  
15 % au Comité Central,  
une au Bureau fédératif wallon,  
zéro dans les secrétariats fédéraux.
- B. Dans les fédérations ouvrières, le nombre d'ouvriers, membres du parti, diminue régulièrement.
- C. Suivant des sondages non-publiés relatifs aux élections législatives de 1977, 1978 et 1980, les couches sociales composant le P.C.B. étaient, dans l'ordre décroissant d'importance : les intellectuels, les services publics, les ouvriers puis, loin derrière, les autres catégories.
- D. Lors des élections de 1981, les cantons ouvriers ont enregistrés de sérieux reculs pour le P.C.B.

## 6. RELATIONS ENTRE INTELLECTUELS ET OUVRIERS AU SEIN DU PARTI.

Cette question est actuellement dépassée au sein du P.C.B. et il faut vraiment creuser pour en trouver encore des traces.

Toutefois, les raisons de ce dépassement reposent sur deux situations tout à fait différentes :

- A. La première situation (dans les provinces du Hainaut et de Liège pour l'essentiel) se traduit par un réel travail en commun des militants ouvriers et intellectuels. Cet aspect a été spécialement renforcé par les nombreuses grèves et actions syndicales menées ces dix dernières années. Il existe encore des spécificités mais, pour l'essentiel, on se bat ensemble.
- B. L'autre situation (à Bruxelles, par exemple) repose sur la faible proportion de militants ouvriers. De ce fait, le conflit n'existe guère par suite de la quasi-non-existence d'une des deux parties.

## 7. PROMOTION DE NOUVEAUX MEMBRES COMME CADRES ET DIRIGEANTS.

Ce phénomène est pratiquement inexistant au P.C.B. pour deux raisons :

- la première, évidente, est le faible nombre de nouvelles adhésions,
- compte tenu du processus exposé ci-dessous au point 9, le nouveau venu n'a guère de chance d'accéder rapidement à des postes au delà du comité fédéral.



8. RELATIONS AVEC LES AUTRES PARTIS SPECIALEMENT LE PARTI SOCIAL-  
DEMOCRATE ET LES PETITS PARTIS (TROTSKISTES, MAOISTES, ...).

L'attitude du Parti Communiste de Belgique vis-à-vis du Parti Socialiste a toujours varié, outre deux pôles :

D'une part, la constatation évidente que la majorité de la classe ouvrière se range politiquement sous la bannière du P.S. et que celui-ci est basé sur des options de gauche.

D'autre part, la prise en compte de la pratique politique des "dirigeants socialistes" qui, lorsqu'ils sont au pouvoir "pactisent avec l'ennemi de la classe" et "trahissent la classe ouvrière et les intérêts de la population en général".

L'étude de l'évolution alternée du P.C.B. entre ces deux positions résumerait déjà une bonne partie de son histoire.

Lorsque, en 1969, le président socialiste Léo Collard lança son fameux appel au "Rassemblement des progressistes", il suscita de très grands espoirs. Enfin, une vision claire d'union était offerte à toute la gauche, tout en respectant la spécificité de chaque organisation politique.

Très rapidement, la déception fut à la mesure des espoirs et il ne fit plus de doute pour personne que le rassemblement des progressistes se fondait en une vague proposition d'intégration au sein du Parti Socialiste.

C'est alors qu'une expérience qui se déroulait dans la région de Mons tomba à point pour fournir une autre tactique au P.C.B.

Il s'agit de l'expérience de René Noel, sénateur et bourgmestre communiste de Cuesmes (petite commune de la région de Mons).

Profitant de la fusion des communes, ce dernier présenta une liste aux élections communales appelées "Union Démocratique et Progressiste". Cette liste rassemblerait des communistes, des syndicalistes chrétiens et socialistes indépendants. Politiquement, le but de cette liste était de prendre les socialistes "en tenailles" et de les obliger à tenir leur promesse de rassemblement des progressistes. Le succès de cette liste fut immédiat : Léo Collard, bourgmestre de Mons, composa alors une majorité communale. Mais alors que le P.S. et U.D.P. avaient la majorité absolue à eux deux, Léo Collard (l'auteur de l'appel au rassemblement des progressistes) imposa la présence du Parti Catholique dans cette nouvelle majorité. Ceci montre bien les limites implicites posées par le P.S. à l'union de la gauche. Ce succès électoral fut un choc pour le P.C. et spécialement sa direction nationale qui n'avait guère appuyé R. Noël. Très rapidement, la question déborda la région de Mons et fut posée à l'ensemble du Parti : c'est la fameuse question des alliances. L'accueil fut assez généralement amical car qui ne serait pas intéressé par un succès électoral. Toutefois, des problèmes majeurs survinrent alors que la direction nationale virait totalement et voulait faire de l'U.D.P. le nouveau crédo. Les éléments essentiels qui retardèrent la mise en place de l'U.D.P. furent :

- A. L'intégration, tout ou partie, du P.C.B. au sein de cette structure qui ne voulait pas être un nouveau parti au départ mais qui, objectivement, ne pouvait échapper à cette situation.
- B. L'alliance avec d'autres formations politiques, soit anciennes, soit nées pour la circonstance (G.P.T.C. : Groupe politique des travailleurs chrétiens; M.A.S. : Mouvement d'Action Socialiste) qui avaient toutes en commun leur anti-communisme plus ou moins déclaré.
- C. Un caractère anti-P.S. très sectaire.
- D. De réelles divergences dans l'analyse électorale et notamment de l'influence réelle et respective de la formule politique et de la personnalité de René Noël.

Cependant, sans l'impulsion de la direction nationale, l'U.D.P. s'installa dans les provinces de Hainaut, Namur, Brabant et en Flandres en présentant des listes électorales en alliance avec le P.C.B. Les résultats furent décevants partout (avec ou sans U.D.P.). Comme la motivation essentielle était la recherche d'un succès électoral, le reste suivit et, sauf à Mons, l'U.D.P. n'est plus qu'un souvenir.

Ce qui caractérise surtout cette expérience, c'est qu'à un moment donné de son existence, le P.C.B., en tant que parti, a failli s'intégrer dans une autre formation politique en allant jusqu'au risque de disparaître comme parti. Ce fait est assez rare pour être signalé.

Néanmoins, sur le plan de la politique électorale, il reste quelques traces de l'U.D.P. au sein du parti. Alors que jusque là, les petits partis (Trotskyistes, ...) étaient écartés sans réserve, des alliances électorales du P.C.B., on trouve encore ponctuellement une ou deux alliances de ce type.

Actuellement, la retombée de cette expérience au niveau du Parti Socialiste est nulle. Il n'y a en effet aucune relation digne de ce nom entre P.S. et P.C.B., sauf localement et ponctuellement comme dans les problèmes de la Paix.

## 9. RECRUTEMENT INTERNE DE CADRES ET DIRIGEANTS.

Cette question ne fait pas l'objet d'une politique permanente au sein du P.C.B. Rien n'est plus faux que l'idée répandue à l'extérieur du Parti et qui consiste à croire que le P.C.B. a des suppléants tout prêts à remplacer chacun de ses responsables. Comme toute organisation politique, le P.C.B. subit une grave crise des cadres et, le plus souvent, c'est lorsqu'un cadre disparaît qu'on se pose le problème de son remplacement. De plus, le nombre de permanents étant fort limité, il y a peu de disponibilité pour les remplaçants éventuels.

Cela n'empêche pas qu'on assiste à une lente montée des générations d'après 40-45. Le processus classique est l'occupation de responsabilité au niveau local, puis fédéral, ensuite national. Le passage de l'un à l'autre échelon peut être assez rapide. Si l'appui de la direction nationale est important, il n'agit effectivement qu'au niveau national; l'autonomie des autres échelons reste entière.

Il faut enfin remarquer que, ces dernières années, la Jeunesse Communiste contribue très peu à ce processus.

## 10. LE COMPORTEMENT ELECTORAL DU PARTI COMMUNISTE.

Dans les entités électorales où l'U.D.P. n'a pas été présentée aux suffrages des électeurs, l'étude du comportement du Parti Communiste seul, ne présente aucun problème puisque la série complète des élections peut être envisagée. Il en est ainsi pour la province de Liège et ses différentes subdivisions.

Par contre, là où l'U.D.P. s'est présentée, la constitution de la série "Parti Communiste seul", pose quelques problèmes. On peut choisir la série des élections pré-U.D.P., c'est-à-dire de 1950 à 1971 et considérer 1978 comme un repère de ce qui va suivre ou un simple exemple. On peut ainsi constituer la série théorique de huit élections 1950 à 1971 plus 1978 et 1981 en "gommant" les élections de 1974 et 1977. Il n'y a pas, à notre avis, de raisons valables pour rejeter l'une ou l'autre solution. Chacune peut contribuer à l'interprétation du phénomène. La série "pré-U.D.P." (1950-1971) permet de situer le comportement électoral du P.C. avant la présentation des listes U.D.P. et de situer celles-ci dans le cadre de l'évolution de l'électorat du P.C. Par contre, la série théorique des neuf élections permettra de comparer, dans l'absolu, le comportement des listes "P.C. seul" et des listes U.D.P.

Par convention, nous admettrons que les résultats électoraux pour le Royaume et pour la Wallonie constituent des références équilibrées pour les aspects différents, que ce soit le P.C., P.C./U.D.P. ou U.D.P., car elles résultent à suffisance d'un équilibre entre ces diverses composantes.

Au niveau du Royaume, l'évolution du P.C. peut se décrire en deux phases. La première va de 1950 à 1958 inclusivement et consiste en une chute régulière de 4,74 % à 1,89 %, ce dernier résultat étant le plus mauvais de toute l'après-guerre. A

partir de 1961 s'amorce un mouvement sinusoïdal qui passe par un maximum de 4,54 % en 1965 et un minimum de 2,31 % en 1981. La moyenne de cette seconde période est de 3,24 %. Elle est très proche de la moyenne générale pour 1950-1978 qui est de 3,34 % et elle correspond d'assez près aux résultats de 1961, 1971, 1974 et 1978 (écart de moins de 10 % de la moyenne).

Pour la Wallonie, le schéma d'évolution est sensiblement celui du Royaume. On passe de 7,91 % en 1950 à 4,55 % en 1958. Ensuite, on oscille entre 9,70 % en 1965 et 4,24 % en 1981. La moyenne de cette seconde phase est de 6,28 %. Cette moyenne est aussi très proche de la moyenne générale qui est de 6,33 %. La sous-série 1971-1978 peut aussi être envisagée. Elle offre une moyenne de 5,74 % avec un écart-type de seulement 4 % de la moyenne ce qui est assez exceptionnel pour le P.C. dont les variations sont appréciables. Cette sous-série nous paraît intéressante car elle traduit une tendance à la stabilisation des résultats électoraux qui ne se poursuivra pas en 1981. Au niveau du Royaume, cette sous-série donne 3,07 % de moyenne. Remarquons aussi qu'au niveau du Royaume, aucun des résultats de la seconde partie n'atteint les résultats de 1950 alors qu'en Wallonie les résultats de 1965 dépassent de 23 % ceux de 1950.

Dans la province de Liège, le mouvement électoral du P.C. suit, globalement, un schéma du même type. La descente de 1950 à 1958 le fait passer de 8,60 % à 5,27 %. Toutefois, ce dernier résultat, qui est le plus bas de la période de 1950 à 1978, sera approché de très près en 1971 et 1974. La période d'oscillation 1961-1978 détermine une moyenne de 6,79 % (écart-type 27 % de la moyenne) et la sous-période 1971-1978 donne une moyenne de 5,53 % (écart-type : 5 % de la moyenne). L'année 1981 est le plus mauvais résultat avec 4,10 %.

La moyenne générale (1950-1978) coïncide pratiquement avec la moyenne de la seconde période. Le comportement général est très chaotique puisque, d'une élection à l'autre, on passe d'une perte de 32 % de l'électorat à un gain de 58 %.

La province du Hainaut se situe à un niveau plus élevé que celle de Liège et suit des mouvements décalés par rapport à cette dernière mais, pour l'essentiel, les variations sont du même type. La période 1961-1978 donne une moyenne de 9,08 %. Cette moyenne ne sera plus atteinte après 1971 et on constate que le résultat de 1981 se situe aux deux-tiers de cette moyenne.

Il n'y a pas de corrélation entre les votes P.S. et P.C. dans les entités électorales suivantes : Royaume - Wallonie - Liège (Prv.) - Liège (Arr.) - Liège (Ctn) - Liège (Ville-communales).

En résumé, l'évolution électorale des listes P.C. peut se traduire par une descente de 1950 à 1958 (cette élection étant souvent le plus mauvais résultat de toute la période 1950-1978) puis un sommet en 1965 suivi d'une descente jusqu'à une période stable de 1971 à 1978. L'année 1981 marque un nouveau recul électoral donnant le minimum absolu dans beaucoup de régions.

Géographiquement, le P.C.B. enregistre des résultats électoraux intéressants dans les provinces de Hainaut et de Liège ainsi que dans la région bruxelloise. En Flandres, Gand et Anvers représentent les deux pôles d'activité électorale mais au niveau de plus ou moins 3 % en 1981.

Résultats électoraux "1950-1981" = Chambre (exprimés en pourcentages).

	1950	1954	1958	1961	1965	1968	1971	1974 (1)	1977 (2)	1978	1981
Hainaut (Province)	PC	8,53	6,14	8,93	11,23	9,37	9,14	—	—	8,70	6,31
	UDP	—	—	—	—	—	—	8,70	7,50	—	—
Liège (Province)	PC	8,60	7,66	5,27	6,18	7,52	5,31	5,30	5,80	5,70	4,10
Royaume	PC	4,74	3,57	1,89	3,08	4,54	3,08	3,22	2,72	3,25	2,31
Bruxelles (Agglomération)	PC	5,49	3,72	2,73	3,56	4,12	2,81	4,00	2,45	2,80	2,10
Wallonie	PC	7,91	6,77	4,55	6,48	9,70	7,02	5,85	5,38	5,82	4,24

(1) Pour 1974 et 1977, les résultats du PC contiennent aussi ceux de l'UDP.

(2) Les pourcentages sont tirés de l'article de J. Beaufays "Analyse des résultats des Elections législatives belges du 10 mars 1974". Annales de la Faculté de Droit de Liège - 1974 - N° hors série (Rencontre des politistes francophones) - p. 167 à 204 et de l'Atlas électoral du CADOP-U.Lg.



10Bis. LE COMPORTEMENT DE L'U.D.P. (pour plus de détails, voir référence bibliographique sur l'U.D.P.).

Le phénomène électoral U.D.P. qui va des communales de 1971 à Mons aux législatives de 1974 et 1977 intervient environ de dix ans après la rupture de l'électorat socialiste en 1961-1965 et dans une période de relative stabilisation. Généralement, il n'y a pas de liaison entre les résultats électoraux du P.S. et ceux de l'U.D.P. et du P.C./U.D.P. sauf à Bruxelles et dans la province du Hainaut (corrélation moyennement positive) et à Mons-Arrondissement (corrélation moyennement négative) et Mons-Canton avec Mons-Ville (corrélation fortement négative). En suivant l'évolution du coefficient de corrélation, ce dernier groupe doit à notre avis s'interpréter comme suit : le point de départ est Mons-Ville (au sens large du terme). Les mouvements électoraux du P.S. et de l'U.D.P.-P.C./U.D.P. sont fortement contradictoires. Le phénomène est encore présent au niveau du Canton de Mons puis s'atténue lorsqu'on passe à l'arrondissement de Mons. Enfin, il s'inverse lorsqu'on arrive aux résultats de la province du Hainaut. Il s'agit donc bien là d'une caractéristique locale dont le territoire d'application se situe approximativement dans l'arrondissement de Mons.

En ce qui concerne la liaison entre l'électorat U.D.P. et l'électorat du P.C., les conclusions sont nettes : sauf dans le canton de Mons, toutes les moyennes U.D.P. sont inférieures aux moyennes P.C. et P.C./U.D.P. Partout, l'élection de 1974 marque un recul sur les résultats de 1971 et 1977 aggrave ce recul. Pendant le même temps, les listes P.C. présentent une relative stabilisation. Ce phénomène de recul est confirmé à posteriori par les élections de 1978. En effet, là où les listes P.C. remplacent les listes U.D.P., les résultats remontent et ne se situent pas trop loin des résultats de 1971.

Si nous envisageons l'élection de 1974 comme résultant d'une estimation d'analyse des tendances sur les sept élections précédentes, nous voyons que l'estimation d'analyse des tendances est de 14,53 % alors que le résultat réel est de 13,00 %. Tandis que si nous effectuons la même opération pour 1978 par rapport aux neuf élections précédentes, le pronostic est de 12,36 % et le résultat de 12,50 %.

Si nous nous intéressons à la comparaison des résultats U.D.P., à la Chambre et au Sénat, nous constaterons que le recul de 1977 est semblable pour les résultats de la province du Hainaut et du canton de Mons alors que dans l'arrondissement de Mons, le recul au Sénat est plus accentué. Il faut tenir compte du fait qu'en 1974, la tête de liste était R. Noël, fondateur de l'U.D.P. et en 1977, J. Gilkin.

Le phénomène de différenciation entre scrutin à la Chambre et au Sénat n'est pas propre à l'U.D.P. ou au P.C./U.D.P. En effet, le canton de Dalhem offre un exemple du même type mais inversé. En effet, les résultats à la Chambre passent de 4,92 % (1968) à 8,97 % (1971) et au Sénat de 5,14 % (1968) à 6,14 % (1971).

Remarquons que le député communiste Marcel Levaux a été nommé bourgmestre de Cheratte après les élections communales en 1970. Il y a là, à notre avis, plus qu'une coïncidence. L'effet de cette différence à la Chambre est toutefois limité au canton de Dalhem lui-même. Pour s'en convaincre, il suffit de consulter les différentes moyennes et les coefficients de corrélation des cantons géographiquement voisins. Il est toutefois remarquable de constater que l'électorat communiste de Dalhem a un comportement fortement corrélé avec celui du canton de Mons alors qu'il a un coefficient de corrélation nul avec l'électorat communiste du canton de Liège.

Il nous paraît donc plausible de conclure que le phénomène électoral U.D.P. possède les caractéristiques suivantes :

1. Il est né localement, dans la région de Mons et il s'est développé au niveau communal spécialement autour des deux élections communales en 1971.
2. Il bénéficie d'un effet de personnalité qui ne lui est pas propre mais qui amplifie partiellement son action.
3. Sa zone d'influence maximale est déterminée par l'arrondissement électoral de Mons.
4. Il possède une forte corrélation négative sur le plan électoral avec l'électorat socialiste.
5. Il a engendré un net recul des résultats électoraux communistes là où il remplaçait le P.C. seul.

## 11. RELATION DU PARTI AVEC LE MOUVEMENT SYNDICAL ET LES MOUVEMENTS ETUDIANTS.

Le mouvement syndical en Belgique est divisé en de nombreuses branches mais deux organisations en constituent l'essentiel : la F.G.T.B. (de caractère socialiste) et la C.S.C. (de caractère catholique).

Le P.C.B. a toujours défendu que ses membres devaient être syndiqués. Au départ, il exigeait que ce soit à la F.G.T.B. exclusivement. Actuellement, tout en donnant toujours la préférence à la F.G.T.B., l'affiliation à la C.S.C. est supportée. Le Parti fournit au mouvement syndical un nombre proportionnellement important des militants. Très nombreux dans les échelons de base, ils se raréfient au fur et à mesure qu'on progresse dans la hiérarchie syndicale et il faut constater qu'il n'y a aucun communiste à la direction nationale de la F.G.T.B. (et ce n'est pas un hasard !).

Dans le cadre de son activité politique, par exemple parlementaire, le P.C.B. relaie et appuie les revendications syndicales. Il en est de même au niveau local, dans les conseils communaux par exemple.

Les problèmes posés par le mouvement syndical au P.C.B. sont les suivants :

1. Quelles relations faut-il entretenir avec le syndicat lorsque, aux yeux du P.C.B., les directions syndicales prennent des décisions contraires aux intérêts de la population ?
2. Au sein du parti, comment intégrer sans heurt l'expérience et les positions des "politiques" et des "syndicalistes" ?

La première ressemble fort à celle qui se pose avec le Parti Socialiste et elle lui est souvent parallèle. La seconde caractérise les difficultés d'une certaine "spécialisation des membres" qu'une absence de formation idéologique entraîne rapidement sur la voie de l'incompréhension mutuelle.

Ces deux questions n'ont pas à ce jour reçu de réponse générale et se résolvent pragmatiquement, au coup par coup.

La liaison avec le mouvement étudiant se fait plus spécialement par l'intermédiaire de l'U.N.E.C. (Union nationale des Etudiants Communistes) qui jouit d'une certaine autonomie en ce domaine. Dans les Universités, les cellules du Parti interviennent parfois.

12. RELATION AVEC LE MOUVEMENT FEMINISTE.

13. RELATION AVEC LES ECOLOGISTES, SQUATTERS, ...

Le mouvement féministe en Belgique ne prend pas une forme réellement indépendante. Seuls, quelques noyaux isolés et non significatifs à l'échelle de masse ont une existence durable (café des femmes par exemple). La revendication féminine se traduit, de manière durable, par les organisations féminines des partis, syndicats et associations professionnelles. C'est dans ce cadre que le P.C.B. dispose d'une Commission féminine qui organise et concrétise son action dans ce domaine. La situation n'a pas évolué durant la période envisagée (voir aussi point 5).

Les écologistes posent un évident problème au P.C.B. Tout d'abord, parce que électoralement ce parti est en train de remplacer le P.C.B. sur la carte politique. Ensuite, parce que le programme et l'action des écologistes se situent, du moins à première vue, en dehors des normes ordinaires. Au lendemain des élections européennes de 1984, le président Van Geyt a classé les écologistes parmi les progressistes. Remarquons que s'il n'y a guère de relation entre P.C.B. et Parti Ecolo, c'est dû, en grande part, aux Ecolos, qui se démarquent ouvertement des communistes.

**14. ROLE DE LA CRISE DANS LE PARTI.**

**15. RELATION ENTRE LA CRISE ECONOMIQUE ET LA CRISE IDEOLOGIQUE, ELECTORALE ET ORGANISATIONNELLE DU PARTI.**

Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, l'évolution du P.C.B. est essentiellement due à des causes internes. Il n'y a pas de liaison directe entre la crise économique et la crise du P.C.B. Par contre, au niveau des conséquences indirectes, voici à notre avis les plus importantes :

1. La crise économique pose des problèmes d'une telle ampleur que le P.C.B. (et il n'est pas le seul !) a de plus en plus de difficultés à proposer des solutions crédibles.
2. Le démantèlement de la structure industrielle de la Wallonie entraîne des pôles d'activités et de recrutement du P.C.B. (sidérurgie wallonne par exemple).
3. L'appauvrissement généralisé et la répression sociale créent un climat de repli et de résignation peu favorable au militantisme politique surtout aussi astreignant que celui du P.C.B.
4. L'évolution effrénée du clientélisme politique défavorise les partis qui ne sont pas au pouvoir et qui n'ont pas l'espérance d'y accéder.

## 16. CONCLUSIONS.

Ainsi donc, de 1968 à 1984, le P.C.B. semble s'être installé dans sa crise interne sans parvenir à en dénouer tous les aspects.

Sur le plan idéologique, son évolution est à l'instar de la plupart des partis communistes occidentaux : une espèce de distanciation, plus ou moins marquée, vis-à-vis de l'expérience des pays socialistes pour se réfugier dans un nationalisme assez étroit. Spécialement dans le cas de la Belgique, cette position est difficile car le nationalisme est fortement contesté de l'intérieur et le P.C.B. ne s'adapte que très partiellement aux réformes régionales et communautaires.

Sur le plan de la taille, des résultats électoraux et de la qualité idéologique, le P.C.B. est en diminution constante et semble de plus en plus gagné par la morosité ambiante.

On peut mesurer son déclin dans la vie courante par le fait qu'il ne sert même plus de repoussoir à l'adversaire. En effet, l'anti-communisme en Belgique se situe sur le plan international car, sur le plan interne, il ne s'exerce plus qu'à titre local ou personnel (sur ces deux plans, il garde encore une vigueur tenace).

En l'absence d'un redressement dont on ne voit que peu de prémisses, le P.C.B. semble condamné à ne plus être sur la carte politique de la Belgique qu'une formation tout à fait marginale.



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(x) Le terme fraction est préféré au terme faction (traduction plus correcte de l'anglais) car il correspond au vocabulaire courant du P.C.B.

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THE FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY: FAILED ATTEMPTS  
TO MODERNIZE A C.P.

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PREFACE

Writing about the Finnish Communist Party may not be one of the most gratifying tasks in Finland. We like, therefore, to point out to our possible guillotiners that Hyvärinen has written the chapters one, two, three and six and Paastela chapters four and five.

Tampere, February 22, 1985.

Matti Hyvärinen

Jukka Paastela

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The aim of this paper is to analyze SKP's<sup>1</sup> difficulties to modernize itself in the last twenty years, its experiences in the governments and its relations to the "big brother party", the CPSU. The party is now in serious troubles: its future existence as one of four big Finnish parties (alongside the conservative Coalition Party, the agrarian Centre Party and the Social Democratic Party) can be questioned. There are numerous dimensions where SKP's difficulties appear:

- difficulties to keep up the unity of the party;
- difficulties to hold sufficient electoral support which is a necessary condition for being one of the big parties;
- difficulties to get new members especially among the youth;
- difficulties to create credible strategy in politics;
- difficulties in participation to governmental coalitions;
- difficulties to maintain relations with the intellectuals;
- difficulties to have any influence among the new social movements (ecological, feminist, etc.);
- difficulties to modernize the principles of organizations and activities;
- difficulties to maintain friendly relations with the CPSU.

#### 1. THE BACKGROUND OF THE INTERNAL DIVISION OF THE SKP

The SKP is one of the oldest communist parties of the world. It was founded in Moscow after a traumatic national event; the civil war in the spring 1918. The founders of the party were the émigrés who had lost the war. The vanquishers saw the war as a "liberation war" against Russian and unpatriotic forces. The SKP was illegal until the end of the War between Finland and Soviet Union 1944. During this period the leadership remained in Moscow, in the 1930s among Stalin's purges and "struggles against deviations". In Finland the activities were difficult: communists revealed by the state police were put in prison for long terms. Many future communist leaders got their most important education in so-called "university of Tammisaari" (the prison where most of political prisoners served their terms). In the late 1930s the SKP managed to build no important popular front movement.

In the Winter War 1939-1940 against the Soviet Union famous "spirit of the Winter War" was created; the Finns felt they were no more a nation divided in two parts; they felt they all have a common enemy. This "spirit of the Winter War" still unified the nation when it in the second world war fought against the Soviet Union side by side with the Nazi Germany. Only the defeat in the war and the bankrupt of the old belligerent policy created room for the SKP in the Finnish political stage. The party tried to create a politically broad front organization; this organization, the SKDL<sup>2</sup> managed, however, to get only a small groups of left-wing social democrats to its ranks.

The SKP entered to the governments of national reconstruction already in 1944. In 1948 it was after a defeat in the general elections ousted from the government. Rumours were spread that the SKP will try to get power by a coup d'état following the model experienced in Prague. The rumours were groundless but it was now easy to accuse the party for unpatriotism. The SKP had no possibilities to enter the government until political climate in Finland essentially changed in the 1960s.

The position of the SKP in Finnish society 1948-1966 can be described by the concept "camp" (Lager), which originally have been used by Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge.<sup>3</sup> The SKP rested on the workers' own separate sphere of culture and life. As two former members of the Central Committee of the SKP Leevi Lehto and Juhani Ruotsalo once wrote: "This was the basis of workers' own patterns of hobbies, cultural and sport activities, even the bringing up of children in pioneers' organizations (SKDL/SKP's organisation for children is the "Society of the Pioneers of Democracy" - MH, JP). The organizations of the workers' movement were, in fact, excluded from the leadership of political and especially cultural life of the nation."<sup>4</sup>

There was only one important exception, one area where the importance of the SKP was great, that was foreign policy. It should be noted that this withdrawing to the "camp" did not mean small electoral support: in 1958, after the general

strike, the SKDL/SKP polled 23,2 per cent of votes and got fifty seats of two hundred in the parliament.

The social conditions for a separate workers' culture began to disintegrate in the 1960s. The changes in the structure of the populations were exceptionally rapid: there was so-called "grand move" from North and East Finland to South Finland and to Sweden. Television changed the models of local relations between people. In the other hand, some prominent social scientists and politicians presented ideas about the acceptance and integration of the communists to the "official society".<sup>5</sup>

As far as the SKP was a party which was averted, forbidden, or branded as unpatriotic, it was easy for the party itself to conserve its ideological, Marxist-Leninist image and its continuity. A situation of strong pressure of integration and deep social changes was much more difficult to the party. It was divided internally, it produced two different strategies, two different factions. The "reformist" current gained a small majority of the members in the Central Committee in SKP's 14th Congress in 1966. Aarne Saarinen became the chairman - against all plans of the former leaders and by support of the "rebellious" rank-and-file. In the next Congress in 1969 the fundamentalist minority faction marched out of the Congress and founded a nation-wide organization of its own. The reunification in 1970 was only formal by its nature. In theory, to be sure, unity was to be attained by open and broad discussion about all ideological and political questions. But in ten years there was no real development toward unity.

In fact, there were three different "democratic centralisms" in the party. Firstly, there were formally unified congresses, strongly supported by the CPSU, where a "common policy" of the party was defined in so abstract level that very different interpretations were possible. Secondly, there was a democratic centralism as it was interpreted by the majority, that was that the minority should submit to the will of majority in political matters and the choice of persons.

A third variety of democratic centralism was realized in the eight district organizations ruled by the minority. Formally they only followed the "decisions of the Congress", but in fact they were (and are) led by the "Tiedonantaja Society",<sup>7</sup> that is, very centralistically. The struggle between two factions meant strong stressing of centralism in both sides, in political practice as well as in political discussion,<sup>8</sup> the struggle led to "terrible pressure toward uniformity".<sup>9</sup>

Dissatisfaction to this formal unity and to the unsolvedness of the situation created a thundercloud which began to burst out in different ways in the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>9</sup> "Party radicals"<sup>10</sup> suggested that old factions should be abandoned altogether and the party should be modernized and "euro-peanized" as to its ideology, programmes and activities. Among the majority a tendency called the "ax-line" demanded the submission of the minority to "discipline and order".<sup>11</sup> The chairman of the SKP in 1982-1984, Jouko Kajanoja, demanded a compromise between the factions, his tendency was called the "unity line". In the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress in May 1984 the "ax-line" gained by few votes only a victory over the "unity line" and the minority. Arvo Aalto, the secretary general of the SKP 1969-1984, a red cloth to the minority, was elected the chairman of the party and the minority decided to remain outside of SKP's Central Committee and Politbyro and began, immediately after the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress to demand a new, special one. The task of this congress would be to oust Aalto from the party leadership and return the party to "the way of unity". The Central Committee invited a special congress to meet in March 1985 - it was forced to do so because eight district organizations had demanded a congress - but it founded before the Congress new district organizations of its own side-by-side of the district organizations led by the minority. This would mean a radical change in relations of forces between the factions in the Congress, in favour of the majority, of course. The result of this was that the majority declared it will not participate to the Congress which originally was arranged by its own demand. The preparation of the Special Congress has been pure farce to which much time and space have been, of course, allotted in the



television and press. The turns of the minority have created a credibility gap, but, on the other hand, the "ax-line" has inevitably failed to show that the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress was "a real turn to organic unity" as it presumptuously declared in and after that Congress.<sup>12</sup> The "radicals" of the party withdrew from party activities or leaved it altogether or returned to the majority in 1983-1984.<sup>13</sup>

The internal situation of the SKP has changed but it remain unsolved. The news coming from the party are mainly news about internal struggle and its new turns and phenomena. The majority expects that the minority finally lose its nerves and quit the party. The minority expects a new turn which would make it suddenly a majority and in no case wants to leave the party without being ousted from it by the majority. In the Special Congress the majority attempts to change the rules of the party in two important points: firstly, the Central Committee would get the right to expel district organizations (now possible only to the congress), that is, the majority would have a possibility to dismiss one district organization after another and in this way finally force the minority to form a new party; secondly, eighth district organizations would have no more the right to demand a congress which would mean that the minority could no more force the party leadership to arrange one. By these changes of rules the power of the leadership would become even stronger that it now is.

The final split of the SKDL/SKP would be a threat to the electoral support and the position in the parliament of the communists in Finland. The electoral system disfavours small parties whose support is not concentrated to certain areas (as it is in the case of the small Swedish Party). SKDL/SKP's importance as a potential part of a governmental coalition would be diminish although not disappear. The reformist wing of the party does not attain its aim it had had from 1966: modernization of the party. All attempts of the modernization, in the 1960s as well as in the beginning of the 1980s have failed and the party has been paralyzed. We would now ask why the modernizations is no difficult and why the struggle inside the party remains unsolved?

One can point out that the SKP has been divided in two quite equal factions by their size (the seats in the congresses have been divided in the relation 45-55). In these conditions the birth of the two new communist parties would mean great losses. One can also point out the role of the CPSU in the internal struggle (this will be discussed in ch. 5 in this paper). But one can ask why there has been no real tendency to unity or even no changes in the main "fronts" of the struggle? Why the struggle has been so stiff, unchanged, so bitter and antagonistic? We suggest that one would seek an answer by analyzing the internal problems of the Marxist-Leninist "discourse", as Michel Foucault would put it. The most problematic supposition is that the party is understood as already ready-made, already finally formed conscious vanguard.<sup>14</sup> If a party firmly obliges itself to follow these principles it is inevitably in troubles in front of a new social situation. Its relation to a new social situation is not creative, it is very hard to the party to learn new things because its "discursive practice" in relation to the differences in thought and in policy is "struggle against deviations". Michel Foucault has brought forth an idea about limiting and controlling internal procedures of discussion.

A quite essential limit is the principle of commentary. There is a hierarchic relation between the original text and the interpretations although, of course, there can be different discourses and commentaries about a one and some original text (e.g., about Lenin's texts). But what is essential is the limiting role of the commentary: always again the commentary finds something new "beyond" same original text. The correctness of an idea can be proved only by interpreting the original texts, "Marxism-Leninism", "democratic centralism", "proletarian internationalism".

The principle of the commentary narrows essentially the possibilities of changements in discourse. A new discourse is always a "play of identity" and it "takes the form of repetition and sameness". One can describe SKP's basic problem as a magic sphere. The attempts to react to a new social

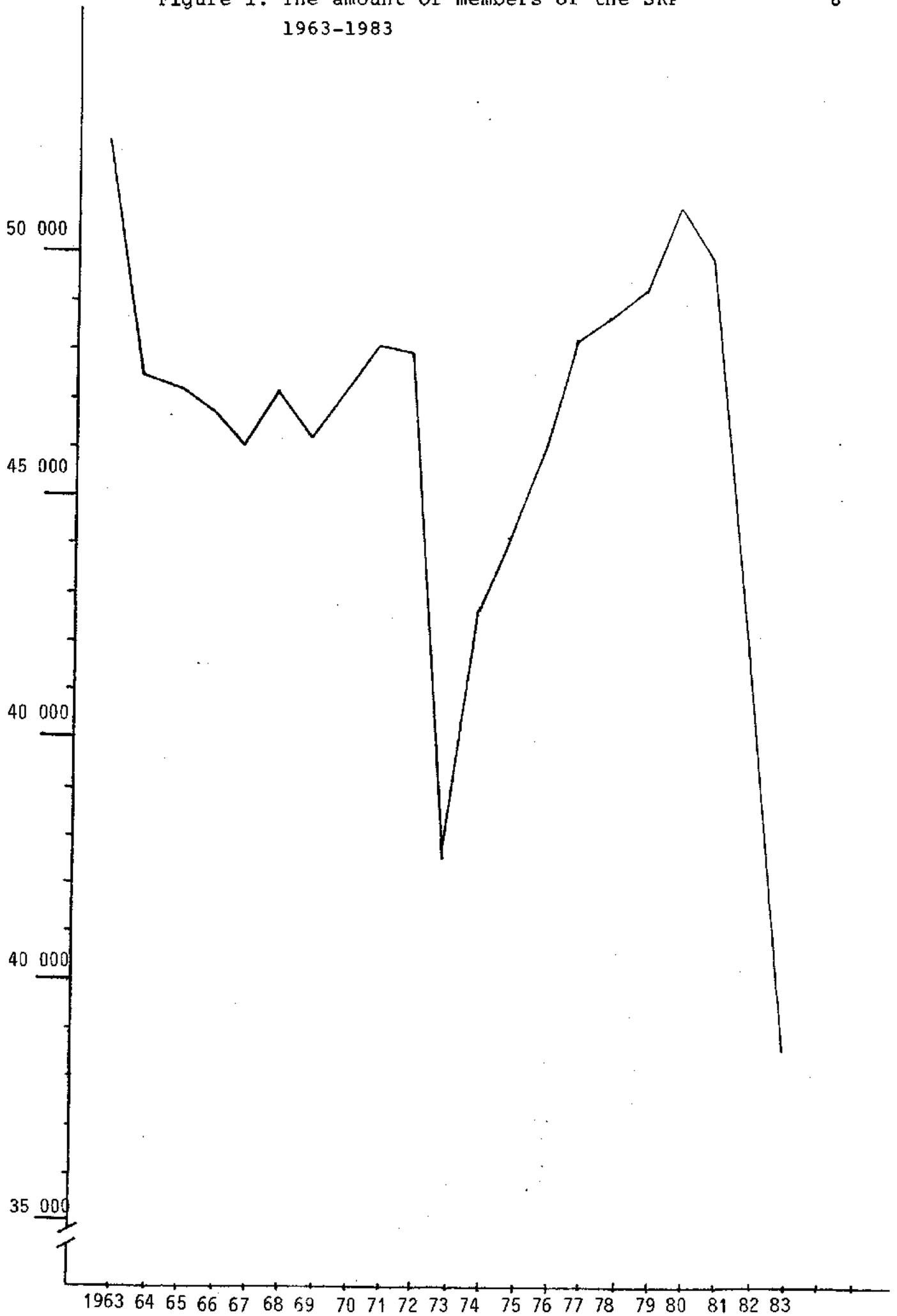
situation led in the 1960s to the division of the party. According to the rules of Marxist-Leninist discourse everybody in the party took her/his standpoint to this division from the point of view of "struggle against deviations". Just the continuous pointing out of "deviations" has led to the bitterness, uncompromising nature and fundamentalism in the side of the minority and to the elevating of the party rules to the place of fetish by the majority. Instead of the modernizing of the party the central theme in the debate about strategy and ideology has been commentary, eternal return to Marxism-Leninism and the legitimation of new ideas only by using some ideas by Lenin. Marxism-Leninism and democratic centralism have thus conserved their place as official doctrines of the party<sup>17</sup>, and no realist tendency inside the party could criticize these doctrines.<sup>18</sup> The struggle sustains the doctrine of democratic centralism, the insisting on doctrines makes the solving of the struggle very difficult indeed.

## 2. SKP AS "A PARTY OF ELDERLY MEN"

The social background and its unchangeableness illustrates the difficulties in the modernization of the party - and here obviously is one reason to the power of traditionalism in the party. After the change of membership books in 1983 there were thirteen members which are 18 or 19 years old. Only six per cent of members were under 30 years old whereas 31 per cent were over 60 years old. More than half of members were over 50 years old. The strong communist student movement in the 1970s or new social movements have had not much impact in the SKP.

A recent large study on Finnish class structures points out that younger age groups are different from older ones just in relation to the traditional forms of organization of the wage workers. "The youngest age class differs clearly from others. Its belief and interest in traditional forms of organization of the wage workers is low, but consciousness and competence for action is in high level".<sup>20</sup> Most problematic for the party is also the division of the membership according to sex: 69 percent of members are men. This figure

Figure 1. The amount of members of the SKP  
1963-1983



as well as the small proportion of under 30 years old in the party tells us how traditionally masculine is SKP's internal culture.

At what time the members have joined to the party? Less than 1/2 per cent of members have joined already before the party became legal. There are about same amount of members who have joined the party in the late 1940s, (17,8 per cent) 1950s (13,1 per cent) and 1960s (15,6 per cent). Most of members have joined in the 1970s: 40,4 per cent. In 1983, the year of change of the membership books, there were 9,3 per cent of members who had joined to the party in the 1980s. Now, two important conclusions can be made. About half of members have joined to the party during its internal struggle. In most cases it has been meant binding to one or other faction from the very beginning. It was quite common that a newcomer was asked did she or he belong to the majority or minority.<sup>21</sup> In the SKP the executive committee of a district organization makes the final resolution about admission of a new member. They make these decisions the "security" of the majority/minority rule in the district organization in mind; it has been, thus, often difficult to a supporter of the rival faction to become accepted as a member by the district committee even she or he had been accepted as one by a party cell. In the 1970s, for instance, it were very difficult for the (minority) student activists to be accepted as members in the (majority-ruled) Helsinki district.

On the other hand, the strong student and youth movement in the beginning of the 1970s increased, after all, much the amount of the members of the party. Nearly one fourth (23,9 per cent) of members are these, now belonging mainly to the age group of 30-39 years old. When we take into account that many of these members who joined in the 1970s left the party in the turn of the decade, we can conclude that in the 1970s there was in the party a tremendous generation gap: roughly speaking, the members were either veterans over 50 years old or newcomers of 20-30 years old.

The total membership of the party is untrustful measurer of party activities because during the internal struggle the both factions need much members in order to get as many representatives as possible to the party congresses. One can, thus, assume that amounts of membership are artificially risen.<sup>22</sup> The change of the membership books cleans the statistics, at least partly. Therefore, the years (1964, 1973, 1983) when the membership books were changed are shown as dramatic fall of membership in the figure one. In 1964 47.400 members remained in the party, 1973 37.500 members, but in 1983 there were no more than 33.400 members. This last change of the membership books took away about 15.000 members.<sup>23</sup> The new leaders of the party have claimed that a proof of their success are 800 new members who joined after the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress in order to show confidence in their attempt to establish "working unity". This is, however, less than one fifteenth of members who had left the party.

One interesting question is who were, mainly, these 15.000 members who left the party? There are, unfortunately, no statistics about them. However, some trends in SKP's membership structure, especially sudden changes in these trends, may point out some answers to this question.

Jyrki Iivonen suggests that only the amount of members who have only elementary school education has dropped sharply.<sup>24</sup> In the light of the data about the membership from the year 1983 this kind of change has not happened. (See table 1.)

Table 1. Members having only elementary school education in the SKP

<u>Year</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
1973	75
1981	52,5
1983	77,8

These per cent amounts might be slightly uncomparable because the criteria of classifying of members were changed in 1983 (this change is showed in table 2.). However, it is

safe to say that the SKP has remained as a party of men having low education - in spite of the student of the 1970s and the rise of general level of education in Finland in the late 1960s and in the 1970s. We can conclude that especially members having relatively good education, who quite massively joined in the 1970s to the SKP, have left the party in the process of the change of the membership books.

This observation becomes more solid and precise when we look at the data on the social background of the members. Again, the new criteria classifying of the social background of the members somewhat troubles comparability, but not decisively. By combining the data presented by Iivonen with the new, in 1983 obtained data, we get the following table:

Table 2. The social background of the party members in 1973, in 1981 and in 1983 (%)

	1973	1981	1983
Workers	48.8	52.2	52.1 x)
Farmers	4.1	2.9	1.8
Own-account workers	1.0	0.8	
Services	6.6	8.0	
Intellectuals	4.4	5.8	
Students	3.3	7.5	2.2
Pensioners	25.5	17.7	28.6
Housewives	6.3	5.1	
Entrepreneurs			0.86
Higher employees			7.9
Other wage-workers			1.9
Unknown			4.9

x) Includes "workers" and "lower employees" (white-collar workers).

One of the most striking point in the table is the amount of the pensioners of the total membership of the SKP. This amount has risen. Between the change of the membership books the statistical part of the pensioners naturally goes lower: many of the eldest die but the old occupation of the new pensioners is not shown in the membership register. Anyway, it is clear that elderly people have stayed most faithfully in the party in spite of its internal crisis. One can interpret this phenomenon in two ways. On the other hand one may think that both factions have referred to tradition and dominating discourse has been the discourse of commentary. On the other hand one can refer to SKP's political culture: it has been the political culture of the 1940s, that is, the culture of national reconstruction.

The dramatical loss of students indicates only that the era of the student movement is now history. The student activists of the 1970s are now either the "higher employees" or they are outside the party. It is illustrating to SKP's situation that now there are more members who have studied in the party schools of the socialist countries than ordinary university students.

The most essential result is, however, that there have been no essential changes in the social background of the party. It has remained as workers-dominated, masculine and very elderly. After ten years of the peak of the student movement, only 7,1 per cent of SKP's members have an academic degree. One can, thus, conclude that the party fatally failed to integrate to its organization the radical intellectuals of the 1970s; at the same time it has failed also in attempts to broaden the structure of membership.

The share of votes of the SKDL/SKP in parliamentary elections remained quite stable after the war until 1970, it was always 20 per cent or above. In 1945 the party polled 23,5 per cent and in 1948 20,0 per cent. The development of SKDL/SKP's support in parliamentary elections 1958-1983 is seen in table 3.



Table 3. The votes of the SKDL in parliamentary elections  
1958-1983

Year	Per cent
1958	23.2
1962	22.2
1966	21.2
1970	16.6
1972	17.0
1975	18.9
1979	17.9
1983	14.0

Note the great losses (four - five percentage units ) in 1970 and 1983. The losses coincide with the situations in which the internal struggle inside the SKP has been very heated.

### 3. MARXIST-LENINIST STUDENT MOVEMENT

The student movement of the 1960s has often been considered as some kind of intermediary factor between the workers' movement and new social movements.<sup>25</sup> Its relation to the left is expressed by the term new left. The "antiauthoritarian" new left criticized the traditional model of activities of the traditional left and theoretically it oriented toward the Frankfurt School and Jean-Paul Sartre's left-wing existentialism. But, as is well known, after the great phase of protest<sup>26</sup> in 1968-69 there was in the student movement in many countries some kind of "proletarian turn"<sup>27</sup>: the expression "new" was abandoned and left wing students formed dogmatic "Marxist-Leninist" or "Trotskyist" groups which fought, above all, against each other.

There was no radical antiauthoritarian student movement outside the political parties in Finland. The new left was only an ideological tendency inside the Social Democratic Party and the SKDL which most notable presented the idea about cooperation between the social democrats and communists.

Mass student movement and "great negation"<sup>28</sup> of the existing society coincided in Finland with the "proletarian turn". The undisputed centre of radical student movement was in 1971-1976 the Socialist Student Association (SOL-Sosialistinen Opiskelijaliitto). The student radicalism was understood as leftism. In traditionally very conservative world of higher learning two important changes happened: firstly, instead of formerly usual "unbounded conservatism" the students began to support established political parties. Secondly, left-wing student organizations got important support in student elections, although never more than forty per cent of votes.<sup>29</sup>

In Finland all university students are automatically members of student societies (this is confirmed by law) which are "parliamentary" bodies. Their representative bodies, thus, are elected by the members. In the 1970s the most of the candidates in these elections were nominated by the student organizations of the political parties. SOL's electoral support was never more than about 17-18 per cent,<sup>30</sup> but its influence in student activities, especially among those who studied social sciences was decisive. The SOL is a member of the SKDL similarly as the SKP, and the youth and women's organizations. What is important is that in the 1970s the SOL was the only member organization of the SKDL which was in the hands of the minority. The SOL was deeply involved in internal struggle of the SKP. It is illustrating that when the SOL in 1971 fell to the minority, the majority founded its own student organization the "Student Organizations of the People's Democrats".

The radicalization of the student movement coincided with the beginning of the open division of the SKP. The students who had radicalized in 1969-1971 choiced SKP's minority which seemed to be only revolutionary force in Finland; all parties of "establishment", including SKP's majority, supported consensus policy. A typical new left idea about restoring the revolutionary role of the working class seemed to find a realization in the demand of the minority that SKP's "revolutionary nature" should be restored. It seemed that the minority was not a bureaucratic party among others but a movement

which fought against SKP's bureaucratic and "revisionist" party apparatus. A Finnish speciality was that Maoist, Trotskyist or other sects had no essential importance. Terrorism was condemned by the radical left.

The aim of this paper is not to describe the activities of the student movement. SOL's history can be roughly divided into four periods as follows:

1. Rise and formation 1968-1972;
2. the period of dominance and faithfulness toward the organization 1972-1975;
3. the period of petrified movement 1975-1978;
4. the period of withering away 1978-1981.<sup>32</sup>

The SOL exists, of course, also after 1981 but as decisively smaller organization and without direct dependence on the minority.

Our essential task in this paper is to describe SOL's political culture. Our thesis is that the student movement did not change SKP's political culture but, on the contrary, the SOL adopted SKP's political culture, especially in its traditional "Kominternian" forms as practiced by the minority. In a way the SOL was in its party zeal more papal than the pope himself. This culture can be described by the light of seven dimension:

1. The SOL accepted the model of orthodoxy and "struggle against deviations" as the starting-points of its ideological discourse. The majority students and the leaders of the SKP accused SOL of "extreme leftism", "petty-bourgeois radicalism" and "leftist deviation". Intolerance was typical to the debate in the beginning of the 1970s.<sup>33</sup>

2. The SOL declared itself as "Marxist-Leninist mass organization". This happened in 1971 when a new programme of principles was adopted. According to the rules accepted in the period of dominance - 1975 - the SOL was "the school of Marxism-Leninism, democratic centralism, proletarian internationalism and revolutionary activities". The SOL founded a serie of publication. The second book in this serie was a long article by the Soviet authors on the "struggle against

revisionism".<sup>35</sup> It was typical to the SOL that its attitude was supercilious toward all other political trends in the student policy;<sup>36</sup> all discourse was commentary of the holy texts.

3. "The model of the policy of the left"<sup>37</sup> was uncritically adopted which meant concentration to the associations. There was continuous struggle of power in the students' societies. The SOL also founded plenty of "common front" organizations, so many as there was not always sense in these activities.<sup>38</sup> Political activity meant toiling in organizations: sitting in endless meetings, distributing leaflets (not only to other students but sometimes also to the workers before the gates of factories at seven o'clock in the morning), etc. For student leaders this also meant writing very long analyses, programmes, etc. In many cases the activists were really "professional revolutionaries" who had no time to read their textbooks for examinations; for many this meant unreasonable personal losses.<sup>39</sup> SOL's "Struggle Programme", a 200-pages document written in 1973, condenses the limitless optimism as to organizational activities as follows:<sup>40</sup>

The level of organizing of the Finnish students is unique in the world. All university students of our country belong to the Association of the Finnish Student Societies. In different universities and high schools the students belong to the student societies of their own. In the fields of science the students are organized in societies of studies, faculties and guilds. In many fields the student of same field have organized in nation-wide study associations. This opens overwhelming views to the developing of democratic student movement, to condensing its unity in action and bounds with the masses. (underlined by us - MH, JP.)

4. The SOL adopted the role of "SKP's assistant and reserve".<sup>41</sup> At least partly this was a result of bitter struggle inside the SKP. In SOL's programme of principles, which was accepted in 1971, the SKP was not mentioned at all. A turn in this regard happened in articles written already in 1972.<sup>42</sup> In 1975 the role of the SOL was fully reduced to SKP's education and assistant organization. According to the rules (6 §) it was a duty of every member to "grow into faithfulness to the working class and to its party, the Finnish Communist Party".

The object of worship was, of course, not the real party led by Aarne Saarinen and the majority in the Central Committee but an ideal party defined by Lenin in his books, led by the minority; something which followed the "decisions of the Congress". In practice this role of "assistant and reserve" meant supporting the minority of the party. SOL's theoretical magazine "Soihtu" (Torch) was in 1971-1980 a theoretical magazine of the minority. Many minority functionaries and editors for their education in the SOL.

5. SOL adopted fully hierarchic structure of organization and democratic centralism. The example of SOL's organization was, on the other hand, the SKP, and on the other hand Otto Wille Kuusinen's writings (from the beginning of the 1920s) about the principles or organization of the communist parties. According to the rules the SOL was also a "school" of democratic centralism. After the reform of the rules in 1975 the SOL had four levels of organization: 1. cells in the institutes of the universities, 2. societies in universities and other institutions of higher learning, 3. district associations and 4. the central association. In fact the most important questions were not decided in SOL's government but in the executive board of the Tiedonantaja Society. SOL's chairman was a member of this board.

6. Among the SOL the attitude toward Soviet Union was totally uncritical. When the majority rose to the leadership of the SOL, one of the first task was to change the old condemning declaration of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. According to the "Struggle Programme" "The example of the Soviet Union - which is building communism - and that of the other socialist countries shows us the historical alternative where there is the future of students and the whole humankind".<sup>43</sup> According to this programme the starting-point of SOL's all activities is "proletarian internationalism" which means "joining the forces in the world in the struggle against imperialism in correct, commonly agreed way".<sup>44</sup>

7. The central role of rites in the activities of the SOL. The correctness of slogans was very important thing. It was

the SOL which brought to the student movement after very long slogans and very hard struggle in the student organizations about slogans. In the congresses of the SOL and in its political celebrations developed a culture of "rhythmic applauding". The SOL did not produce only a little metal sign to be put in shirt that everyone knows that its bearer is a member of the SOL, it also produced, after the model of the Freie Deutsche Jugend, a blue skirt of organization. At the same time majority-controlled SKP's youth organization produced a red skirt of organization which led in SKP's festivals and celebrations, like in first of May demonstrations, to fanatic competition between red and blue skirts about the amounts of the skirts of different colour and that of the loudness of applaudings.

Such were the features of the anti-intellectual, authoritarian and traditionalist culture of the "Marxist-Leninist" student movement. This model of militant communism recruited thousands of students to the activities in the 1970s. At best, the SOL polled in the elections of the universities nearly 7.000 votes.

From the very beginning, however, there was also another, more academic tendency inside the SOL. Among this tendency there was, for instance, a big project to analyze Finnish state monopolist capitalism. In 1976 a separate organization the "Society of Scholars" was founded. Although in its founding Congress it was stressed that the new society is by its nature "struggle organization" and "Marxist-Leninist mass organization"<sup>45</sup> it was among this organization in which the estrangement of the Marxist intellectuals from the SKP and Marxism-Leninism began.

In the end of the 1970s the activities of the SOL became paralyzed. The intellectuals got enough of the internal struggle. The Society of Scholars and the SOL were no more tied to the minority. The SOL and the "Student Organizations of the People's Democrats" fused. Many of their former activists were active in the "party radicals" -group.<sup>46</sup> The failure of the attempt of the "party radicals" meant that the perhaps

the last possibility of the students of the seventies to obtain any reform in SKP's political culture was unsuccessful.

In Finland the most radical left wing students adopted SKP's political culture in its extreme form. When the SOL and its many of its former activists changed opinions, the movement was too weak to get influence in the party. Those who remain activists in the party are tend to accept dominating culture and one of the two factions.<sup>47</sup>

#### 4. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GOVERNMENTAL ROLE OF THE SKP TO ITS INTERNAL LIFE

The SKP has more experience about participation to governmental coalitions than any other communist party in a capitalist country. Immediately after the second world war the party participated to the government of national reconstruction 1944-1948 and then to the broad centre-left coalitions in 1966-1971, 1975-1976 and 1977-1982. It can be estimated that the participation to the government has been one factor in the sharpening of the internal struggle of the SKP, but not a decisive one, however. Firstly, the "revisionist" development of the SKP began before the party had any idea of becoming a party in the government; secondly, the decision of the entry in 1966 was made unanimously in the SKP and only in 1975 the minority decidedly opposed the entry and behaved in the parliament like an independent opposition party; thirdly, the decisive development toward organizational split began in 1984 when the party was in opposition.

In the middle 1960s a wide debate on the party's ideological principles bursted out in the SKP. In order to understand this sudden outburst one should note that in 1956 the destalinization in Russia had had no remarkable effect in the SKP: all inventions to discuss difficult questions of the party's history were suppressed after the Soviet intervention in Hungary.<sup>48</sup> In the leadership, however, there was certain tension between the typical party apparatus men, mostly former refugee leaders, and more pragmatic trade union leaders. These internal pressures began suddenly to emerge in 1965 and such questions like the validity of the

concept dictatorship of the proletariat was now heatedly argued. The party still could, however, formulate a common standpoint on these questions in the famous document "On Marxist State Theory and the Way to Socialism in Finland". It was accepted in October 1965 unanimously in spite of its "revisionist" declarations like the commitment to honour civil rights and the rights of opposition in the transition to socialism and even under socialism.<sup>49</sup> The seeds of the future split were, however, sowed and later the representatives of the minority faction sharply condemned this document.<sup>50</sup>

SKP's entry to the government in 1966, which happened quite unexpectedly the party being very unprepared to assume its new role,<sup>51</sup> obviously influenced the thought of many members who "belonged" to the future majority. If a bourgeois state is nothing else as a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, how it is possible that a communist party can be a part of the government of this state? A trade union leader, Elsa Aaltonen asked this question explicitly in 1966 and her conclusion was that it is not unambiguous to define the class character of the government and generally that of power in bourgeois-democratic society.<sup>52</sup>

From 1948 to the middle 1960s the SKP had been in a political "ghetto". Although it would be exaggeration to say that the party had no influence to policy in the state level - SKP's support for Urho Kekkonen was, for instance, crucial in the 1956 presidential elections - it was entirely blocked off by all other parties. The party lived, so to speak, in the margin of the society and developed its own sub-culture. The entry to the government changed this situation completely. But the becoming "qualified to the court" also created serious internal difficulties.

In 1967 the minority, now in the process of formation, held a nation-wide meeting where the role of the SKP in the government was criticized.<sup>53</sup> In the next year the party's Central Committee condemned some undefined party organizations for behaving like representatives of opposition; the Central Committee declared that all representatives of the party



should defend SKP's policy also in the government.<sup>54</sup> In that year the first general agreement of incomes between the trade union movement, employers' organizations and the government was made; the minority faction opposed this incomes policy. In 1970, however, also a representative of the minority entered to the government when it was formed after the parliamentary elections. Its minister, Erkki Tuominen defended his entry among other things on the ground that there was then no plans for a general incomes agreement.<sup>55</sup>

We see that the participation to the government was not a direct cause to the internal difficulties of the SKP. The attitude of the emerging minority was in 1966-1970 critical to the participation but this was not rejected by principle. In this regard the attitude of the minority was different in 1975-76 and 1977-82. The minority opposed the entries to the governments on the ground of their bourgeois policy. A theorist of the minority, Dr. Seppo Toiviainen, MP, wrote that the communist participation to such governments can be only a tragedy or a farce.<sup>56</sup> In fact, there was a big difference between the policy of the governments in the late sixties and the late seventies. In the sixties important reforms, like the creating of more egalitarian health service and school systems were carried out whereas in the late seventies the governments had no important reform aims, they only managed day-to-day affairs. It is very interesting that the SKP majority leadership defended the participation of the party in the sixties by positive arguments, i.e. that the SKP involvement was beneficial to the workers, whereas in the 1977-83 period the arguments for the participation were "lesser evil" -type or even the class base of the government as such.<sup>57</sup>

The role of the CPSU in the question of the SKP involvement in the government is interesting. The position of the Soviet writers to this question has been contradictory: other have stressed the positive effects of the reforms made by the government, the 1966-71 ones, to be sure. Other writers, however, have declared that the SKP participations has fortified "right-opportunist tendencies" in "some party

organizations".<sup>58</sup> Now there is important new information on this question in the memoirs of Aarne Saarinen, the chairman of the SKP 1966-82. According to him the "leadership of the parties all socialist countries (I do not know the attitudes of China and Albania) have estimated SKP's participation to the governments of our country as a positive thing". In 1966 the CPSU had "showed green light" to the participation.<sup>59</sup> In 1978 Saarinen was told in Moscow that "SKP's participation to the government and the experience it has got has great international importance".<sup>60</sup>

The truthfulness of these Saarinen's statements cannot be doubted. However, his writing has a strong tendency to defend the participation to the government and the attacks the position of the minority in this regard. It is therefore possible that he remembers only positive remarks made by the Soviet side in the negotiations between the CPSU and SKP. It seems that Saarinen does not know - or at least he does not take into account - the negative assessments made by the Soviet theorists.

The situation of the SKP vis-à-vis the government changed quite dramatically in 1983 when SKDL's share of votes fell from 17,9 per cent to 14 per cent. Shortly before the parliamentary elections the SKDL/SKP had returned to the opposition. The formal reason was the military budget but one can presume that the real reason was tactical, the party tried to sharpen its profile before the voters.

After the elections the Social Democratic Party and the Centre Party did not even consider seriously the possibility of the SKP participation to the government which was a new situation in Finnish politics after 1966. One reason for this was that the Rural Party had gained important victory in the elections (9,7 per cent of votes, 17 seats) and showed, first time in its history, the signs of the will of taking responsibilities. In a way this petty-bourgeois populist party took the place of the SKP in the government.

Now it seems to be so that the leaders of the majority use all their energy to the internal questions of the SKP. It is unlikely that the SKP returns to the government before next general elections (1987). The new "unity line" which emerged in the beginning of the eighties is more critical to the participation of the SKP in the government than the traditional majority. The leader of the "unity line", Jouko Kajanoja declared in the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the party in May 1984 that if it is possible to "act in connection with people and in the interest of people we are very ready to the governmental cooperation with the left and centre. But the solutions in which one is forced in opposite position with the masses do not at all fit to our line".<sup>61</sup> The traditional minority suggested that a decision to participate to the government should be submitted to the referendum of all party members and would be accepted only if two third of members approve it.<sup>62</sup> This suggestion, however, can be considered pure propaganda.

The new chairman Arvo Aalto, the leader of the "ax-line" explained, however, the position of the SKP as regard to the possible participation to the government has remained the same as it has been earlier.<sup>16</sup> In the autumn 1984 Aalto again affirmed that the SKP would enter to the government and the prime minister Kalevi Sorsa said that it is possible to widen the basis of the government. He did not said to which direction but obviously this meant SKP's possible re-entry to the government. The minority loudly opposed any attempts to entry again. However, this question is not now the main difficulty between the factions and the relations between them are now so bad that even the entry of the majority to the government, which now is as we stated, very unlike, cannot worsen these relations.

It would have only one clear result, the split of the SKDL parliamentary group. In the early eighties the SKDL group was split into two groups because the majority did not accept the oppositional role of the minority M.P.s. For a short period the minority indeed agreed to obey the decisions of the group and in the autumn 1982 the group was united. After

the elections in the spring 1983 the group has acted as united. It can be estimated that this is due to SKP's position in opposition. Because the relations between the factions are very much worse than they were in the autumn 1982 it is obvious that the entry of the majority would split the group again. This is, however, only a theoretical possibility now.

##### 5. THE SOVIET INFLUENCE ON PARTY LIFE

The relations between the CPSU and SKP have traditionally been very warm. In post-war atmosphere it was natural that the SKP stressed in its propaganda the position of the CPSU as "exemplar which shows the way to the communist movement of the world".<sup>64</sup> In the educational work of the party (study groups, ideological "seminars", party's residential college) mainly Soviet ideological books were used as study material until the 1970s. Party's young activists have been, moreover, educated in the Moscow international party school. The so-called scientific cooperation, visits of the Soviet lecturers in Finland and the Soviet articles in SKDL's press, has been extensive until recent times.<sup>65</sup> It has been a duty of every communist activist to be a member of the Finland-Soviet Union - Society and active in its propaganda work, too.

All this should be seen against the background of the Finnish society. The Finnish bourgeoisie has been traditionally hostile to the Soviet Union, although there have been important exceptions and when the business elite realized that the commerce with the Soviet Union is very profitable, the attitudes have been, roughly speaking from the 1960s, changing. However, when the SKP returned to the political stage in the 1940s its natural task was the work for friendly relations between the two countries. In this regard the SKP has succeeded: all important parties support official foreign policy and the Centre Party and the Social Democratic Party have relations with the CPSU also in party level. Ironically, these relations are today quite unproblematic whereas the relations between the CPSU and SKP are now very problematic due to the split of the SKP into two factions.

The CPSU has always tried to prevent open split in the Finnish brother party. When the minority in 1969 marched out from the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress of the SKP the representatives of the CPSU tried, in vain, to be sure, to influence the minority leaders in order to get them return to the Congress. Afterwards the CPSU was an active factor in the negotiations between the factions which led to the Special Congress of the party in 1970 where the division was institutionalized.<sup>66</sup>

Aarne Saarinen has described interestingly the pattern which developed in the meetings of the delegations of the CPSU and SKP in the 1970s. He writes:<sup>67</sup>

On the other side of the table sat CPSU's delegation led by a member of the politbyro and opposite them SKP's delegation led by myself. I presented SKP's report - a speech of the responsible leadership. After that Taisto Sinisalo (SKP's vice-chairman 1970-1982, the leader of the minority - MH, JP) delivered the speech of the minority, that is, that of the party opposition, which usually contained much accusations against the majority and the Kansan Uutiset (People's News - the organ of the SKDL and SKP - MH, JP) and a list of their "mistakes". (...) After a break of shorter or longer time, often next day, CPSU's delegation presented their own opinions, usually in the name of the Politbyro. The representatives of the CPSU expressed their irritation: there is no development toward unity in the SKP and its representatives always come to the meetings at odds. They (the representatives of the CPSU) have always expressed hope that the unity will be attained in the basis of "Marxism-Leninism" and "proletarian internationalism". These communists which exercise frequently these expressions in different contexts are "correct" communists.

This kind of pattern in the meeting began at least in 1973 when M.P. Maserov gave a lesson to SKP's leaders in Helsinki. He accused particularly SKDL's papers for pluralism - they published also the point of views of SKDL's socialists - and estimated it as a serious lack that the SKP had no newspaper of its own. He openly supported the minority and its newspaper, Tiedonantaja (Informant): "It is wrong to accuse some part: (of the party - MH, JP) as a faction, opposition, if it has not allowed the deviation from Marxism-Leninism and if it follows the decision of the Congress".<sup>68</sup>

Kalevi Haikara reminds that president Paasikivi sometimes said that Moscow is not a magistrate's court where one can complain about petty things.<sup>69</sup> However, in the 1970s it became such a court for the Finnish Communists, especially to the minority. For instance, during SKP's leaders' visit in Moscow 1974 the discussions followed the pattern described by Saarinen. Now the main question of dispute was the relationship between the SKDL and SKP. In the beginning of the 1970's the minority continuously accused the SKDL for its "development toward the direction of party". The SKDL was originally to be a very large organization of all "democratic forces", including not only communists and socialists but also all "sincere democrats". In practice it became an organization uniting the communists and left-wing socialists; the latter had no formal organization at the time, only meetings now and then. There were indeed some suggestions to unite the SKDL and SKP in the late 1960s because the activities of the SKDL and SKP in many cases were parallel and in fact there was a heavy double organization same members being active both in the SKDL and SKP. However, the fusion of the SKP with the SKDL was never a serious possibility.

The real problem was that from the late 1960s the socialists of the SKDL began to identify themselves ideologically in the SKDL. For instance, the socialist chairman of the SKDL, Ele Alenius published a book where he suggested that the transition to socialism should be gradual which attracted criticism in the Soviet Union.<sup>70</sup> In the 1974 discussions between the delegations of the CPSU and SKP Mikhail Suslov expressed the fear of the Soviet leaders that the SKP would lose its influence in the SKDL. He stressed that the SKDL cannot be transformed to the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the Finnish working-class because its leaders openly present statements against Marxism-Leninism. Inside the SKDL the leading role of the SKP must be safeguard and also the women's and youth's organizations should be submitted under the direction of the SKP.<sup>71</sup>

In this phase of the relations between the SKP and CPSU the speeches in the negotiations were not usually published in

the party press. But the minority leaders read particularly the statements of the Soviet representatives in the meetings of the party organizations and in some cases they were "leaked" to the bourgeois press which published them as sensational stories.<sup>72</sup> In 1982 this situation changed and now the declarations of the representatives of the CPSU are published in SKDL's press and in Tiedonantaja. According to Saarinen it was Soviet representative Arvid Pelshe's suggestion in 1982 that his speech was published in SKDL's press.<sup>73</sup>

That year meant serious worsening of the relations between the CPSU and the SKP. It was the year of SKP's Special Congress, an attempt to unite the party. Aarne Saarinen left the chairmanship and the majority used pressure toward the minority in order to also get Taisto Sinisalo to resign of his position of vice chairman; Sinisalo as vice-chairman and Saarinen as chairman were indeed become symbols of SKP's division. Sinisalo did agree to a compromise where he was appointed as a chairman of the committee of the international affairs of the party. Four days before the Special Congress SKP's and CPSU's delegations discussed again in Moscow. Arvid Pelshe presented the opinion of CPSU's politbyuro which contained seven very serious accusations toward the majority of the SKP.

Firstly, Pelshe declared that there was lack of sincerity in the relations between the CPSU and SKP. There are "tendencies of development" in the SKP which threaten the "Marxist-Leninist nature" of the party and its unity. These "tendencies of development and deeds may cause far-reaching negative effects to the Finnish domestic policy, to the continuous development of the friendship between Soviet Union and Finland to the cooperation between the peoples of both countries". What this statement meant and what was its real purpose? As to Marxism-Leninism the practice of the majority leaders is that they do not swear in the name of it but, on the other hand, they do not declare it old-fashioned, or they do not declare that Marx and Lenin were mistaken in many things. They were indirectly charged by these crimes by Pelshe; however, only

some quite uninfluentical intellectuals may present such arguments. It is difficult to interpret Pelshe's meaning and purpose in any other way as an attempt to use as heavy artillery as possible in order to create suspicions among the followers of the majority leaders toward them. In this Pelshe completely failed.

The other arguments were the following: Arvo Aalto, then the general secretary of the party was charged, unnamed, for his suggestion of the Finnish historical compromise.<sup>74</sup> Thirdly, the question of the press; Pelshe supported the publication of Tiedonantaja, although the paper was not unnamed, of course. Fourthly, the SKP has been tried to substitute by the SKDL. Fifthly, opinions that one "should take 'critical stand' in relation to the Soviet Union and to the existing socialism" have been expressed. Sixthly, there has been "attempts to accuse the CPSU for interfering with the internal life of the SKP". Seventhly, there has been a "battue" against these comrades who defend Marxism-Leninism, solidarity with the CPSU, etc., that is, against the minority.<sup>75</sup>

Saarinen commented the relations between the SKP and CPSU lengthly in his speech in the Special Congress. He stated, undoubtedly correctly, that CPSU's statement offended many members of the majority<sup>76</sup> and its efforts, thus, obviously were just contrary to what was intended. Saarinen declared that the statement did not further the unity of the party but was a starting point of provocational activities" of the minority. Saarinen now publicly criticized the CPSU:<sup>77</sup>

As much as I honour the CPSU, its wisdom generally and its great positive role in world history, I state that in some matters also it can be mistaken. There is now one such a mistake in front of us. (...) We Finns do understand and take into consideration the fact that the CPSU is a great and honoured leading party of a large state. The SKP is a relatively small party of the relatively small working class. But self-esteem must not be dependent on largeness, since small and large have the right to identity and self-respect...

In the beginning of the chairmanship of Jouko Kajanoja (1982-1984) it seemed in first sight that the internal development had turned toward unity in the party. But that was not so.



As we have pointed out above, Arvo Aalto the leader of the "ax-line", was elected the chairman of the party. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress he made a much-quoted, very odd declaration about the attitude of the Finnish communists toward the Soviet Union: "We Finnish communists are the friends of the Soviet Union even after our death".<sup>78</sup>

The leaders of the majority now began to speak openly about split of the party. In the municipal elections in the autumn 1984 the minority and the majority formed in many big towns their own separate tickets. The former chairman Jouko Kajanoja formed openly a "third line" which allied with the minority. It can be estimated that he has not much support among the members of the party, but he is, of course, useful to the minority. In October 1984 the delegation of the CPSU visited in Finland and invited SKP's leaders to hear a letter from the Soviet Politbyro to the SKP. But not only them but also Sinisalo and Kajanoja, who have no official position in the party were invited. In the letter the course of the party was, as could be expected, sharply condemned as directed against "SKP's unity and basic principles whose staggering would lead in last hand to the liquidation of the SKP as a communist party". And the letter added: "How else are explained the public statements about the alloweness, desirability and even 'usefulness' of the split?". The CPSU again referred to the relations between the two countries also: SKP's weakening and split would mean that "right-wing circles" "would more easily to stagger the common positions of these forces who support President Mauno Koivisto's foreign policy, which aims at cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union".<sup>79</sup>

This letter interestingly named President Mauno Koivisto. It must be remembered that the minority opposed Koivisto's election its unofficial candidate being Ahti Karjalainen from the Centre Party, who finally was not elected as a candidate of that party. Although the minority after the election has supported Koivisto's foreign policy, one can read from the letter a message to the minority, too. However, the main target, the majority continued its policy by organizing rival district organization to the districts where the organizations were in

the hands of the minority. SKP's answer to the CPSU has not been published.

It seems probable that the party will in near future finally split into two organizations. The CPSU has made it crystal clear that it "will have relations only with a revolutionary Finnish Communist Party". This does not, however, necessarily mean that the CPSU would declare the SKP of the majority as such a gang of renegades with whom no relations could be maintained. The "majority SKP" would still be a factor in Finnish policy not to be neglected. The leaders of the majority have continuous contacts with the representatives of the CPSU. On the other hand, the leaders of the minority refuse to answer a question like "which party the CPSU would choose as a brother party, new or old one?". In a recent interview Taisto Sinisalo answered to this question only that it is interesting question but it is impossible to answer to it. He, however, stated, that cooperation undoubtedly will continue with the CPSU and the minority.<sup>81</sup>

#### 6. CONCLUSIONS: THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF THE SKP

We have brought forward arguments for the thesis that SKP's political culture has remained traditional. The principle of democratic centralism has not been questioned. The open dispute inside the party from 1966, has not only conserved old political culture but also sharpened its problems.

One of the original ideals of SKP's reformist tendency was to democratize and modernize the party. However, the struggle on party leadership and severe "struggle against deviations" have produced a culture which can be described as a culture of mutual fear. It seems that there have been lack of credible means for create unity in the party tradition.

The 1970 Special Congress declared noble ideals: it was assured that by common, open debate and common political action the disputes could be overcome. But this solution was not viable in the culture of fear created by the "struggle against deviations".

The majority took advantage of its administrative positions in order to prevent the membership for minority supporters. Wide debate on political and ideological matters in Kansan Uutiset was not allowed. The minority was unable to give any positive content to the "debate". How useful can be a debate in which one faction "will not deviate in principal questions one centimeter from Marxism-Leninism"?<sup>82</sup> For the minority the "party" is one and same thing as "Tiedonantaja Society". According to the minority no organ of the party, the Central Committee or the Congress, can make correct solutions as to policy, theory or choice of persons of the party which would be in contradiction with the decisions of Tiedonantaja Society.<sup>83</sup> It "owns" the correct theory, Marxism-Leninism. The aim of any debate can only be "revealing" the right opportunists", like Arvo Aalto, and get "sincere members" to support "correct theory".

Unity meant for the majority to submit the minority under the rule of (continuous) majority, whereas for the minority it meant its transformation to majority in the party. The era of strong student and youth movement indeed seemed to offer to the minority a possibility to transform itself as majority. Both factions sought a victory in the internal struggle as soon as possible.

The debate, favoured by congresses, was impossible because there existed no common press. The membership was divided to the readers of majority and minority press. There were two papers also for students, youths and children. No paper tried to become as a mean of the formation of political will, newspapers were only the means of spreading ready-made policy. There was no real party debate between or even inside the factions.

As to party cells, the development was toward the formation of "pure" cells - or toward withering away of all activities. The struggle about power in the cells might interest members some years but in the end it became psychically unbearable. The "opinion of the organizations" or that of the "rank-and-file" decayed as pure formality due to the

women" - the party has a "section of women and equality work" which mainly tries to increase SKP's support among women; not to establish relations with the independent women's movement<sup>85</sup> - and by publishing quite vulgar Marxist criticism of radical feminism in the theoretical magazine of the party.<sup>85</sup> The amount of members under 20 and 30 years old indicates how far the SKP is away from youth radicalism and new social movements.

The relations between the SKP and SKDL have somewhat changed due to the internal struggle in the SKP. The standpoint of the majority has much in common with SKDL's socialists and there has been, in fact, a common front of both of them against the minority. This front has been strengthened by the attacks of the minority against SKDL's socialists who have been branded as the representatives of "petty-bourgeois socialism". According to the minority the SKDL should be a broad front organization in which one should not, however, presents ideological thoughts which deviate from Marxism-Leninism.<sup>87</sup>

During Juoko Kajanoja's chairmanship 1982-1984, just before the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress there was even debate about the possibility of establishing a new party if Kajanoja's "unity line" and the minority got majority in the Congress. This new party could be formed by joining the majority communists and SKDL's socialists.<sup>88</sup>

Among the SKDL there was in the beginning enthusiasm about Aalto's election as chairman of the SKP: it was believed that the SKDL now has more room to its own action.<sup>89</sup> Later many have begun to question whether there in fact would be less room to the SKDL side-by-side with the SKP which is dominated by the majority. For instance, the foundation of the eight new district organizations side-by-side with the minority-controlled organizations means that many SKDL members now can be active also in the SKP and this may limit their will and/or possibility to be active in the SKDL.<sup>90</sup> In May 1985 the SKDL will get a new chairman. Traditionally the chairman has been a socialist and the socialists want

dispute. The rank-and-file was either given a task like to protest against the "lack of discipline" of the minority or against "Aalto's historical compromise". The independency, eagerness to taking initiatives and ability to function was reduced to minimum by the stiff structures of the dispute.

The disappearing of democracy is most glaringly seen in the elections of the delegates to the congresses. In these elections every member has the right to vote as many candidates as is elected in the district organization. In practice district committees elect, with larger or smaller group of their supporters, the delegates before the elections. To the tickets the names of the "candidates favoured by the district organization" are written on the one part and the names of the other candidates, that is these proposed by the minority in the district organization, are written on the other part of the tickets. In some cases it is enough to draw only one line across the right row of candidates.<sup>83</sup> The election of the district and other committees has been only factional question: only important thing has been that the members of "our side" would be elected. In parliamentary and municipal elections both factions have concentrated the propaganda and votes as strictly as possible only to one or few candidates in order to prevent the other faction to get seats. Only those selected beforehand by the party apparatus had have any possibility to be elected.

At the time when feminism and new social movements are getting foothold in Finland the SKP has closed itself to twofold fundamentalism: the majority to its demand of discipline and democratic centralism and the minority to stiff Marxism-Leninism. No wonder why the party has no or very little influence among these new movements. On the contrary, many former members of the SKP feel that these movements are credible alternatives to the party and many have left the party just in order to join these movements. The feminist groups take great care of their independency.

The SKP has reacted to the rise of the new women's movement in two ways, by stressing the importance of "work among

that this practice continues. This is, however, no more sure, the boundaries between the SKDL and SKP have become more elastic.

In March 23, 1985 the Special Congress, originally called together by the minority, takes place. The Congress can dismiss the district organizations controlled by the minority although the majority leaders have declared that they have no such intentions. Anyway, this would not solve the basic problem of the party. After organizational split the dominating feature in public life would be the quarrel between two rival communist party about "more orthodox" ideology and policy.

It is very difficult to see how it would be possible to break the "spiral of fear" and discipline-oriented culture. Among defeats and negative experiences it seems to be most safely to fasten to tradition<sup>91</sup>. It is likely that the widening of political culture and encouraging successes are conditions to each other and just because that the realization of them both is very difficult.

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Finnish Communist Party translates Suomen Kommunistinen Puolue.
- <sup>2</sup>The Democratic Association of Finnish People translates Suomen Kansan Demokraattinen Liitto.
- <sup>3</sup>Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung. Zur Organisationsanalyse von bürgerlicher und proletarischer Öffentlichkeit, Frankfurt a/M., 1972, pp. 111-115 and 341-356.
- <sup>4</sup>Leevi Lehto and Juhani Ruotsalo, 'Kommunistinen vapautusliike' (Communist Liberation Movement), Helsingin Sanomat, April 2, 1983, Soihtu 2/1983.
- <sup>5</sup>Olavi Borg and Jukka Paastela, 'Communist Participation in Governmental Coalitions: The Case of Finland', Quaderni 26 (1983, published by Fondazione Gianciacomo Feltrinelli, Milan), pp. 108-109.
- <sup>6</sup>Leevi Lehto and Juhani Ruotsalo, 'SKP:n tilanne - uhkaava katastrofi ja miten sitä vastaan on taisteltava' (SKP's Situation - Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight against It), Kansan Uutiset, January 17, 1981, Soihtu 6/1981.
- <sup>7</sup>Tiedonantaja (Informant) is a newspaper published officially by eight minority-controlled district organizations. The executive committee of "Tiedonantaja Society" has weekly meetings like the Politbureau.
- <sup>8</sup>A strong document in this sense is Mikko Ekorre's memorandum Valmistautumisesta SKP:n ylimääräiseen edustajakokoukseen. Kollektiivisesti vai sitoutumattomana? (On the SKP's Special Congress. Collectively or Unpartially?), April 19, 1982. Ekorre, an M.P. for Lapland at the time, writes: "The aim of most groups of representatives is the change of SKP's organizational activities. This demand means absolute return to the situation according to the rules. (Underlining original.)
- <sup>9</sup>Lehto and Ruotsalo, op. cit. in note 6 above.
- <sup>9a</sup>An important turning point was SKP's 19th Congress in May 1981. In this meeting chairman Saarinen stressed the unity of the party and Kansan Uutiset (SKDL/SKP's main organ) also wrote about spirit of unity. (E.g. 'Osapuolijaon aittaa purettava' (The Fence between the Factions should be unloosed), Kansan Uutiset, May 13 and 23, 1981.) Tiedonantaja made very different kind of assesement, it seemed that now the victory of the minority is in sight:

Now it is not time to seek "new majority", "new unity", now one must seek unity on the basis of communist principles, proved in practice and confirmed by science. Everyone can come along with this attempt. But on the basis of scientific socialism. Historical compromise has finally knocked its bottom out. (Urho Jokinen, Tiedonantaja, October 22, 1980)

And further:

Coming back to the former positions and even the rise above them suppose the return to the clear Marxist-leninist sources. (Urho Jokinen, Tiedonantaja July 28, 1981.)

The minority believed that it can seize the leadership of the party but instead of that it got out of the leadership.

<sup>10</sup>This term refers to a group, formed especially by intellectuals, which before the 1982 Special Congress presented conspicuously slogans like the "exceeding the limits of factions", the "modernizing of the party" and "party publicity". The discussion provoked by this group was one factor behind Jouko Kajanoja's election as chairman of the party in 1982. He, however, favoured small compromises between the factions. Before the 20th Congress he allied with the minority and formed his own "unity line". (About "party radicals" and Kajanoja, see Jarkko Tirkkonen, 'Myytti kommunistien kolmannesta linjasta' (The myth about the Third Line of the Communists), Suomen Sosialidemokraatti, December 21, 1984.)

<sup>11</sup>See Ekorre, op. cit. in note 8 above.

<sup>12</sup>This is a concept used by the victorious majority about the present situation in the party. (Arvo Aalto, 'Toimivaan yhtenäisyyteen' (Toward Working Unity), Kommunisti 4-5/1984, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup>Lehto and Ruotsalo, who were in 1982 elected to the Central Committee, gradually ceased to work there and the discussion provoked by the "party radicals" ended in 1983. Lars D. Eriksson who earlier had criticized the existence of firm factions (Eriksson, 'Sivistyneistö ja SKP:n tila' (Intellectuals and the Condition of the SKP), Soihtu 1/1981, p. 26) is now a member of the Central Committee and one of the ideologists of the majority. About those who left the party, see our discussion in ch. 2 in this paper. See also Tirkkonen, op. cit. in note 10 above.

<sup>14</sup>See Matti Hyvärinen, Alussa oli liike (In the Beginning there was a Movement), Tampere 1985, pp. 149-165.

<sup>15</sup>This is Lenin's idea, most essential e.g. in his What is to Be Done. The fundamental minority stress in every possible occasion uncompromizing struggle against "right opportunism" of the party leadership. Urho Jokinen, 'Kommunistisesta sanomalehdestä' (On Communist Newspaper),



- Uudenmaan työkanasa 1/1985 and the interview of Taisto Sini-salo, 'Hajoaminen ei ratkaisu - Aallon johdolla ei yhdistytävä' (Split no Solution - Under Aalto's Leadership no Unity), Suomen sosialidemokraatti, February 8, 1985.
- <sup>16</sup> Michel Foucault, 'The Order of Discourse. Inaugural Lecture at the College de France, given 2 December 1970' in Untying the Text, ed. by Roger Yong, Boston, ect., 1981.
- <sup>17</sup> See a document of SKP's 20th Congress 'SKP:n kehittäminen nykyaikaisena leniniläisenä joukkopuolueena' (Developing the SKP as a Modern Leninist Mass Party), Yhteistyö 22-23/1984. There are declarations such as "the principal guide of activities of the party is Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism" and "the organizational practice according to the rules and following democratic centralism which regulates this practice is a condition to the unity of the party".
- <sup>18</sup> Also in the debate of the "party radicals" support was sought from Lenin and new interpretations about democratic centralism were presented. (See e.g. Matti Hyvärinen, 'Menneisyyden vai tulevaisuuden kangastuksia?' (The Mirages of the Past or these of Future?), Soihtu 1/1982.
- <sup>19</sup> Raimo Blom (etc.), Suomalaiset luokkakuvassa (The Finns in the Class Picture), Tampere 1984, pp. 506-509.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 507.
- <sup>21</sup> See e.g. Lena Bööck, 'Muuttuva kommunisti' (Changing Communist), Yhtenäisyys 1985.
- <sup>22</sup> Jyrki Iivonen, A Ruling Non-Ruling Communist Party in the West: The Finnish Communist Party. University of Tampere, Department of Political Science, Occasional Papers 32/1983, pp. 16-17.
- <sup>23</sup> The source of our information about the membership of the SKP is SKP:n jäsentilasto 1983 (The Statistics of SKP's Membership 1983), unpublished party document. Also Iivonen, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
- <sup>24</sup> Iivonen, op. cit., p. 18.
- <sup>25</sup> E.g. Alain Touraine, The Voice & Eye, Cambridge 1981, pp. 10-24.
- <sup>26</sup> On "great phase of protest", see Ottheim Rammstedt, Soziale Bewegung, Frankfurt a/M, 1978, pp. 150-154.

- 27 E.g. Joachim Hirsch and Roland Roth, 'Uusien liikkeiden yhteiskunnallinen perusta ja näköalat', (The social background and views of the new movements), Politiikka 1/1981.
- 28 Touraine (op. cit. in note 25 above, p. 16), among others, has used this concept about the phase of 1968 of the student movement.
- 29 Suomen Ylioppilaskuntien Liitto (the national students' association): SYL:n järjestöpoliittinen asiakirja. SYL-julkaisu 6/1978 (The Organization Political Document of the SYL.), pp. 26-27.
- 30 Ibid., p. 27.
- 31 See 'Titanicin matkassa' (In the Journey of Titanic), the interview of Kimmo Rentola, Sosialistinen Politiikka 4/1984, pp. 40-41.
- 32 Ibid., p. 43 (note 31).
- 33 Documents of this debate: Juhani Ruotsalo, 'Sosialistinen tietoisuus ja opiskelijat. SOL:n periaateohjelman merkityksestä' (Socialist Consciousness and the Students. On the importance of SOL's programme of principles), Soihtu 2/1971; Kari Toikka and Juhani Ruotsalo, 'Opiskelijaliike ja SOL' (The Student Movement and the SOL), Soihtu 1/1972; Reijo Kalmakurki and Juhani Ruotsalo, 'SKP:n edustajakokouksen päätökset ja esimerkki - SOL:n toiminnan perusta' (The Decisions and Example of SKP's Congress - the Basis of SOL's Activities), Soihtu 4/1975, especially p. 64.
- 34 Sosialistinen Opiskelijaliitto: Säännöt ja periaateohjelma (Rules and the Programme of Principles), Helsinki 1976, p. 3.
- 35 M.B. Leibzon and J. Zhilin, Taistelu revisionismia vastaan (Struggle against Revisionism), no place and date.
- 36 See e.g., SOL:n Taisteluoehjelma Suomen opiskelijoille (SOL's Struggle Programme for Finnish Students), Helsinki 1973, pp. 177-179.
- 37 On the concept and model, see Christine Buci-Glucksmann, 'Formen der Politik und Konzeptionen der Macht' in Neue soziale Bewegungen und Marxismus - Argument-Sonderband AS 78, Berlin 1982, especially pp. 44-52.
- 38 See e.g., 'Arvio Tampereen Opiskelevien Sosialistien kriisikehityksestä' (An assesment about the crisis of the Tampere Socialist Students), Soihtu 2/1972.

- <sup>39</sup> See Matti Hyvärinen, 'Tilitys 1970-luvusta' (An Account on the 1970s), Suomen Kuvalehti 37/1984, pp. 100-101.
- <sup>40</sup> The Struggle Programme, op. cit. in note 36 above, p. 168.
- <sup>41</sup> SOL, Säännöt ja periaateohjelma, op. cit. in note 34 above, p. 3.
- <sup>42</sup> Toikka and Ruotsalo, op. cit. in note 33 above.
- <sup>43</sup> The Struggle Programme, op. cit. in note 36 above, p. 182
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 179.
- <sup>45</sup> Kari Toikka, 'Tutkijoitten järjestäytymisestä' (On the Organizing of Scholars), Soihtu 1/1976.
- <sup>46</sup> Like Leevi Lehto (A majority student activist), Juhani Ruotsalo (SOL's former chairman), Martin Scheinin, Pertti Rovamo, Päivi Etelävuori, etc.
- <sup>47</sup> Of SOL's chairmen after 1971 three have remained in the important posts in the minority, only one has left spectacularly the minority.
- <sup>48</sup> Cf. Pekka Haapakoski, 'Brezhnevism in Finland', New Left Review 86 (1974), pp. 34-35. The standpoint of the writer of this article is a Trotskyist one.
- <sup>49</sup> 'Marxilaisesta valtioteoriasta ja Suomen tiestä sosialismiin', Kommunisti 10/1965, pp. 326-327.
- <sup>50</sup> Aarne Saarinen, 'Yksimielinen' (Unanimous), Kommunisti 2/1966, p. 45.
- <sup>51</sup> Borg and Paastela, op. cit. in note 5 above, pp. 108-111.
- <sup>52</sup> Elsa Aaltonen, 'Ajankohtaisia puheenvuoroja' (Speeches of Current Interest), Kommunisti 2/1966, p. 45.
- <sup>53</sup> Marjut Helminen, Kommunistit ja hallituskysymys (Communists and the Question of the Government). Helsinki 1976, p. 118, note 92.
- <sup>54</sup> 'SKP:n keskuskomitean päätös puolueen yhtenäisyydestä' (The Resolution of the Central Committee on the Unity of the Party), Kommunisti 4/1968, pp. 203-204.

- <sup>55</sup> Erkki Tuominen, 'Kommunistien hallituspoliittiset tavoitteet' (Political Aims of the Communists in the Government), Kommunisti 7-8/1970, p. 300.
- <sup>56</sup> Seppo Toiviainen, Nykyinen kriisi ja hallituskysymys (The Present Crisis and the Question of the Government), Helsinki 1978, pp. 63-64.
- <sup>57</sup> Borg and Paastela, op. cit., p. 112.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 112-113.
- <sup>59</sup> Aarne Saarinen, Suomalaisen kommunistin kokemuksia (The Experiences of a Finnish Communist), Helsinki 1984, p. 145.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 155.
- <sup>61</sup> Jouko Kajanoja, 'Keskuskomitean toimintaselostus' (Report on the Activities of the Central Committee) in SKP:n 20. edustajakokous (SKP's 20th Congress), Helsinki 1984, p. 19.
- <sup>62</sup> 'SKP:n taistelukunnan ja yhtenäisyyden kehittäminen' (The Development of SKP's Fitness for Battle and the Unity), Tiedonantaja, May 30, 1984. (The speech of the minority in the 20th Congress.)
- <sup>63</sup> Arvo Aalto, SKP historiallisten tehtäviensä mittaiseksi (The SKP to the Level of its Historical Tasks) in ibid., p. 31.
- <sup>64</sup> A. F. Upton, Communism in Scandinavia and Finland: Politics of Opportunity, New York, 1973, p.
- <sup>65</sup> Jyrki Iivonen, 'Veljeyttä yli rajojen. NKP:n ja SKP:n välisten suhteiden kehittyminen ja suhde puoluehajaannukseen', (Brotherhood Across The Borders.), Politiikka 1/1985, p.
- <sup>66</sup> Saarinen, op. cit. in note 59, above, p. 120.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 122.
- <sup>68</sup> Kalevi Haikara, Isänmaan vasen laita (The Left Side of the Fatherland), Helsinki 1975, pp. 367-369.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 407.
- <sup>70</sup> Borg and Paastela, op. cit. in note 5 above, p. 113.
- <sup>71</sup> Haikara, op. cit., pp. 412-413.

- <sup>72</sup> E.g. Ibid., p. 360.
- <sup>73</sup> Saarinen, op. cit. in note 59 above, p. 132.
- <sup>74</sup> Borg and Paastela, op. cit. in note 5 above, pp. 115-116.
- <sup>75</sup> Saarinen, op. cit. in note 59 above, pp. 128-130.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 134.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 135-137.
- <sup>78</sup> Aalto, op. cit. in note 63 above, p. 30. When Aalto declared this, the television cameras pictured the countenances of CPSU's delegates. They were very astonished and confounded.
- <sup>79</sup> 'NKP:n kirje SKP:lle' (The Letter of the CPSU to the SKP) Tiedonantaja, October 24, 1984.
- <sup>80</sup> Grigory Romanov's declaration to the SKP leaders in April, 1983, quoted in Jyrki Iivonen A Ruling Non-Ruling Communist Party in the West: The Finnish Communist Party. University of Tampere, Department of Political Science. Occasional Papers 32/1983, p. 26.
- <sup>81</sup> 'Hajoaminen ei ratkaisu - Aallon johdolla ei yhdistytä' (Split no Solution - Under Aalto's Leadership no Unity), Suomen Sosialidemokraatti, February 8, 1985.
- <sup>82</sup> 'Ylimääräisen edustajakokouksen päätökset 16. edustajakokouksen pohjaksi' (The Decisions of the Special Congress should be the Basis of the 16th Congress), Soihtu 1/1972, p. 77 (Originally published in Tiedonantaja.)
- <sup>83</sup> The Special Congress of the SKP would want to elect a representative of the minority, Dr Seppo Toiviainen as vice-chairman instead of Taisto Sinisalo who with Aarne Saarinen (who retired in this Congress) was a symbol of the division. The minority did not accept this change and the suggested division of seats in the Central Committee and marched out from the Congress. The minority then boycotted few months the meetings of the Central Committee. In order to end this situation new chairman Jouko Kajanoja agreed to a compromise with the minority, a compromise which clearly meant the change of a standpoint expressed by the Special Congress (formally all was correct, to be sure, because the chairmen are elected not by the Congress but by the Central Committee). Veikko Alho, a local politician from a small communist dominated industrial town of Karkkila, unknown person even for many active communists, was elected as vice-chairman, Sinisalo was appointed as chairman of SKP's Committee for international affairs. This compromise broke the credibility of Kajanoja's "unity line" and strengthened the "ax-line" inside the majority and thus contributed to

its victory in the 20th Congress 1984. - It is interesting to note that Pravda did not inform its readers about Kajanoja's election as SKP's chairman until Alho was elected as vice-chairman.

- <sup>84</sup> See e.g., 'SKP:n osapuolten vai puolueen kriisi? Puolueen johtajat vastaavat' (The SKP Crisis of the Factions of that of the Party? The Party Leaders Answer), Soihtu 1/1982, especially the answers of Arvo Kamppainen and Esko-Juhani Tennilä. One of the two writers of this paper, Matti Hyvärinen, was this kind of "representative of the district organization" in the beginning of the 1970s.
- <sup>85</sup> See Naisen vapautuminen ja marxismi (The Liberation of Woman and Marxism) Seminaari 25.9.1983. SKP:n nais- ja tasa-arvotyöjaosto, Helsinki 1984. This attitude is very clear in Mirja Ruikka's speech, pp. 67-71.
- <sup>86</sup> See Joanne Naiman, 'Marxismi ja feminismi' (Marxism and Feminism), Kommunisti 4-5/1984. In the preface to this article written by Timo Ravela it is declared that the duty of woman is to "adopt" Marxism-Leninism: "Because this theory is a scientific one it is as such nor a theory of men and neither that of women". The party's own discourse is thus put outside any critique of the women's movement as "unsexbounded". But the ideas of the feminists should be criticized from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism. At least here the party wants to itself a role of a "teacher" very one-sidedly.
- <sup>87</sup> Op. cit. in note 81 above, pp. 85-86.
- <sup>88</sup> 'Onko tilaa uudelle puolueelle? Keskustelu tulenarasta aiheesta' (Is there Room for a New Party? A Discussion about Inflammable Subject), Kansan Uutiset, May 21, 1984.
- <sup>89</sup> 'Nyt jäsenistö tietää mitä uusi johto tahtoo' (Now the Members Know What the New Leaders Want), the interview of Kalevi Kivistö, Kansan Uutiset, May 29, 1984.
- <sup>90</sup> See Jorma Hentilä, 'Miten käy SKDL:n?' (What Happens with the SKDL?), Kansan Uutiset, December 15, 1984. Hentilä was long time a secretary general of the SKDL. He writes:  
When SKP's struggle of power is now entering a new phase and the majority communists no more need SKDL's organizations in such way as it was formerly the case, it seems that many of them are ready to shelve SKDL's cells as needless "parallel organizations".
- <sup>91</sup> The former chairman Jouko Kajanoja shows this fundamentalism and return to the old by criticizing the new Central Committee as follows:  
Somebody has expressed a viewpoint that Marxist analyses of society, made in the last century and in the first half of our own century no more correspond to the reality of the late capitalist society.  
(Kajanoja, 'Mitä kuuluu keskuskomitealle' (What is Happening in the Central Committee), Yhtenäisyys, 1985.

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THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF WEST GERMANY (DKP):

A RED HERRING IN WESTERN EUROPE?

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## Preface

This paper deals with the West German Communist party founded in 1968 as a successor to the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) which was banned in 1956. Thus it does not deal with the Communist party of East Germany, merged with the Social Democrats into the Socialist Unity Party (SED), nor with the West Berlin section of this party (SEW/ Sozialistische Einheitspartei Westberlins).

After a few comparative comments, the paper provides a brief historical survey of the KPD, because it has had a great impact on the DKP. The third section of the paper relates the foundation of the DKP to the context of the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition of the 1960s. The fourth section contains a brief history of the DKP, with emphasis on its strategy and ideology. The fifth section deals with the party culture and organisation. Relations with other organisations are analyzed in section six.

As the DKP is a small party in West Germany, it has received only scant attention from scholars. As it is also a rather controversial party, it has been the subject of rather biased studies, both pro and con. I hope this study does avoid both kinds of bias.

### 1. The DKP in a Comparative Perspective

Western European Communist parties can be divided into three (rough) categories, according to their weight in the national political system:

I- Major parties, which have enough seats in parliament and/or enough active members in social mass movements and institutions to exert significant influence in the political system - either as (potential) government party or as veto power; obvious examples are the Communist parties of Italy, France, Portugal and Finland, but also the People's Alliance (Althyubandalag) of Iceland, the Progressive Party of the Working People (Anorthikon Komma Ergazomenou Laou) of Cyprus, and possibly the KPD of the Weimar Republic.

II- Minor parties, which are represented in parliament and/or in social mass movements or institutions (trade unions, local governments, universities, peace movement) but which can exercise significant influence only through coalitions with other parties or



under extraordinary circumstances (resistance against fascist dictatorship, for instance); the Communist parties of Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden and since 1982 probably also of Spain fit in here.

III- Marginal parties, which are rarely or never represented in parliament and only marginally involved in mass movements or institutions; in the 1980s this category includes the Communist parties of Austria, Denmark, Norway, Ireland, Malta and possibly of Great Britain and West Germany; most of the maoist parties that emerged in the 1960s fall into this category as well.

This classification may help to explain why certain parties have moved away from orthodox marxist-leninism towards eurocommunist positions, whereas others have not. One could venture the hypothesis that the major parties will be torn between eurocommunist and orthodox tendencies, in connexion with their potential government party option or their veto power or counter-community option.<sup>1</sup> The parties of Italy and Iceland have chosen the former option, the Portuguese party the latter, while the French and the Finns are still struggling. Only the Cypriots seem to be able to combine both options.

The minor parties will lean more towards eurocommunist positions, in order to win allies in coalitions, but also as a result of the contacts with these allies. Actually the Spanish party had taken a Eurocommunist position even before it was reduced to the status of a minor party; the cases of the Swedish, Dutch and Belgian parties may fit in more neatly with this hypothesis.

The marginal parties will maintain an orthodox marxist-leninist position as well as close ties with the Soviet Union. From identification with the leninist tradition and the leninist motherland they derive a sense of importance. They serve the interest of the Soviet Union, too, by explaining and justifying its policy to their fellow-countrymen. This may apply to the parties of Ireland and Malta, to a lesser extent also to those of Denmark and Norway (after the split of 1975). It does not apply to the Communist Party of Great Britain, which has adopted a eurocommunist position - perhaps because its influence in universities and trade-unions is more than marginal?<sup>2</sup>

The Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (DKP) of West Germany seems comparable to the British party in terms of influence, but shares the orthodoxy of the other marginal parties. Yet in a historical sense it is a "red herring" as well. It was founded in 1968, 12 years after its predecessor had been banned by the West German Constitutional Court. Whereas other Communist parties recovered their Cold War losses in the period 1960-80, the DKP remained weak and small. Its electorate declined from .6% in 1969 (in an electoral alliance with other groups) to .2% in 1980. If we compare this with the electorate of the KPD in 1953 (2.2%) or 1949 (5.7%) the decline becomes more remarkable; even more, if we consider also the KPD votes in the Weimar Republic: at the last free elections for the Reichstag in November 1932 the KPD won almost 17% of the popular vote, more than any other Communist party in Western Europe! (See Figure I)

As remarkable as the electoral decline of the German Communists seems their reaction to it. Whereas other (bourgeois) parties try everything to reverse such a fateful decline, changing their leaders, principles, policies, or at least their 'images', the DKP has done nothing of the kind. A few changes did occur, but leadership, principles and policies have remained the same. Perhaps a closer look at its history, context, ideology, organisation and relations with other organisations will help to understand its resistance to change.

## 2. The Predecessor of the DKP: the KPD (1918-1968)

The history of the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (KPD) was marked by three traumatic events: the 'abortive revolution' of 1918-21, the Nazi 'counter-revolution' of 1933 and the division of Germany in 1945-1949.

The party was founded at the end of the revolutionary year 1918. The German Empire had lost the First World War. Soldiers and sailors rose in mutiny and set up revolutionary councils together with workers in many German cities. The Emperor abdicated, the Social Democratic opposition constituted a provisional government and proclaimed the republic. The Social Democrats were divided, however, between two parties

and a few leftwing fringe groups. In 1916/1917 the Independent Social Democrats (USPD) had broken away from the Majority Social Democratic party (SPD) because they refused to support the war any longer. After the war the two parties clashed over the kind of regime Germany should have. While most Majority Social Democrats preferred a 'bourgeois' parliamentary system, most Independent Social Democrats hoped to develop the workers councils of 1918 into a new system of direct democracy. The leftwing fringe shared this goal, but did not trust the gradualist approach of the Independent Social Democrats. On December 30, 1918 these fringe groups founded the KPD.<sup>3</sup> Though inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the German Communists differed from the Bolsheviks in many respects. Like many other 'infantile communists' in Western Europe, they leaned more towards libertarian communism and revolutionary syndicalism than towards leninism. While refusing to take part in the elections for a constituent national assembly in 1919, they engaged in - poorly planned - revolutionary actions in Berlin, Munich and Bremen. While the Independent Social Democrats hesitated, the Majority Social Democrats called in rightwing militias to suppress the rebellion. Several Communist leaders were arrested and shot.<sup>4</sup>

In the aftermath, more moderate leaders gained the upper hand. The libertarian and syndicalist members left the KPD and started the Communist Workers Party of Germany (KAPD) in April 1920. Owing to ideological and organisational conflicts, the new party disintegrated within a few years.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the KPD had become the German section of the Communist International - somewhat reluctantly, in fact.<sup>6</sup> The majority of the Independent Social Democrats also wished to join the Communist International. Hence they split their party and merged with the KPD in October 1920; most of the other Independent Social Democrats rejoined the (Majority) SPD in 1922.

Reassured by the merger and by the encouragement from the Russian leaders of the Communist International, the KPD began to prepare again for the revolution. It organized armed militias and carried out a few attacks in 1921 and again in 1923; both attempts resulted in defeat. The party was banned until March 1924.<sup>7</sup> By then it realized the revolutionary period was definitely over. The bourgeois republic and the

capitalist economy of Weimar Germany entered an era of stability and prosperity - until 1929. In this period the KPD managed to consolidate itself. It maintained its share of the electorate around 10%, while its membership hovered around 150,000. Most members were industrial workers. Factory cells and street cells replaced the traditional social democratic branch organisation. Ideological debates and factional struggles subsided, while the central leadership strengthened its hold on the organisation and reinforced the party apparatus. Leninism became the official ideology, while the 'spontanist' ideas of the party's founders were denounced as opportunistic deviations. Instructions from Moscow were to be obeyed without questions or qualifications. By 1929 the party had been fully 'bolshevized' as well as 'stalinized'. The non-conformist and intellectual leaders of the early 1920s were replaced by conformist proletarians, such as Wilhelm Pieck and Ernst Thälmann.<sup>8</sup>

At the party congress of 1929, Thälmann received standing ovations and greetings like "Hail Moscow!" The KPD tried to build up a leader cult around Thälmann to counteract the beginning leader cult around Hitler. As economic prosperity and political stability were breaking down, Hitler's National Socialist party gained influence. Especially the German middle classes deserted their traditional liberal parties, in search for a Leader who would save them from unemployment, deflation and insecurity. Social Democracy and political Catholicism did not offer attractive alternatives. The Communists tried to woo the middle classes by adopting nationalist and populist slogans like "People's Revolution" and "People's Action" and to stress the leadership qualities of Thälmann. It may not have convinced many middle class Germans. Yet the KPD increased its membership and its electorate, especially among the unemployed workers, at the expense of the SPD.<sup>9</sup>

KPD and SPD fought each other even more intensely between 1929 and 1933 than before. Instructed by Stalin, the Communists regarded the Social Democrats as the vanguard of fascism, "social fascism". They set up their own Red Trade Unions and their own militia. At times they even co-operated with the Nazi's against the SPD (the campaign to dissolve the Prussian parliament in 1931, the Berlin urban trans-

port strike in 1932). Most of the time Communists and Nazi's treated each other literally as deadly enemies: street battles between Red Front Fighters and SA:Storm Troopers took hundreds of lives. The Social Democrats fought both - but they banned the Red Front Fighters League in Prussia before they tried to ban the SA (1929 and 1932 respectively). At the elections of November 1932 the KPD won almost as many votes as the SPD: 17% and 20% respectively; but the National Socialist party became the real winner with 33%. A few months later it came to power and destroyed both SPD and KPD. The KPD suffered more than any other party; about half of its 300,000 members were imprisoned, tortured or sent to a concentration camp, about 10,000 were killed under the Nazi regime.<sup>10</sup>

Thälmann died in a concentration camp, but some leaders managed to escape to neighbouring countries. In October 1935 the refugees held a congress near Moscow to reconsider their strategy. A few months earlier the Communist International had revised its ultra-leftist line and advocated a Popular Front against fascism; the KPD did the same. It also tried to maintain a nation-wide underground organisation in Germany, but failed to overcome the brutal repression of the Gestapo. Only local groups in regional strongholds survived and continued to spread anti-nazi propaganda, sometimes in co-operation with other political groups. But their activities took a heavy death toll, too. At a second congress in exile in 1939 the KPD proposed a merger of Communists and Social Democrats into a unified working class party. In a national alliance with farmers, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie the working class would fight for a democratic republic - the kind the KPD had opposed vigorously 20 years before!<sup>11</sup>

When the Nazi regime collapsed and the Allied Forces allowed the Communist refugees to return to Germany, they began to implement their proposal of 1939. In the Eastern zone, occupied by Soviet forces, KPD and SPD merged into the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED: Socialist Unity party of Germany) in April 1946. It claimed to pursue a 'German road to socialism' rather than the Russian model.<sup>12</sup> In the Western zones, occupied by American, British and French forces, the SPD refused to merge and declared the membership of the SED incor-

patible with that of the SPD. The KPD tried again, even decided to change its own name into "Socialist People's Party" in 1948, but to no avail.<sup>13</sup> After 1948 the Cold War led the KPD to harden its attitude. Though it continued to argue for a National Front, it renounced its own "titoist" ideas about a German road to socialism. It expelled its "titoist" vice-chairman Müller - who was kidnapped to East Germany, where he spent 5 years in prison for "espionage".<sup>14</sup>

Naturally the KPD opposed the foundation of the Federal Republic, which consolidated the division of Germany into a pro-Russian and Communist-led Eastern state and a pro-American and bourgeois Western state. In a Platform for National Reunification the KPD declared dramatically: "When the West German population wants to live, it has to overthrow the Adenauer regime.. Only the relentless revolutionary struggle of all German patriots can and will lead to the overthrow of the Adenauer-regime and to the elimination of the main pillar of American imperialist domination of West Germany."<sup>15</sup>

The platform, adopted by the executive committee of the party in 1952, provided the Constitutional Court of the Federal Republic with sufficient evidence to ban the KPD in August 1956, on request of the government led by Adenauer.<sup>16</sup> Yet the KPD did not engage in revolutionary action, apart from organizing a mass petition against rearmament. Its close co-operation with the East German SED and its loyalty towards the Soviet Union had made it rather unpopular in West Germany, however. At the first elections for the Bundestag (federal parliament) it had won 5.7% of the popular vote (in 1949), but at the second elections in 1953 it received only 2.2%. Membership went down from about 300,000 in 1946 to 185,000 in 1950 and 70,000 in 1956.<sup>17</sup> In March 1956 the party began to mollify its 'revolutionary' course - inspired by the destalinisation in the Soviet Union - but failed to impress the Court. The KPD was considered a threat to the free democratic order of the Federal Republic. Many leaders received prison sentences of 2 or 3 years. In fact, legal repression had started already in 1951 with the dissolution of the Free German Youth. Between 1951 and 1966 more than 6000 Communists were tried for treason or subversion of the state ("Staatsgefährdung").<sup>18</sup>

The prohibition and persecution of the KPD may have served to prove West German loyalty to the Western alliance and to legitimate the political system of the Federal Republic in general and the hegemony of the Christian Democratic party in particular.<sup>19</sup> It did not contribute probably to the popularity of the Communists; membership in the illegal KPD fell to about 7000 by 1967, according to intelligence reports.<sup>20</sup> Communist participation in electoral alliances and in the German Peace Union did not result in electoral gains - unlike for example in Greece, where the Communist party was banned after the Civil War and participated in a fairly successful alliance between 1951 and 1967.<sup>21</sup>

As in 1933, most KPD leaders fled abroad in 1956. In 1957 and 1963 the party held its congresses in the East German Democratic Republic. In 1963 it adopted a new platform, advocating a peaceful transition to socialism in West Germany, "on the basis of the Constitution" but "inspired by the example of the German Democratic Republic".<sup>22</sup> The West German party members devoted their energy mainly to propaganda for the GDR and for relegalisation of the KPD. The Federal Government refused persistently to lift the ban on the KPD, but in 1968 it made it clear that it would not prevent the foundation of a new Communist party. Perhaps it cherished the hope that a new Communist party would divide or at least channel the Extra-parliamentary Opposition which had sprung up in the 1960s.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. The Extra-Parliamentary Opposition and the West German Party System

In 1949 the West German party system resembled that of the Weimar Republic. The first Bundestag represented 10 parties. Both the Social Democratic SPD and the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) - allied with the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) - won about 30% of the votes each. The CDU/CSU made a coalition with some smaller parties and managed to 'swallow' all but one of them between 1949 and 1957. An electoral threshold of 5%, established in 1953, contributed to the concentration of parties. In 1957 the Christian Democrats won an absolute majority in parliament. They owed their success probably to their popular economic

policy, their Christian symbolism and the leadership of Konrad Adenauer. Their atlanticist (pro-NATO, pro-USA) foreign policy and national rearmament met with resistance in the early 1950s, but were justified in terms of a rather visceral anti-communism that linked up with personal experiences of many refugees from Eastern parts of Germany but also with Nazi propaganda between 1933 and 1945 and possibly with even older fears of communism and socialism.<sup>24</sup>

The dominant anti-communist ideology may have weakened the position of the SPD. Though refusing any co-operation with the KPD, the SPD had also criticized the atlanticist and capitalist policy of the Federal Government and advocated neutralism and socialism, like the Communists. In the late 1950s the Social Democrats began to revise their position, however. At Bad Godesberg in 1959 they adopted a new programme without neutralist or marxist items. They still argued for social reforms and for a more flexible foreign policy, but within the framework of a capitalist and atlanticist Federal Republic.<sup>25</sup> From an electoral viewpoint this revision may have paid off: the SPD increased its share of the popular vote from 32% in 1957 to 39% in 1965. It could win votes in the centre of the political spectrum without losing any on the left; left socialist or pacifist parties failed to pass the 5% threshold. At most, they could exercise a little pressure on the SPD by organizing demonstrations and petitions, as they often did during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>26</sup>

The pressure on the SPD increased when the party joined a coalition government with the CDU/CSU in 1966. The two parties held together 468 of the 518 seats in the Bundestag, leaving only 50 for the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP). The Grand Coalition of the two rivals was seen as a mariage de raison rather than a mariage d'amour. The SPD wanted to prove its competence in government, while the CDU/CSU hoped to use the SPD to realize urgent reforms and to overcome its leadership crisis after Adenauer's retirement.<sup>27</sup> The reforms concerned - among other things - constitutional procedures in case of a state of emergency. These "Notstandsgesetze" (Emergency Laws), already drafted by a CDU minister in 1960, sparked off a massive extra-parliamentary op-



position movement in the mid-sixties. In the eyes of the opposition, the Emergency Laws became the symbol of declining democracy and re-emerging authoritarianism or 'creeping fascism' in West Germany. After all, the decline of the Weimar Republic had also begun with the introduction of emergency laws, in 1930. The sudden rise of a neo-nazi party in the Federal Republic around 1966 (the National Democratic party:NPD) seemed to confirm the worst fears of the opposition.<sup>28</sup>

The Extra-parliamentary Opposition (Ausserparlamentarische Opposition: ApO) was a loose coalition of trade-unions, radical intellectuals and student organisations, comparable to New Left movements in France, Britain or The Netherlands.<sup>29</sup> A leading role was played by the small but dynamic Socialist German Student League (Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund: SDS). Founded in 1946 by Social Democrats, the SDS had refused to follow the SPD on its revisionist road to "Bad Godesberg" in 1959. Hence the SPD declared membership of the two organisations incompatible and encouraged loyal students to set up a more moderate Social Democratic College League (Sozialdemokratische Hochschulbund: SHB) in 1961. Left on its own, the SDS concentrated on the study and discussion of the socialist classics. While some branches stuck to traditional Marxist theory, others developed a neo-marxist perspective, inspired by the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse) or by New Left theorists such as C. Wright Mills. By 1964 the students were ready to leave their studies and put theory into action. The 'traditionalists' in the SDS sought the co-operation of leftist trade-unionists, still hoping to mobilize the West German working class against the monopolist bourgeoisie. The neo-marxists had given up on the working class and began to look for revolutionary agents in the Third World or among marginal groups like unemployed youth or students and apprentices. For them the main enemy was not monopoly capital, but the authoritarian state and its tentacles in society. By 1966 the anti-authoritarian neo-marxists prevailed over the traditionalists within the SDS and the ApO.<sup>30</sup>

At least in the short run, the anti-authoritarian students seemed more effective (and creative) in mobilizing support for the ApO through spectacular actions in the streets and in universities. The tradition-

alists failed to woo the working class away from the SPD. Though most trade-unions opposed the Emergency Laws, they refused to engage in radical actions such as political strikes. Moreover, the traditionalists aroused latent anti-communist feelings again by expressing sympathy for the German Democratic Republic - and even for the intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968. In September 1968 the leaders of the traditionalist wing were expelled from the SDS, because of an incident at the World Youth Festival at Sofia in August. Early in 1969 they would set up the Association of Marxist Students (later called: Marxist Student League) "Spartacus".<sup>31</sup>

The SDS did not benefit from this purge. Its anti-authoritarian majority was breaking up into a bewildering variety of conflicting ideological factions, faculty cells and women's groups. In March 1970 the SDS dissolved itself officially at a chaotic congress in Frankfurt. The Extra-parliamentary Opposition disintegrated, too, mainly because it had failed its main objective: in May 1968 the Emergency Laws had passed parliament.<sup>32</sup>

Many old and new groups tried to pick up the pieces of the ApO. Maoist groups sprang up in most German universities, often led by former SDS leaders; some militant activists turned to anarchism or terrorism; moderates often joined the youth organisation of the SPD (JUSO). The Communists rushed to found a new party, the DKP (Deutsche Kommunistische Partei) in September 1968; and a new electoral alliance, the Action for Democratic Progress, in order to attract ApO supporters. The alliance received only .6% of the popular vote at the Bundestag elections of 1969. Many ApO supporters must have voted for the SPD, which won 43%. In a reaction against the Grand Coalition the SPD shifted a little to the left. In a coalition with the liberal FDP it carried out several reforms between 1969 and 1974. After 1974 the reformist zeal diminished. The former ApO activists began to turn away from the SPD. A new extra-parliamentary opposition emerged, now concerned more with environmental issues and nuclear disarmament. Civic action groups (Bürgerinitiativen) appeared in every German town. Around 1980 they began to take part in local and national elections, usually under the name 'Ecologist' or 'Green' (Grünen). In 1983 the Ecologist party Die Grünen won 5.5% at

the Bundestag elections; for the first time since 1949 a new party had managed to enter parliament. A new party system may be developing.<sup>33</sup> The Ecologist party eclipsed the DKP at national as well as regional elections; in 1983 the German Communist party received only .2% of the popular vote.

#### 4. The DKP from 1968 to 1984: ideology and strategy

The new German Communist party (DKP) could be considered the heir of both the old KPD and of the traditionalist wing of the Extra-parliamentary Opposition and the SDS in particular. The old KPD had by 1968 shrunk to a cadre of about 6000, mostly older industrial workers; the Extra-parliamentary Opposition could count on tenths of thousands of young intellectuals, students and some workers.<sup>34</sup> One might have expected ideological conflicts between the two groups within the party, but those seem to have been few and far between. Initially some young members objected to the party discipline.<sup>35</sup> There were also debates about the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.<sup>36</sup> On the whole, the leadership of the party was left firmly in the hands of former KPD cadres. At the first party congress at Essen in 1969 Kurt Bachmann was elected chairman: born in 1909, trained as a leather worker, he had joined the KPD in 1932, spent most of the war years in a concentration camp and many post-war years in East Germany. Vice-chairman became Herbert Mies, born in 1929, electro-technical worker, who joined the KPD in 1945 and who led the Free German Youth office until 1956, studied economics in Moscow and went to East Germany in 1959; in 1973 he would succeed Bachmann as chairman of the party.<sup>37</sup>

Loyalty to the Soviet Union and to leninist principles was asserted already at the press conference at Frankfurt in September 1968, when the founding committee announced the foundation of the party.<sup>38</sup> It was confirmed at the first party congress. Factory cells (Betriebsgruppen) were given high priority - especially after the disappointing experience with the elections of 1969. The spontaneous strike wave of September 1969 seemed to confirm the validity of marxist-leninist principles: the working class did still resist capitalism. Between 1969 and 1971 factory cells were established in about 400 (mostly industrial)

firms. They enjoyed the same rights within the party as local cells (Wohngebietsgruppen). In giving some priority to factory cells, the DKP revived a KPD tradition; but the KPD had still 1400 cells in 1956, whereas the DKP never managed more than 500. Quite likely their number has declined again to 400 or even 300 by 1984, owing to the economic recession and repressive measures of employers - as well as to the rigidity of the party leadership, who alienated some popular shop stewards at times.<sup>39</sup>

The organisational continuity between KPD and DKP seems as striking as the ideological continuity. The first DKP congress adopted a rather moderate Declaration of Principles, emphasizing the need for peace, democratic rights and education against the manipulation by monopoly capital. It calls for "unity of action" of all socialist and anti-monopolist forces. This seems different from the older KPD programme; but not from a new programme drafted by the illegal KPD in 1968.<sup>40</sup> Quite likely by 1968 the KPD cadre had discussed and accepted the theory of state monopoly capitalism, developed by theorists in Eastern Europe as well as in Western Communist parties in the 1960s. Thus the anti-monopolist Declaration of Principles of 1969 should not be interpreted as an ideological sop given to former supporters of the ApO!

At a second congress at Dusseldorf in 1971 the DKP elaborated its principles and strategy in a manifesto. State monopoly capitalism was defined as the integration of monopoly capital and state power. Through active intervention in the economy the state ensures monopoly capital a safe profit, at the expense of the working class, the farmers, the intelligentsia, artisans and shopkeepers, and even the small capitalists. All strata of the people are gradually "proletarianized" and made dependent on monopoly capital. Hence all strata should unite in a democratic struggle against the monopolies, to defend their social and democratic rights. The working class has to lead this anti-monopolist coalition, because it still constitutes the main productive force in society - it produces surplus value - as well as the best organized and most militant political force. To play a leading role, however, the working class should unite in action. Especially Social Democratic and

Communist workers should co-operate, in spite of the resistance from rightwing leaders of the Social Democratic party. The DKP does not claim leadership within the unity of action. But it does claim to represent the total interest (Gesamtinteresse) of the working class, in the present but also projected into the future; and to include the most progressive and most class conscious workers within its ranks, because it is based on the theory of Marx, Engels and Lenin and because it belongs to the world-wide Communist movement.<sup>41</sup>

Though the DKP still referred to the "growing importance of the socialist example of the GDR", it did not argue for reunification of Germany - unlike the KPD before 1968. It gave priority to peaceful co-existence and mutual recognition between the two German states.<sup>42</sup>

The anti-monopolist coalition strategy did not help the DKP to improve its electoral performance. At the federal elections of 1972 it received only .3% of the popular vote. However, it had waged only a half-hearted campaign, in order not to prevent the SPD from beating the CDU/CSU - which it did not: the SPD won 5 more seats than its rival. Yet in 1976, the DKP campaigned more actively without increasing its share of the electorate. At state elections it did not do any better. In the early 1970s it won about 3% in Saarland and Bremen, 2% in Hamburg and 1% in Hesse and North Rhine/Westphalia; by 1976 it got 2% in Bremen and Hamburg, 1% in Hesse and Saarland, .5% in North Rhine/Westphalia.<sup>43</sup>

At a congress at Mannheim in 1978 the party adopted a new platform, yet without changing its strategy. In view of the economic recession and the growing reactionary tendencies in West German society it called for a turn (Wende) towards social<sup>and</sup> democratic progress. For this purpose it invited not only Social Democratic workers, but even their (rightwing) leaders to unite in action with the Communists. In alliance with other democratic forces the workers could reduce the power of the monopolist financial oligarchy which controlled the state. By expanding the freedom and democratic rights of the people, they will lead the way to socialism. The decisive role of the Communist party is stated clearly:

"The working class can fulfil its leading role in conquering the power of the monopolies and in realizing socia-

lism the more effectively, the more the revolutionary party succeeds in exercising decisive political influence." <sup>44</sup>

Of course, this revolutionary party is the Communist party. But the DKP recognized the need for a variety of parties and tendencies, even in a socialist society. More explicitly than before it expected a coalition government to lead the transition to socialism. It also defined socialism more explicitly in the 1978 platform. Major monopolies would be nationalized. Production would be planned and controlled democratically; workers should take part in the decision-making process. The state apparatus of army, police, judiciary, administration and mass media should become more democratic and free from neo-nazi and militarist elements. <sup>45</sup>

The example of the German Democratic Republic received less attention in the platform of 1978. Even so it did not show any eurocommunist tendency: it still acknowledged the inspiration from "real socialism" and stressed the close fraternal relations with SED and CPSU. Eurocommunism was discussed only indirectly. In 1977 chairman Mies had condemned it as a ploy of the bourgeoisie to divide the Communist movement. The DKP continued to reject "any attempt to revise the doctrine of Marx, Engels and Lenin", he warned. <sup>46</sup> In a similar dogmatic vein the party criticized "critical solidarity" with the Soviet Union: only "principled solidarity" seemed acceptable. <sup>47</sup> Hence it did not express any sympathy for critics of "real socialism" such as Biermann and Bahro, who were exiled from the German Democratic Republic in the late 1970s. The DKP disapproved also of the Solidarity movement in Poland, because it opposed "real socialism" and in particular the centralisation of the means of production in the hands of the state. <sup>48</sup>

The party lent active support to most civic actions against pollution, nuclear power and nuclear arms. It did not welcome the Ecological parties that emerged around 1980, because these might split the Ecological Movement and hence serve the interest of monopoly capital - as well as draw (protest) voters away from the DKP, of course. The DKP also disagreed with the dogmatic rejection of nuclear energy by the Ecologists and criticized their naive analysis of society. <sup>49</sup> Nevertheless the Communists declared their willingness to co-operate with the Eco-

logists, at a DKP congress in 1981. Co-operation could involve not only common actions against nuclear arms and other issues, but even electoral alliances. Common actions were not unusual; for example, the Communists were very active in the peace movement against new nuclear missiles, side by side with the Ecologists.<sup>50</sup> According to some observers, they were the driving force behind the Krefeld Appeal, a mass petition against the Pershings II and cruise missiles.<sup>51</sup> The party congress of 1984 confirmed the co-operative approach of the DKP. It expressed its sympathy for the peace movement and for the trade-union campaign for a reduction in working hours. It regretted the anti-trade-unionist attitude of some Ecologists.<sup>52</sup> A few electoral alliances came into being, for example in Bremen in 1983 and in North Rhine/Westphalia in 1985.<sup>53</sup>

At local elections the DKP improved its performance. By 1984 it could claim 100 seats in municipal and county councils; in 1974 only 40.<sup>54</sup>

At state elections and federal elections its share of the popular vote continued to fall, however. At the Bundestag elections of 1983 it received only .2%. Yet the youth festivals and Unsere Zeit (the party daily) festivals attracted crowds of 200 or 400,000 people. Moreover, the organisation continued to grow.

##### 5. The Organisation of the Party: Leaders and Members

Though the term 'democratic centralism' has been avoided by West German Communists after 1956, it could still apply to the organisation of the DKP. In 1969 the party adopted a constitution, which has not been changed drastically since then. It specifies the rights and duties of party members in the leninist tradition: the right to criticize leaders and other members, the duty to take part in a primary party group (factory cell or local cell) and to represent the party in social life, to carry out decisions taken by the party and to assess one's own activities critically.<sup>55</sup>

Preferably a new member should join a factory cell (Betriebsgruppe) rather than a local cell (Wohngebietsgruppe). Yet by 1980 there were about 1000 local cells and at most 500, but more likely 300 factory cells. Besides, college groups (Hochschulgruppen) had been set up at

about 80 colleges and universities in the Federal Republic.<sup>56</sup> Both factory cells and local cells can direct proposals to the party congress. Actually most proposals seem to come from the next higher echelon, however, the local organisation at the level of village or urban district (Orts- or Stadtteilorganisation).<sup>57</sup> These local organisations are joined together in county organisations (Kreisorganisation). Against the will of the party leadership the first party congress decided in 1969 to give these county organisations the right to elect delegates to the national party congress. In 1973 the leaders had their way, however; congress delegates were to be elected by the 12 district organisations (Bezirks- or Landesorganisation) which correspond roughly with the 11 states (Länder) of the Federal Republic.<sup>58</sup> The decisions of a party congress bind all party members. The congress elects the national executive committee (Vorstand) of 91 members, which in turn elects a presidium of 17 members. At any organisational level, executive committees are responsible to the membership, but their decisions bind all lower echelons.

Factions or tendencies are not allowed. The DKP claims to be a "community of like-minded people" which does not tolerate "destructive or harmful criticism" from any member.<sup>59</sup> Outsiders have reported a few incidents which indicate at least fragmented opposition in certain areas. For instance an active local organisation in Hesse opposed the Dusseldorf Manifesto of 1971; in 1973 it broke away from the party and existed for a while as an independent League of German Communists (Bund Deutscher Kommunisten).<sup>60</sup>

Leaders are usually elected unanimously, without alternative candidates, "because of complete agreement between party leaders and members in all political questions."<sup>61</sup> The DKP is proud of the working class background of its leaders, which contrasts with the middle class background of the SPD leaders. Yet the DKP leaders have come a long way; as Heimann points out, they have often been party officials since the 1950s.<sup>62</sup>

Most congress delegates seem to share the working class background of their leaders. Of the 994 delegates at the first congress in 1969 763 (i.e. 77%) claimed to be blue or white collar workers ("Arbeiter"



or "Angestellte"); so did 578 of the 778 delegates (74%) at the seventh party congress in 1984.<sup>63</sup> Students, artists, scientists and other members of the intelligentsia made up only a minority of 10-20%, while farmers, shopkeepers and businessmen were hardly represented at all. Most rank-and-file members seem to be blue or white collar workers as well, though students and academics figure prominently in certain university towns such as Marburg. Yet quite a few artists and other intellectuals may have left the party because of ideological disagreement.<sup>64</sup>

Membership rose rapidly in the early 1970s: from 22,000 in 1969 to 39,000 in 1973 and 46,500 in 1978. Between 1978 and 1984 it increased more slowly to 50,000.<sup>65</sup> While its electorate shrunk to 66,000 voters, the DKP has reached an unusually high membership ratio of 75%. Though one should be wary of speculative interpretations of this fact, it may indicate at least that repressive measures such as the ban on Communist public servants (Berufsverbote) failed to stop the growth of membership; it seems unlikely that such measures intimidate voters, as the ballot is secret. Thus one would have expected a declining or stagnating membership and a growing electorate in this case, but the opposite has occurred. The most plausible interpretation seems to me that the DKP has become totally isolated in West German society. It can rely only on the support of a loyal core of workers and intellectuals in certain areas, who are willing to vote and work for the party. It seems a close-knit community, united by a 'Diaspora-spirit' as a result of the anti-communist feelings of most West Germans.<sup>65</sup>

For a fairly small party, the DKP seems to spend a large amount of money. It may receive large donations from dedicated members - or from its brothers in East Germany. In 1983 the party claimed to have received 16 million DM, of which 6 million were membership fees and 10 million donations and profit from sales of publications, festivals etc. According to Heimann, many donations came from companies engaged in trade between East and West Germany - in other words, indirectly from the German Democratic Republic.<sup>66</sup> Other sources, close to West German or US intelligence, mention donations from East Germany in the order of 30, 50 or even 100 million DM.<sup>67</sup> Apart from donations in

cash, the East German regime also provides benefits like cadre training courses, children holiday camps or Marxist literature.

## 6. Relations with Other Organisations

Like most other Communist parties, the DKP can rely on a network of auxiliary and peripheral organisations, such as a Soviet friendship society, women's groups, cultural organisations, a children's group (Young Pioneers) and a publishing house. Most importance seem to have the Socialist German Workers' Youth and the Marxist Student League (Marxistische Studentenbund: MSB) "Spartacus". The former was founded in 1968, a few months before the DKP itself, and claimed 35,000 members in 1980. It has been very active in representing the interests of young workers and conscripted soldiers.<sup>68</sup> Both the Workers' Youth and the Marxist Student League have been more successful than the DKP in finding serious coalition partners. Thus the MSB co-operates closely with the Socialist College League SHB (Sozialistische Hochschulbund). In the 1970s the two won usually about 25% of the seats on students councils together; by 1980 about 15%.<sup>69</sup>

Ironically, the SHB had been founded as Social Democratic College League in 1961 by students who wanted to remain loyal to the SPD and broke for that purpose with the radical SDS. In the late 1960s the SHB had become radical, too, and co-operated with the SDS. In 1970 it split in two factions, one favouring an alliance with the Communists, the other preferring an even more radical 'anti-revisionist' line. The latter faction broke away in 1972. Though the SPD cut all ties with the SHB - and forced it to change its name from "Social Democratic" to "Socialist College League" - SHB members still play an active part in the youth organisation (JUSO) of the SPD.<sup>70</sup>

In spite of the mediation attempted by SHB members, co-operation between Communists and Social Democrats has remained incidental and exceptional in West Germany. The SPD has not mollified its negative attitude since the late 1940s; it still threatens to expel any members who co-operate with Communists.<sup>71</sup> The German Confederation of Trade Unions, dominated by Social Democrats, has become slightly more tolerant. Though refusing to co-operate with the DKP, the trade unions

tend to accept Communist members quietly. The Communists have been very careful not to oppose decisions taken by trade union leaders. Unlike the KPD before 1956 or most Maoist groups after 1970 the DKP does not advocate separate Communist lists at elections for works councils (Betriebsräte) but lends support to the official lists of the Confederation trade unions. Through these lists DKP members won about 600 out of 200,000 works council seats in the 1970s. Owing to their dedication and discipline they might have acquired some influence in certain unions, such as the Printers and Paper Workers (Druck und Papier), Teachers and Scientists (GEW), Trade Banking and Insurance (HBV) and Steel Workers. The real extent of their influence seems a controversial issue among (non-Communist) West German scholars.<sup>72</sup> Throughout the 1970s the DKP had to compete with Maoist groups for the support of industrial workers. Whereas some Maoist groups set up their own 'Red Trade Unions' - as the KPD had done between 1929 and 1933 - others infiltrated the unions of the Confederation in order to develop factions within them. When they were expelled by the unions, the Communists approved.<sup>73</sup>

Though both the DKP and the Maoist groups referred to the doctrine of Marx, Engels and Lenin, they disagreed strongly about the strategic implications of the theory and about the different forms of application. Whereas the DKP defended the Soviet Union and the GDR, the Maoists denounced these countries as "social imperialist" if not "social fascist powers" more dangerous to socialism than NATO and US imperialism. The Maoists identified "real socialism" with Albania and China - at least until Mao's death. Around 1980 Maoism disintegrated; some Maoists joined the Ecological parties, others tried to steer an independent course or to stick to Albania.<sup>74</sup> The DKP tried to ignore the Maoists at first, then to isolate and discredit them. It attributed their presence to the absence of a strong and legal Communist party in the 1960s and to the prevailing anti-soviet feelings in West Germany.<sup>75</sup>

In the 1970s the DKP also combated New Left groups of anarchist or independent socialist persuasion. Since 1981 it seems willing to cooperate with at least Left Socialists and Ecologists; especially within the peace movement and the anti-nuclear power movement, but also with

squatters and gay liberation groups.<sup>76</sup> While it admits to not being a mass party yet, it conceives of itself as an "organizing and guiding force for the whole left", because of its unified organisation and its understanding of the struggle between imperialism and socialism in the world.<sup>77</sup> In other words, whilst the DKP seeks allies everywhere in West Germany, it relies most of all on its superally abroad - the Soviet Union. This alliance detracts from domestic alliances, however, when the DKP opposes nuclear power or nuclear missiles in West Germany but not in East Germany or Russia.<sup>78</sup> Hence few Ecologists show an interest in the DKP.

Heimann may be right in concluding that the weak position of the DKP inside West Germany makes it a very safe partner for both the USSR and the GDR.<sup>79</sup>

## 7. Conclusion

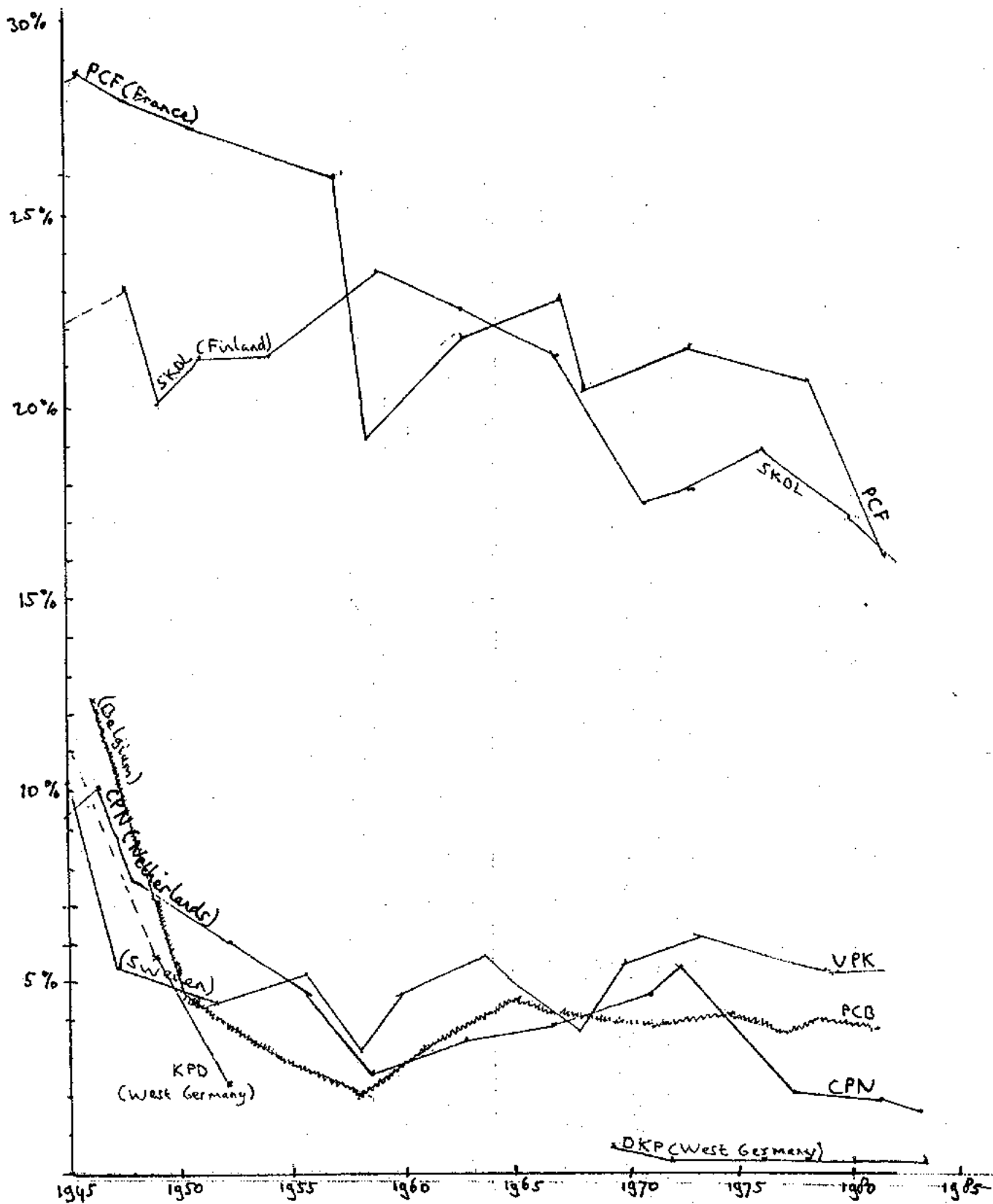
The German Communist Party (DKP) could claim the heritage of both the large KPD of 1918-1956 and of the Extra-parliamentary Opposition (ApO) of the 1960s. Yet it failed to turn either heritage into productive use. On the one hand, the working class base of the KPD had shifted to the SPD and did not come back to the DKP - the workers apparently wanted 'unity of action', as the DKP advocated, but without Communists! Whatever the SPD leaders did to alienate the working class, it was not enough to make it vote for the DKP. On the other hand, the new middle class of scientists, students, artists, teachers and the like which had supported the ApO in the late 1960s did not turn to the DKP but (in the late 1970s and early 1980s) to the Ecologist party.

In both cases the identification of the DKP with the GDR and the USSR may have tarnished its image. In the 1920s and 1930s the KPD also identified with the Soviet Union, but could still picture it as a distant paradise. During World War II the Soviet Union came too close, however, to appear in such a light. The real heir of the KPD became the SED, the ruling party of the East German Democratic Republic. Though it may have tried to help its nephews in the West German KPD and DKP, it did not do them a favour by suppressing the workers' rebellion of June 1953, by building the Berlin wall and exiling or imprisoning dissidents

like Bahro, Biermann, Harich and Havemann.

It seems likely that the DKP will maintain its ties with the East German rulers. Perhaps it could have severed them in 1968, but not now. If it turned to eurocommunism in the 1980s, it would probably gain very little in terms of votes or influence, given the competition with the Ecologists; but it would lose its main source of legitimation and moral support - possibly also financial support. Hence it will remain a more or less marginal but orthodox marxist-leninist party, in my opinion. As the Federal Republic has defined its identity in anti-communist terms, it may never tolerate a significant Communist party that identifies with the Enemy behind the Wall. But it can tolerate quite easily a small red-herring trying to swim against the stream. Thus many factors contribute to the Communist party's resistance to change: the anti-communist tradition of the Federal Republic and the isolation of the party, its political culture - the 'Diaspora spirit' - and its close-knit organisation, its leadership oriented towards the GDR and the USSR; and even its ideology, which justifies coalitions with all kinds of groups provided they are "guided" by the DKP in the long run.

Figure 1 Electoral trends of Communist parties 1945-1984



## Notes

1. The distinction between government party and counter-community has been developed by: R. Tiersky, French Communism, 1970-1972 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974) 269f.
2. These schematic statements are based on: R. N. Tannahill, The Communist Parties of Western Europe (London: Greenwood Press, 1978); W. Leonhard, Eurokommunismus: Herausforderung für Ost und West (Munich: Goldmann Verlag, 1980); R. F. Staar (ed), Yearbook on International Communist Affairs 1984 (Stanford Cal.: Hoover Institution Press, 1984); D. Childs (ed), The Changing Face of Western Communism (London: Croom Helm, 1980).
3. Ossip K. Flechtheim, Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1969<sup>2</sup>) 120-129 especially
4. Helmut Trotnow, Karl Liebknecht, eine politische Biographie (Munich: DTV, 1982) 249-292
5. Hans M. Bock, Geschichte des 'Linken Radikalismus' in Deutschland (Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, 1976) 74-152; see also Flechtheim, op. cit. 143-146
6. Flechtheim, op. cit. 133-143; see also Hugo Eberlein, "Spartakus und die Dritte Internationale", in: Hermann Weber (ed), Völker hört die Signale: der deutsche Kommunismus 1916-1966 (Munich: DTV, 1967) 75-78
7. Flechtheim, op. cit. 152-190
8. Hermann Weber, Die Wandlung des deutschen Kommunismus (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1969) I, 54-62, 85-97, 232-238
9. Flechtheim, op. cit. 256-263
10. Ibid. 263-288; see also the documents in Völker hört die Signale, 61-63, 68-71, 106-110, 119-130; Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung, 5 (Berlin: Dietz, 1966) 436
11. Völker hört die Signale, 166-183, 212-214
12. Ibid. 293-295
13. Hans Kluth, Die KPD in der Bundesrepublik 1945-1956 (Cologne/Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1959) 17-28
14. Ibid. 33-34; see also Ossip Flechtheim (ed), Dokumente zur parteipolitischen Entwicklung in Deutschland seit 1945, VII (Berlin: Wiedler, 1969) 511

15. My translation of the German text: "Wenn die Bevölkerung Westdeutschlands leben will, muss sie das Adenauer-Regime stürzen...Nur der unversöhnliche und revolutionäre Kampf aller deutschen Patrioten kann und wird zum Sturz des Adenauer-Regimes und damit zur Beseitigung der entscheidenden Stütze der Herrschaft der amerikanischen Imperialisten in Westdeutschland führen." in: Völker hört die Signale, 301; see also Kluth, op. cit. 36-49
16. Das Verbot der KPD. KPD Prozess Dokumentarwerk (Karlsruhe: Müller, 1956); see also Kluth, op. cit. 113-117
17. Kluth, op. cit. 36, 129
18. Alexander von Brünneck, Politische Justiz gegen Kommunisten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1968 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978) 110-112, 278 etc.
19. Ibid. 334-350; see also Christian Bockemühl, "25 Jahre nach dem KPD-Verbot: Historische und aktuelle Ueberlegungen", Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 1981: 46, 3-12
20. Otto Schönfeldt, "KPD-Verbot - ein fortwirkendes Uebel", in: Max Schäfer (ed), Die DKP: Gründung, Entwicklung, Bedeutung (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Marxistische Blätter, 1978) 111-144; see also: Richard Loss, "The Communist Party of Germany (KPD) 1956-1968", Survey, (1973) 19:4, 66-85
21. See Vincent McHale, "Greece", in: Vincent McHale/Sharon Skowronski (eds), Political Parties of Europe (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983) 328-363; at the last elections before World War II the Greek Communist party had won 15 out of 300 seats in parliament, whereas the United Democratic Left in which it participated after 1951 won 18 (out of 300) seats in 1956, 24 in 1961 and 28 in 1963; whereas the German Peace Union in which the German Communists participated received merely 1.9% of the vote in 1961 and 1.3% in 1965
22. Völker hört die Signale, 272-273; Von Brünneck, op.cit. 43-44
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26. Ernst Richert, Die radikale Linke von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart (Berlin: Colloquium, 1969) 38, 49, 89, 92
27. Bodo Zeuner, "Das Parteiensystem in der Grossen Koalition (1966-1969)" in: D. Staritz (ed), Das Parteiensystem der Bundesrepublik (Opladen: Leske/UTB, 1976) 174-193; see also Smith, op. cit. 112-116
28. Richert, op.cit. 105f.; see also K. Shell, "Extraparliamentary Opposition in Postwar Germany", Comparative Politics (1970) 2:4, 653-680
29. A.P.M. Lucardie, The New Left in The Netherlands (1960-1977) (Ph.D. Thesis, Queen's University, 1980) 189-235
30. Tilman Fichter/ Siegward Lönnendonker, Kleine Geschichte des SDS (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1977); see also Bock, op. cit. 189-223
31. Bock, op. cit. 220-221; Fichter/Lönnendonker, op. cit. 129-135, 157-158; cf Johannes Henrich von Heiseler, "SDS und Organisationstheorie", in: Die DKP, 145-156
32. Fichter/Lönnendonker, op. cit. 140-143; see also Frank Wolff/ Eberhard Windaus (eds), Studentenbewegung 1967-1969 (Frankfurt am Main: Roter Stern, 1977) 171-232
33. Roland Roth, "Notizen zur politischen Geschichte der Bürgerinitiativen in der Bundesrepublik", in: Parlamentarisches Ritual und politische Alternativen (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1980) 74-96; see also: Wolfgang Rudzio, Das politische System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Opladen: Leske/Budrich UTB, 1983) 121-123, 133-134
34. Ulrich Probst, The Communist Parties in the Federal Republic of Germany (Frankfurt am Main: Haag/Herchen, 1981) 20; but his statement "Undoubtedly the student university groups of the GCP form the backbone of the party" (22) seems somewhat exaggerated; cf Kurt Bachmann, "Die Konstituierung der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei", in: Die DKP, 167-192, especially 179, 191
35. Kurt Fritsch, "Die DKP - eine Gemeinschaft von Gleichgesinnten", in: Die DKP, 265-283, especially 269
36. Flechtheim, Dokumente VII, 575-578; see also: Dietrich Staritz, "Der 'Eurokommunismus' und die DKP", in: Die Linke im Rechtsstaat 2 (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1979) 133-154 especially 142

37. Siegfried Heimann, "Die Deutsche Kommunistische Partei", in: Richard Stöss (ed), Parteienhandbuch, I (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1983) 901-981; see also Die DKP, 324-327
38. "Erklärung zur Neukonstituierung einer kommunistischen Partei vom 25.9.1968", in: Die DKP, 284-291
39. Ulf Wolter, "Dissens in der DKP", Kritik, (1978) 6:18, 4-46; Heimann, op. cit. 935; H.J. Horchem, "Infiltration von Betrieben und Gewerkschaften durch Kommunisten", Beiträge zur Konfliktforschung, (1980) 3, 87-101; Rolf Ebbighausen/ Peter Kirchhoff, "Zur Betriebsgruppenstrategie der DKP", Politische Vierteljahresschrift, (1972) 13:1, 106-129
40. "Grundsatzerklärung der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei, beschlossen auf dem Essener Parteitag vom 12./13. April 1969", in: Flechthelm, Dokumente IX, 209-219; "Entwurf: Programm der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands", ibid. VII, 523-558
41. Protokoll des Düsseldorfer Parteitages der DKP (Hamburg: Blinkfuer, 1971) 305-349; see also: Rolf Ebbighausen/ Peter Kirchhoff, "Die DKP im Parteiensystem der Bundesrepublik", in: J. Dittberner/ R. Ebbighausen (eds), Parteiensystem in der Legitimationskrise (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1973) 427-466
42. Protokoll, 321-322, 325-326, 334-336
43. Helmut Birstein et al., Organisierter Kommunismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Opladen: Leske/Budrich, 1977) 18
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45. Ibid. 66-67
46. Herbert Mies, "Die deutsche Bourgeoisie und der 'Eurokommunismus'", Unsere Zeit, February 2, 1977; for a reaction see: Ilse Spittmann, "Die DKP und der Eurokommunismus", Deutschland Archiv, (1977) 10:4, 346-347; see also Staritz, op. cit. 138-139
47. K. H. Schröder, "Das internationalistische Antlitz der DKP", in: Die DKP, 247-264

48. W. Gerns, "Polen und die Forderung nach Selbstverwaltung der Betriebe", Marxistische Blätter, (1981) 19:6, 86-91
49. W. Gerns, "Grüne und bunte Listen. Schaden für die Umweltschutzbewegung?", Marxistische Blätter, (1979) 17:1, 26-35
50. Jan Wienecke, "Nach dem 6. Parteitag der DKP", Marxistische Blätter, (1981) 19:4, 86-91; Unsere Zeit, June 1, 1981; cf. Heimann, op. cit. 914
51. Eric Waldman, "The DKP", in: Richard F. Staar (ed), Yearbook on International Communist Affairs (Stanford Cal.: Hoover Institution Press, 1984) 470-477
52. Unsere Zeit, January 7, 1984
53. Unsere Zeit, February 5, 1985
54. Bilstein et al., 19; Unsere Zeit, January 7, 1984
55. Flechtheim, Dokumente IX, 220
56. René Ahlberg, "Differenzen und Konflikte zwischen den kommunistischen Parteien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland", Beiträge zur Konfliktforschung, (1979) 3, 67-83
57. Gerd Walter, Theoretischer Anspruch und politische Praxis der DKP. Eine Analyse am Beispiel der Betriebsarbeit (Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain, 1973) 17
58. Flechtheim, Dokumente IX, 221; see also Fritsch, op. cit. 269-270; two states, Bavaria and North Rhine/Westphalia, are divided into two districts (Bezirke) each; the DKP has no members in West Berlin, which has its own Communist party, the SEW (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Westberlins: Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin)
59. Fritsch, op. cit. 280
60. Heimann, op. cit. 953-955; Staritz, op. cit. 148-149
61. Unsere Zeit, January 10, 1984; but cf. Wolter, op. cit. 8-13
62. Heimann, op. cit. 973; see also above, 12
63. Unfortunately guest delegates were included in this number; Unsere Zeit, April 17, 1969, cited by Walter, op. cit. 26; Jan Wienecke, "Die DKP: Partei des Friedens, der Arbeit und des Sozialismus", Marxistische Blätter, (1984) 22:2, 89-93
64. W. Mensing, "Zur Kulturpolitik der DKP", Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, (1983) 10, 37-46; Staritz, op. cit. 151-152
- 65<sup>a</sup>. Rudzio, op. cit. 156; Unsere Zeit, January 7, 1984
65. Staritz, op. cit. 146

66. Heimann, op. cit. 966
67. Waldman, op. cit.
68. Heimann, op. cit. 969-970; Bilstein et al., op. cit. 41-50; H.J. Rautenberg, "Soldateninitiativen der siebziger Jahre", Beiträge zur Konfliktforschung, (1980), 1, 71-96
69. Horst Mewes, "The German New Left", New German Critique, (1973) 1:1, 24; Ossip Flechtheim et al., Der Marsch der DKP durch die Institutionen (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1980) 270; students began to switch to Ecological groups and 'Alternative Left' groups by 1980
70. Gerd Langguth, Die Protestbewegung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1968-1976 (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1976) 309-316
71. Heimann, op. cit. 938
72. Ossip Flechtheim et al., op. cit. 23-43; cf Heimann, op. cit. 937; Horchem, op. cit. 87-101; Walter, op. cit. 27
73. Horchem, op. cit.; Langguth, op. cit. 85-87
74. Langguth, op. cit. 102-211; Ahlberg, op. cit.; Waldman, op. cit.; Bilstein et al., op. cit. 75-114.
75. Fritsch, op. cit. 269; Protokoll, 354-355
76. Jan Wienecke, "Nach dem 6. Parteitag der DKP", Marxistische Blätter, (1981) 19:4, 86-91; Unsere Zeit, January 11, 1984
77. Rainer Eckert, "Die Linkskräfte in der Bundesrepublik", Marxistische Blätter, (1983) 21:5, 74-81, especially 79:.."objektiv die Funktion einer orientierende und organisierende Kraft für die gesamte Linke"
78. W. Gerns, "Grüne und bunte Listen", Marxistische Blätter, (1979) 17:1, 26-35; presumably nuclear power is only unsafe in capitalist societies, where profit motives prevent sufficient safety precautions
79. Heimann, op. cit. 980; in a similar vein Staritz, op. cit. 151

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"SOCIALISING THE NATIONAL QUESTION":

THE DILEMMAS OF IRISH COMMUNISM

Paper for 'Inside Communist Parties

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I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following people in the writing of this paper. By agreeing to be interviewed they made the task much easier.

Mr Sean Garland General Secretary of the Workers' Party

Mr George Jeffares, Former member of the National Executive of the CPI

Mr Michael O'Riordan, Former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland.

In 1983, the Communist Party of Ireland celebrated its 50th Anniversary. This chosen date for celebration was rather misleading; 1933 saw the re-creation of the Party founded in October 1921 and dissolved into the Irish Workers League in 1923. The Party founded in 1933 was in turn transformed in 1941 with the section of the CPI in Northern Ireland becoming the Communist Party of Ireland and the Party in the Irish Free State being temporarily dissolved, regrouping in 1948 as the Irish Workers League, (subsequently the Irish Workers Party). In 1970 these two organisations reunited to form the Communist Party of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Throughout these dissolutions and regroupings a certain continuity of organisation has been maintained and the contemporary CPI can legitimately claim descent from the party formed in 1921 by the son of James Connolly, and even with James Connolly's own Socialist Party of Ireland (formed in 1909). James Connolly's legacy to modern Irish Communists is more than purely organisational; the most significant Irish marxist of his generation and subsequently, he provided the framework of a Marxist analysis of Ireland within which many modern Irish Marxists work.

Despite this continuity of organisation and despite the best efforts of Communists from 1921 to the present, Communism in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic has remained, for the most part, a weak and rather marginal force. It is beyond doubt that this weakness has been a product of the remarkably conservative political attitudes which have prevailed until relatively recently in both states. This conservatism has often taken the form of overt anti-Communism. In the Irish Republic, Catholic clergy have repeatedly denounced Communism and socialism and have alerted the populace on many occasions to the dangers of communism. "A survey of 2,300 Dubliners carried out in 1972 and 1973.... found that, of seventy 'stimulus categories', Communists were sixty ninth in order of popularity, ahead only of 'Drug Pushers' and below both wings of the IRA, 'Criminals' and 'Drug Addicts'." Of those surveyed "27.2 percent favoured their (Communists) expulsion from Ireland" while a majority were of the opinion that "Communism should be out-

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laved in Ireland."<sup>2</sup> This conservatism and anti-Communism has been a source of difficulties for other Marxist or socialist parties.

In assessing the weakness of Communism in the political history of Ireland, however, it may be useful to draw a distinction between those structural factors which have presented profound problems to the emergence of the left as a significant political force, and the characteristics of Irish Marxism which have perhaps exacerbated these problems. The Irish National Revolution (1918-21) which resulted in the creation of an independent Irish state (The Irish Free State) in the twenty six counties of Ireland displayed two characteristics which have influenced later developments. In the first place, the leading group in this revolution was a rural Catholic bourgeoisie which had emerged in the period after the Famine (1845-48). In the conflicts over land in the 1870s and 80s, this rural bourgeoisie had defeated the Anglo-Irish Protestant landlord class and forced the British state to institute land reforms which brought about peasant proprietorship in land before the political revolution for independence. As a result, the national revolution was socially and economically conservative.<sup>3</sup>

In the second place, Irish nationalists were unable either to persuade or to coerce the Protestant 'Unionist' population of the six northern counties of Ireland to participate in the creation of an independent state. The northern region, in particular the area round Belfast, had in the 19th Century undergone an industrial revolution. The working class in this region - and, therefore, the core of the working class in Ireland as a whole - was both Protestant and fiercely hostile to the predominantly rural, Southern and Catholic nationalist movement.<sup>4</sup> This Northern working class has remained a major problem for all those Marxists who have argued that it is essential to combine the struggles for socialism and national unity/independence in Ireland.

As is well known, the national revolution in Ireland resulted in 1921 in the partition of the country into two states: the Irish Free State (which



became the Republic of Ireland in 1949) and Northern Ireland, which remained an integral part of the United Kingdom. Since then, left-wing groups and parties have been operating within a context in which the dominant parties in both states - Fianna Fail in the Irish Republic and the Unionist Party in Northern Ireland - have gained the support of the working class in their respective states. This hegemony has been constructed by combining populist social and economic policies with nationalist and sectarian ideologies. In the Irish Free State/Republic from 1932 to 1958 a protectionist economic strategy was combined with social and cultural policies aimed at resisting "alien" influences and restoring "traditional" (ie Catholic) Irish values. The effects of these policies on the labour movement can be seen in the nationalist offensive against trades unions based in the United Kingdom which led to a split in the Irish Trades Union Congress in 1945. For fourteen years, there were two national trades unions organisations, one of which - the Congress of Irish Unions - propogated "an intense Catholic and anti-Socialist ideology."<sup>5</sup> The labour movement, for a significant period, had to adjust defensively to this offensive by stressing its nationalist, Catholic and anti-Communist sympathies. In Northern Ireland, the pre-existing divisions among the Catholic and Protestant working classes over the national question were made more profound by the exceptionally repressive nature of the Northern Ireland state created in 1920. The Protestant working class could be neutralised by the Northern Irish industrial bourgeoisie not so much by the "marginal privileges" so widely discussed by commentators on the left as by the threat that divisions within the Unionist camp would lead to the victory of Irish nationalism.

Clearly in this situation the prospects for communism were not encouraging. It has been argued, moreover, that the theoretical framework within which Irish Marxists have worked has been somewhat limited and has also been a cause of the weakness of Irish Marxism and Communism.<sup>6</sup> This framework was constructed by James Connolly (1870-1916) a leader of the

Easter Rising of 1916, executed for his part in the Rising and in many respects the most outstanding Irish Marxist. Connolly's analysis of Ireland was based on a synthesis of socialism and nationalism which included two major propositions. The national question, firstly, was in its essentials a social question because capitalism was a foreign (ie British) import into Ireland. Secondly, the Catholic bourgeoisie - hitherto the leading group in the Irish nationalist movement - would never effectively challenge British rule. Instead, the Irish working class would have to lead the national revolution against Britain. The crucial problem here was, of course, that a substantial section of the Irish working class - the Protestants in the north - were not willing to follow the course described by Connolly. This popular Unionism was never effectively understood by Connolly, who treated it as a problem which would be resolved after British withdrawal. In this approach was similar to that adopted by more traditional nationalists. The inadequacies of this approach became apparent when the Protestant population in the North successfully resisted all efforts to incorporate them in an independent Ireland.<sup>7</sup> The fundamentals of Connolly's approach have not been revised by his heirs however. Instead it has been argued that the Irish nationalist revolution was "incomplete" and that the victory of socialism would require the mobilisation of the masses in a fight for the unity and true independence of Ireland. One effect of this approach has been a tendency for the left in Ireland to become linked with more traditional and rather conservative nationalist movements. As we shall see the Communists in Ireland, while on some occasions seeming to offer a challenge to the Connolly theses have remained faithful to them.

In the years after the Second World War Communists in Ireland faced overwhelming difficulties. The Communist movement was in fact organised into two parties: the Communist Party of Northern Ireland and the Irish Workers League, established in 1948 in the Irish Free State. (The League became the Irish Workers Party in 1962). This division had come about because the Irish government remained neutral in the conflict. The Communist organisation in the Irish Free State was dissolved in 1941 and its members joined the Irish Labour Party to work for an end to Irish neutrality. In the North, the Communist Party from 1941 - like the Communist Party of Great Britain - "threw itself into the effort to mobilise the broadest possible campaign to help defeat Hitler."<sup>8</sup> The division of the Party, in effect, was a result of the difficulties involved in working within two states, with differing state structures, government policies, social structures and socio-economic problems. While the long-term goals of Communists North and South might be identical, the immediate priorities were rather different, a fact which the Communists recognised by their continuing the separate structures of the Parties until 1970. (The separation was not, of course, absolute, nor was the eventual unity total). The different situations facing the communists in Ireland's two states can be seen reflected in the relative strengths of the Parties. In 1945, the CPNI won a total of 12,456 votes in elections to the local Northern Irish parliament.<sup>9</sup> The Party had 1,000 members (although this war-time expansion was to be reversed in the late 1940s) and had begun to secure influence within the trade union movement. In the South there was a mere handful of Communists (their numbers had been depleted by losses in the Spanish Civil War) who faced not merely indifference but active and occasionally violent hostility and persecution. When Michael O'Riordan arrived in Dublin in 1947, to become a transport worker, a priest encouraged the organisation of a Catholic religious sodality within the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.<sup>10</sup> Marches were organised against the evils of Communism and in elections in 1951, the Archbishop of Dublin

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declared it a mortal sin to vote for O'Riordan.<sup>11</sup> The Standard, a Catholic newspaper, printed photographs of IWL members, their names and occupations and campaigned vigourously against the involvement of Communists in an unemployed workers organisation.<sup>12</sup> The zenith of this antagonism was reached in 1956 during the Hungarian crisis, when the IWL bookshop was attacked and destroyed and physical attacks were launched against IWL members and their homes.<sup>13</sup> The success of this hysterical anti-Communist aggression was guaranteed, to some extent by the high unemployment which meant that a considerable section of the labour movement was forced to emigrate, a factor in maintaining the conservative nature of Irish society and politics.<sup>14</sup>

The separate development of the two Communist movements can be seen reflected in the programmes adopted by the CPNI and the IWL in 1962. The years of separate organisation had resulted in a considerable change of emphasis on the resolution of the national question in Ireland. Without rejecting or criticising the "Connolly perspective" on the national question and socialism, Irish Communists had evolved a strategy which in some respects departed from Connolly's approach. It is important, nonetheless, not to neglect the continued importance of the national question. In November 1960, Communists from both Parties attended the World Congress of Communists and Workers Parties in Moscow, where Sean Murray spoke on behalf of both Parties. He stressed the extent to which imperialism continued to dominate Ireland and placed great emphasis on partition as a means by which this domination was maintained:

"The partition of our country is the means by which British Imperialism dominates our country and retards its economic development. It is British Imperialism's way of preventing the full national, democratic aims of the Irish people being achieved. .... our Parties are directing their efforts to mobilise the Irish workers and toilers generally to break the power of imperialism in all its forms in Ireland and to achieve full national liberation, democracy and socialism."<sup>15</sup>

The departure from the Connolly approach lay not in the definition of the goals but in the discussion of the ways in which they could be attained. The 1962 programmes outlined separate strategies for the Communists in both states.

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The fight against "monopoly capitalism" would be common to both and would involve the construction of progressive anti-monopoly alliances in both states. In the Irish Republic, the most important priority was to oppose those sections of the bourgeoisie who intended to drop the policy of protectionism and open the doors of the country to international capitalism. Communists were to take the lead in constructing an anti-monopoly alliance composed of the working class and small farmers, shop-keepers, small businessmen, professionals and intellectuals to defend national economic independence and resist any efforts to draw Ireland into the anti-Soviet camp. The progressive alliance was directed towards the election of a progressive government which would not only safeguard independence but through state investment and nationalisation begin the process of transition to socialism in the Republic.<sup>16</sup> This strategy is remarkably similar to the Communist Party of Britain's "British Road to Socialism." It may be concluded that developments within the International Communist movement were influential on Irish Communism.

In Northern Ireland, it was accepted, the Communists had different priorities. There the economy was already subject to imperialist domination and the task of electing a progressive government was likely to be much more difficult because of the anti-democratic and sectarian policies pursued by the Unionist Party. There, the working class would have to construct an alliance for democracy, which would both overcome the sectarian divisions and provide the basis for progressive economic policies which would lead to greater autonomy of the Northern Irish economy.<sup>17</sup> In both states, Communists campaigned against EEC membership. The unity of Ireland would be effected as a result of the policies of the progressive governments and the creation of a Socialist Republic would be assured. While these programmes may in retrospect arouse astonishment at their calm optimism they are interesting in what they reveal about Irish Communism. The programme for the North, especially, represents a clear acceptance of the social and political obstacles to Irish unity and to a socialism which would insist on placing the

ending of Partition high on the agenda. The conclusion might be drawn that there was scope for far-reaching change within Northern Ireland but only if Irish unity were not insisted upon. It may be going too far to suggest that the CPNI or the IWL could have gone beyond this practical revision of the Connolly thesis. In any event, the political developments in Ireland were to prove influential in restraining them from going further.

During the 1960s the Communist Party of Northern Ireland did embark upon a campaign against the repressive laws and the sectarian policies of Northern Ireland's Unionist governments. Using its influential position in the trades union movement, the CPNI set about the creation of a movement for civil liberties. The approach adopted was a cautious one; the Communists wanted to ensure that the movement did not become an exclusively Catholic one. It was also important that Protestant and Catholic workers should be in the forefront of a campaign to remove social and legal discrimination against Catholics.<sup>18</sup> In initiating such a campaign the CPNI appeared to have certain advantages. Although weak in numbers - there were not more than 300 members, mainly in the Belfast area - their influence within the trade union movement was greater than their numbers would suggest. Interestingly, the CPNI drew its support overwhelmingly from the Protestant working class and could, therefore, expect to recruit a section of the Protestant labour movement to support their reform programme. There was no question at this stage of mounting a mass movement of protest against discriminatory or repressive legislation, but it is hard to accept Milotte's verdict that CPNI members were timid in their pursuit of reforms within Northern Ireland. In the case of repressive legislation, for example, the CPNI seemed prepared to risk offending Protestant trade unionists when, in 1963, they proposed in the Belfast Trades Council, a resolution in favour of amnesty for all Republican prisoners held in Northern Ireland prisons. This proposal - which was, in fact, accepted - was necessary because a number of Republicans had been sentenced or interned in the wake of a guerrilla

campaign against the institutions of Northern Ireland which had been waged between 1956 and 1962. Needless to say, this campaign had aroused great hostility among the Protestant population and had, indeed, been condemned by both the Communist Party of Northern Ireland and the Irish Workers League. Again, Milotte accuses the CPNI of focussing on electoral malpractices and the discriminatory voting procedures in local government elections, rather than discrimination in employment which might have been seen as a threat to the job security of the Protestant workers who supported the CPNI. In fact, the CPNI newspaper Unity consistently published articles revealing and condemning discrimination in employment; likewise, they attempted to expose and isolate public figures or groups which promoted sectarian ideas or policies.<sup>19</sup> Public support was given to a proposal by the Northern Ireland Labour Party in the Northern Ireland Parliament to outlaw discrimination on groups of colour, race or religion. In May 1965, CPNI members were behind the organisation of a Trades Council Conference on Civil Liberties which expressed support for a broad programme of reforms.

Milotte's most telling criticism, perhaps, is his complaint that these policies were never translated into action; they remained merely written or spoken words.<sup>20</sup> The activities envisaged to promote these policies - lobbying MPs, setting up a trades union based 'action council' - he considers to have been too feeble; he also points out that few, if any, of these proposed activities were ever carried out. In some cases this was not the fault of the CPNI - the 'action council' floundered because of lack of support from the Northern Ireland Labour Party, for example - but it has to be conceded that progress towards mobilising support for a campaign against discrimination was slow indeed. It was not until 1967 that an organisation committed to campaigning for 'Civil Rights' was created. This body, known as the 'Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association', was composed of liberals, socialists, trades unionist, Communists and Republicans. The Civil Rights Association was viewed by the Communists as primarily an opinion-changing

pressure group rather than a mass movement. Communist members were unhappy with the change of pace in the Civil Rights movement which became apparent in the early summer of 1968. They felt that street demonstrations were quite the wrong way to approach the problem; that they could be seen as in some ways provocative.<sup>21</sup> Whatever the merits of this position, by the autumn of 1968 the CPNI found little support for it. While they remained influential within the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, the latter body had less control over the broader movement for civil rights.

The prospects for a gradual reform of the Northern Irish social and political structure may have seemed favourable to the CPNI in 1967. Communists had maintained their positions within the trades union movement in spite of their anti-stakhanovian policies. In 1966, for instance, the CPNI participated in celebrations to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter rising: in June of that year, CPNI vice-chairman Jimmy Graham was elected Belfast secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. His opponent was a right-wing Loyalist. Support for the Northern Ireland Labour Party had increased in the early 1960s although not without setbacks. There appeared also to be some prospect of divisions emerging within the Unionist Party, whose monolithic unity had allowed it to govern unchallenged in Northern Ireland from 1921. The Catholic population, which had reacted with hostility or indifference to the Irish Republican Army's campaign of 1956-62, also showed some signs of internal divisions which gave rise to hopes that class politics might be emerging within it. The Nationalist Party, which had been the principal representative of the Catholic community from 1921, was being challenged by more radical contenders. The Nationalist Party went so far as to give up their final symbol of resistance to the Northern Ireland state when they accepted the status of 'Official opposition' Party. One interesting development within the Catholic sector of politics, which was welcomed and encouraged by the CPNI and the Irish Workers Party, was taking place within the IRA and its political wing, Sinn Fein. The failure of the



1956-62 military campaign to arouse any support among the Northern Catholic community lead to a radical reappraisal of Republican strategy. Militarism was seen as futile; social and political campaigning became emphasised; Republicans began to read Marx and Lenin. In the long term this process was to have effects on the Irish Communists which were not entirely welcome. In the short-term, the Republicans in the North gave their support to the Civil Rights Association. They provided, to some extent, access for the CPNI to the Catholic community. Finally, the election of a Labour Government at Westminster raised hopes within Northern Ireland that British indifference to events in the Province would not be sustained.

Optimism about the forces for change in Northern Ireland must surely have been limited, at least from the point of view of the CPNI. The success of the Northern Ireland Labour Party had provoked a counter-offensive from the Unionist Party which set out to re-construct the all-class bloc on which Unionist dominance had been based. Divisions within Unionism were not exactly propitious; the less sectarian sector of Unionism was that which proposed the economic strategies against which the CPNI's anti-monopoly alliance was to work. By 1967, moreover, the Labour Government, even with a comfortable majority, seemed hardly more concerned than the Conservatives about Northern Ireland's internal divisions. The Communists had no doubts that caution was essential to the process of reform. The course of events in Northern Ireland did not follow the path mapped out in the CPNI's 1962 programme; the effect of this was a Communist reappraisal of that programme from the mid 1970s.

If Northern Ireland was displaying a reluctance to change, the same could not be said for the Irish Republic in this period. The "modernisation" of Irish society was concentrated principally in the economic field; the dominant political party, Fianna Fail moved away from its protectionist economic strategy and embarked upon a course designed to promote industrial development in Ireland. The Republic applied to join the EEC, linking its application with that of the United Kingdom; a Free Trade Agreement was reached with Britain in 1965 and steps were taken to encourage capital investment by multinational corporations. In so far as this strategy was successful, there were inevitable social consequences. Emigration slowed down, urbanisation increased. The trades union movement expanded. Social attitudes began to change, more gradually in some spheres than in others. By 1969, the Irish Labour Party felt confident enough of its electorate to publish a programme based on the slogan "The Seventies will be Socialist". Less than ten years earlier, such an unashamed reference to socialism would have been unthinkable.

The economic policies upon which Irish modernisation was founded were not acceptable to the Irish Workers Party, which continued to criticise them. The effects of these policies were not without favourable consequences for the Irish Worker's Party, however. While the Irish Labour Party in the late 1960s and early 1970s was the principal beneficiary on the left of these radicalic trends, the Irish Workers Party also experienced a gradual increase in membership. (This increase must be seen in perspective - by 1975, the Communist Party of Ireland claimed to have 600 - 700 members). Growth in membership was mainly in the Dublin area and was combined with a degree of increased influence within the labour movement and intellectual strata. Party members initiated and were involved in a number of campaigns which could mobilise varying degrees of support. The Irish Vietnam Committee, for instance, could organise demonstrations attended by several hundred people, as could the Anti-Apartheid movement. Domestic issues such as unem-

ployment or poor housing gave rise to committees and pressure groups in which Communists were influential. While the Party in the South was never as successful in trade union work as the CPNI, some Party members were successful in attaining posts within trade unions or places on Dublin Trades Council's executive. The influence of the Catholic Church on popular political attitudes had become somewhat limited by this stage. Although the Church was not absolutely without influence - the Irish Labour Party alleged that clerical opposition restrained potential voters for its 1969 manifesto - there was no longer the extreme anti-Communism of the 1950s. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was not opposed in Ireland to the same degree as the invasion of Hungary had been. While the Irish Workers Party was still a long way from the creation of its "progressive alliance", Party members could feel encouraged by developments in the South. The "new Republicanism" which had brought northern Republicans into the Civil Rights Association, had also had effects in the South. Sinn Fein members became involved in domestic and international pressure groups with the Communists, and could be seen as having come into the Irish Worker's Party's sphere of influence. A clearly identifiable Left-Right division was emerging within the Labour Party. If there was as yet no sign of a "left" group within Fianna Fail, this might be only a matter of time.

Against the background of crisis in Northern Ireland and progress in the Republic, the two Irish parties decided to unite in 1970. There were some disagreements among the participants in the Unity Congress in March 1970 about the significance of this merger and the reasons for it. In one view it was merely an extension of the Joint Council which had co-ordinated the activities of the two Parties for some time. The Northern and Southern areas of the new Communist Party of Ireland would continue to have a considerable degree of autonomy.<sup>22</sup> Alternatively, the creation of a united Party was viewed as a clear statement of the Party's commitment to a united Ireland.<sup>23</sup> At the time, there was no public opposition to the resolution in favour of unity. Later there were allegations that certain members had

opposed it<sup>24</sup> and there is evidence that some members did indeed have reservations. Public statements by the new Communist Party of Ireland were fairly clear on the reasons for its formation. A new stage had been reached in the "Irish people's long struggle for national and social liberation", and "the upsurge of the people of the six counties (ie Northern Ireland) on the issues of civil and democratic rights" indicated that "British imposed partition policies" would not be successful.<sup>25</sup> The division into two Parties had been an effect of the conditions of World War II; the division had been somewhat artificial as the two Parties had always been in agreement over policies.<sup>26</sup> The "new stage" was not as yet fully defined by the CPI. The implication of the Manifesto is that an end to the partition of Ireland would be on the agenda, but the organisation and policies of the Party continued to reflect the problems of working within two states. The Party would be organised into Northern and Southern areas with area Congresses and Executive Committees which would have some autonomy over policy matters. In addition, each area would continue to publish its own newspaper.

The alleged opposition or reservations about the uniting of the two Parties came from within the Irish Workers Party. The Southern area of the CPI would also generate more serious discontents in the mid '70s. Such reservations as there were on the issue of unity seem to have been for a number of reasons, not always clearly defined. There was a feeling that the members of the Northern Party were too preoccupied with day-to-day activities and uninterested in wider theoretical problems of socialism. Some Northern members were thought to have over estimated the revolutionary potential of the situation in Northern Ireland. In general, uniting the Parties might lead, too soon, to a commitment against partition.<sup>27</sup>

The Communist Party of Ireland was not so absorbed with the national question in Ireland as to ignore developments within the international Communist movement. In 1975/76 a storm erupted within the Southern area over the Irish Party's attitude to "Euro-Communism" and its relationship with the

Soviet Union. The storm had been brewing for some years; those on both sides of the dispute were aware of differences emerging in the aftermath of Khrushchev's secret speech to the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Neither the CPNI nor the IWL was represented at that Congress and consequently the revelations about Stalin's crimes were the more disturbing for Irish Communists. The 1956 Congress set in motion a process of questioning which in the long-term "eroded the confidence" and "lowered the morale" of many Irish Communists.<sup>28</sup> The doubts raised by Khrushchev's speech did not have any immediate effects upon the Irish parties, almost certainly because of the 'seige mentality' engendered by the ferocious anti-Communism of Catholic Ireland. By 1968, however, considerable sections of Communists in the Irish Republic were sufficiently disaffected from the USSR to issue a statement condemning the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Irish Worker's Party had been impressed by the "Prague Spring" and were all the more distressed by its suppression. "Socialism with a human face" could have provided an acceptable model, appealing to many sections of the population which the Irish Workers Party hoped to draw into its fold. The Irish Workers Party called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia; the CPNI allowed some debate on the matter, but the Northern Communists also described the use of force by the Soviet Union as a "grave mistake".<sup>29</sup>

Subsequent to this demonstration of independence from the USSR the Party in the Republic experienced a growth in membership and influence. Some members continued to express an interest in the problems of socialism and democracy and, quietly, to criticise the practices of the CPSU. As in the experience of other Parties, the new line did not go unchallenged; by 1975, the "orthodox" group within the CPI was sufficiently strong to reverse the trend towards a complete break with the Soviet Party. It is interesting that this trend was exclusively represented within the Irish Workers Party and the Southern area of the CPI; insofar as the Communists in the North were mobilised it was against the trend. At the CPI Congress in March 1975 the

question of Czechoslovakia was re-examined. Milotte states that the resolution condemning the Soviet invasion was reversed but this is not entirely accurate. Nonetheless, the Congress did accept<sup>30</sup> an interpretation of the Czechoslovakian reform movement which implied that it was counter-revolutionary and Western inspired. The defeated critics of the Soviet Party still represented a sizeable group within the Southern area at least; they demanded that the published report of the Congress include a reference to the fact that the Party was deeply divided over the question of Czechoslovakia. Conflicting evidence is offered about the outcome of this demand; not such reference was made in documents about the Conference. By the end of 1975, the "Euro communist faction" had decided to leave the Party; twenty-two members defected from the Southern area. Four of the twenty-two were members of the National Executive Committee. This departure of the twenty-two brought a public discussion of the problems of socialism and democracy. The fact that it came about in these circumstances inevitably meant that the discussion was rather dismissive. Those who left the CPI established the Irish Marxist Society, a discussion group which published a theoretical journal. The Society was rather short-lived and its most prominent members have since joined the Irish Labour Party.

The strongest complaint of those who resigned from the Party was that they were prevented from expressing their views and that a concerted effort was made to squeeze them out of Executive positions within the CPI. This is, naturally, refuted by the 'pro-Soviet faction'. In their letter of resignation, the departing group argued that "democracy" had become a "dirty word among the dominant section of the leadership." This section of the Party viewed "other Communist and left-wing Parties as enemies" and considered the strategies of the Portuguese Communist Party as a model for Ireland."<sup>31</sup>

The National Executive Committee refuted some of the detailed criticisms of breaches of inner Party democracy. The wider theoretical issues raised

were taken up in a discussion of Eurocommunism by the General-Secretary of the Party at the time in 1977. The article focussed most attention on the Communist Party of Spain and the writings of Santiago Carrillo. Referring to Irish history, the Paris Commune and the experience of Chile, O'Riordan argued that the Spanish Party's approach would allow a capitalist political party to undermine a socialist system. This was "Right Wing Social Democracy", rather than Marxism. Social-democracy had been artificially introduced into Portugal by other Western European Socialist Parties in order to "divert the coming revolutionary process." In any case whatever the merits or otherwise of these strategies in other countries, they had no relevance whatsoever in Ireland. There was no basis for alleging that Ireland was similar to developed capitalist countries such as Britain, Italy France and Spain because none of the former had

"A National Independence question; Are situated beside a powerful imperialist aggressor; An imperialist power which dominates the economy of the island which it has partitioned into two states; A Northern "state" in which side by side with imperialist repression there is waging a mini-sectarian civil war."<sup>32</sup>

In Ireland "the division between the Labour movement and the National Independence Movement.... frustrates the development.... of a broad democratic movement." In order to overcome this division there must be "a united mass movement under working-class leadership.... not split by projected multi-party division."<sup>33</sup>

This discussion is interesting in its associating the problems of democracy and national independence. It is hard to define the implications of the final paragraph; disregarding them, however, it is clear that a change of emphasis on the stages from democracy to socialism and national independence and unity has been achieved. One possible conclusion is that the pro "Eurocommunist" faction were also opposed to moving unity and independence into a central place in the CPI's strategy, and vice versa. There is some evidence to support this, though it is not conclusive. O'Riordan, for

example, is one of a group of cadres who had a history of Republicanism. Whatever the merits of this interpretation, Eurocommunism continues to be decisively rejected by the Communist Party of Ireland, which is uninhibitedly pro-Soviet. There have been suggestions that a more critical approach is taken by some intellectuals within the present Party membership, but there has been no public disagreement with Party statements in favour of the Soviet invasion of (intervention in) Afghanistan; condemning the Solidarity movement or welcoming the introduction of martial law in Poland.



Within a disturbingly short time, the conflict within Northern Ireland over Civil Rights was pushed into the background by a renewed military struggle for Irish unity. The deployment of British troops on the streets of Northern Ireland, the use of emergency repressive legislation, the upsurge of inter-communal sectarian violence and the terrorist tactics of the Provisional IRA caused dismay and confusion within the Communist movement and among the Left in Ireland, generally. Only the tiny Trotskyist inspired groupuscules could discern any prospect of socialism in the bleak environment of Northern Ireland. During the 1970s the Communist Party reappraised its analyses of the Northern Ireland situation with the result that its 1982 programme displays a great deal more nationalism than those of twenty years earlier. This change of emphasis was achieved with some hesitations and there are some continuities with the line adopted in the 1960s, but the present day Communist Party could be said to stand within the "anti-Partitionist" camp in Irish politics.

This by no means implies that the CPI supports the strategy of winning Irish unity and independence by military means; a consistent aspect of its policies has been its opposition to the paramilitary violence of the Provisional IRA and the Irish National Liberation Army. The activities of these groups are condemned in much the same terms as those used by other European Communist Parties faced with terrorist groups; these activities alienate the working-class and give the ruling classes an opportunity to introduce repressive legislation which can be directed against the broader labour movement. In Northern Ireland, the terrorist campaigns had the additional effect of deepening the already existing sectarian divisions within the working class and therefore obstructing the path towards complete Irish independence. Communist Party members, especially within the trade union movement, have sought ways of overcoming these sectarian divisions. The implication of their strategy in the early 1970s was that a peaceful resolution of Northern Ireland's problems could still be found within the

context of reforming the Northern Ireland state and transforming Northern Irish society. Therefore, Communist Party members continued (and still continue) to work within the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. Although many of original demands of the Civil Rights Association - for electoral reform, an end to discrimination in the allocation of public authority housing and the introduction of legislation to end discrimination in employment had been met by 1972 - there was still scope for campaigns against emergency repressive legislation and for a more vigorous drive against sectarian employers. Given the continued Provisional IRA campaign and the effects of economic recession, there is little prospect of much being achieved in either of these areas in the near future. Similarly, efforts to launch a trades union based movement combining opposition to sectarianism and demands for economic growth have met with little success.

Since the late 1970s the belief in the possibility of a limited solution to Northern Ireland's problems being found within the Northern Ireland context has been abandoned to some extent. The CPI now firmly accepts the concept of Ireland's "incomplete national revolution" and has focussed its attention on ways to achieve its completion. The strategies evoked so far are not without inconsistencies. In its most recent programme argues that:

"The continuous political crisis in Northern Ireland since October 1968 has clearly shown that the 1920 'Solution' to the Irish Question is no longer viable."

The imposition of partition on Ireland was "undemocratic"; by having imposed partition, Britain is responsible for the political crisis in Ireland. The resolution of the crisis can only be brought about by a British withdrawal from Ireland, under certain clearly established conditions. The British government must first "declare its intention to withdraw, in a specific time, from all interference in Irish affairs, political, military and economic, thus opening the way for the Irish working people, North and South, to determine what future political and economic structures are needed to

best serve their interests." This declaration must be accompanied by an end to repressive legislation; the withdrawal of British troops to barracks pending their complete withdrawal; the disbandment of the locally-recruited and mainly Protestant regiment of the British Army and the creation of a new, accountable civilian police force. Without these conditions being met there would be a danger of an extreme loyalist paramilitary group embarking on a military campaign against the new arrangements.

The second set of conditions for a satisfactory British withdrawal relate to the political structures within Northern Ireland. In 1972 the locally elected Northern Ireland Parliament was abolished by the British government. Since then Northern Ireland has been governed through "Direct Rule" by the Westminster Parliament, while a number of efforts have been made to create a new set of institutions which would be acceptable to the two communities in Northern Ireland. British policy has been based on the idea that some form of autonomous government is necessary for Northern Ireland. Throughout the 1970s, the Communist Party of Ireland, too, has demanded the return of devolved government to Northern Ireland. Even given the demand for a British declaration of intent to withdraw from Northern Ireland it will still be necessary to create such a local Parliament because:

"the winning of working-class unity on the twin questions of national and social emancipation is basic to freeing Ireland from the grip of imperialism. For this reason, we declare that a transition period, to undo the injustices and heal the divisions created among the working-class in the North is in the best interests of the Irish people.... It is imperative that.... a devolved assembly.... should be established in Northern Ireland."

This assembly would have wide financial and economic powers which would allow it to create joint economic projects with the Irish Republic and establish a publicly owned industrial sector through new investment and nationalisation. The programme also calls for an end to the Provisional IRA and INLA campaigns which have "damaged the anti-imperialist struggle" and

"played into the hands of imperialism by providing it with a pseudo-justification for its repression."

The military campaigns have also "strengthened unionist ideology among the Protestant section of the working class and also alienated the British working class whose help we need." The primary responsibility for violence in Northern Ireland, however, rests with the British Government.

The policies advocated for the Republic of Ireland in this programme are also, to some extent, based on the idea of a transitional period leading to unity and "genuine independence." Some demands are realisable within the existing structure of the Irish Republic, for example those relating to a state-funded programme for economic expansion. Others are based upon the possibility of preparing for unity; thus, the economic programme also includes measures to weaken the grip of imperialism and there are demands for the secularization of Irish politics and society.<sup>34</sup>

The major difference between the 1982 programme and those of 1962 is that Irish unity, instead of coming as a result of a long and gradual process of social and political change in both states, is now seen as an immediate objective, inextricably linked to the process of social change. Leaving aside the innumerable practical difficulties in attaining any of the goals set out in the 1982 programme, it is interesting to consider some of the problems which it leaves unresolved and to draw some conclusions about the reasons for this return to the Connolly model for socialism in Ireland. The major difficulty is, as it has always been with any attempt to link nationalism and socialism, the resistance of the Protestant working-class to Irish unity, resistance which has been strengthened by the experience of the IRA military campaign. This problem of Protestant working-class unionism is of much greater consequence for the Community Party than for other "socialist-nationalist" groups, as so much of their support in the North comes from this sector, a fact which is recognised by some Communists, at least:

"The steadfast refusal of this (ie Protestant) section of the working-class to become republican has resulted in republicanism labelling it 'irreformable'.... There are considerable problems about labelling a section of the working-class irreformable when it has demonstrated an intense trade union militancy, generated the bulk of the leadership of the Communist Party in the North of Ireland and has made at least an equal contribution to the votes obtained by Communist candidates in all elections contested since the Second World War."35

The basic premise of the argument is, however, that Protestant workers must indeed become republican, though the writer can offer only remarkably feeble suggestions as to how this might be achieved. This is to be as a result of an economic programme which will bring about economic expansion and the integration of the economies of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. The material basis for sectarianism will be destroyed, while the material basis for Irish unity will be created. The British declaration of intent to withdraw from Northern Ireland would "break the grip of Unionist ideology on the Protestant working-class" thus paving the way for social and political unity. There is no discussion of the possibility that such a declaration would tighten the grip of unionism rather than weaken it.

The assumption that the Protestant working class continues to support the Communist Party of Ireland to the same extent as formerly is rather dubious. The Communist vote in Northern Ireland elections - larger than in the Republic, though by no means significant - has slumped in the last fifteen years. Candidates now poll fewer than 100 votes in elections, indicating that there has been no increase in their popularity among Catholic workers. This situation cannot necessarily be attributed to changes in the Party's programme but to the increased polarisation within Northern Ireland. The Party's programme is an effect and a reflection of this situation rather than the other way around.

The increasingly nationalist positions of the Communist Party may be explained as a response to two developments within Irish politics in recent years. The first of these is the emergence of Provisional Sinn Fein - the political wing of the Provisional IRA - as a political force within Northern

Ireland in the wake of the campaign for "political status" for Republican prisoners convicted of crimes of violence. This campaign culminated in a hunger strike in which ten Republican prisoners died. The period of the hunger-strike was marked by the election of one of the hunger-strikers as a Westminster MP. This was significant in Northern Ireland terms both because it was the first occasion on which Provisional Sinn Fein had stood for election to any of the - in its view - illegitimate political institutions in Northern Ireland and because it indicated a greater degree of Catholic support for Sinn Fein than had previously been indicated. While this support has not been sustained - and was clearly generated by sympathy for the hunger-strikers and hostility at the British governments refusal to acknowledge their demands - Sinn Fein has continued to contest elections with some degree of success. The Communist Party supported the demands of the hunger-strikers - while arguing that political status should also be awarded to Loyalist prisoners - and supported the candidacy of the hunger-striker, Bobby Sands (although there was some opposition from its members in the Northern Ireland trade union movement). Since then, the CPI has become more accommodating to Sinn Fein, has entered into pressure groups with it and has called for the government to discuss Northern Ireland's problems with Sinn Fein. Sinn Fein's policies are seen as "populist" rather than "socialist" and it is 'subjectively' rather than 'objectively' anti-imperialist. Nonetheless, the Communist Party considers there to be some value in joint work with Sinn Fein in spite of the fact that the latter supports the terrorist campaign of the IRA which the CPI deplures.

The other development which seems to have encouraged the Communist Party to declare its policies in more clearly nationalist terms has been the rapid growth of support for the Workers' Party, especially within the Republic of Ireland. The history of the Worker's Party deserves much fuller treatment, in brief, at this Party is the product of the growing interest among Republicans in North and South in socialist theory and politics in the

aftermath of the 1956-62 military campaign. With some encouragement from the Communists, as we have seen, the IRA and Sinn Fein turned to politics rather than militarism to achieve its goals and began to redefine these goals. This was not a smooth process, as there was considerable resistance to socialism among traditional Republicans. The Republican movement eventually split into "Provisional" and Official" wings in 1969, as a direct result of the proposal from the more radical groups that Republicans should take seats, if elected, in British and Irish institutions. The Provisional IRA has, since then, been the main paramilitary group seeking to overthrow the Northern Ireland state by force. As for the Official wing of the movement, it continued its evolution away from militarism and towards a socialist strategy throughout the 1970s. This was a painful and difficult process; the Provisional IRA have periodically resorted to violence against the "Officials" and there was considerable internal debate about the policies to be adopted. The outcome of the process is that this organisation now has a socialist rather than a republican orientation - the adoption of the name The Workers' Party in 1982 was intended to emphasise this - and it now sees Irish unity as a long term goal, attainable only through consent. The Workers' Party contests elections in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In the Republic it has had some electoral success, winning three seats in the Dail, (the Irish Parliament) in 1982. Although one seat was subsequently lost, it is apparent that support for the Workers' Party is increasing particularly in the Dublin area. Their influence within the trades union movement has increased; in this arena, they have replaced the Southern area Communists.

As we have seen, the Communists encouraged the socialist trend within the Republican movement and during the 1970s, the CPI and Official Sinn Fein (known as Republican Clubs in the North) worked jointly on a number of issues. The relationship between the two organisations appears to have been satisfactory from the Communists' point of view until the mid 1970s; they had broadly similar short term policies and a few of the more left-wing

members of Sinn Fein moved into the Communist Party. Since then, however, there has been some discord, with the Workers Party becoming the target of a great deal of criticism from the CPI. The latest Communist Party programme, unusually, contains a specific critical commentary on the Workers' Party.

The core of the Communist Party's disagreement with the Workers' Party is that the latter has "turned its back on the national question", in what is described as "an opportunist fashion." The status of the Workers' Party is also questioned: is it a Marxist party or merely social-democratic? In the view point of some Communists, it is clearly social-democratic, but masquerading as Marxist.<sup>36</sup> Much criticism is reserved for the Workers' Party Research section which is seen as having been the driving force behind the loss of commitment to the national question.<sup>37</sup> Overall, there is a sense of the Workers' Party having become a competitor with the Communist Party, one which threatens to displace the Communist Party both domestically and internationally. Co-operation between the two Parties is now at a minimum, the last major joint initiative involving them both was in the attempt to create a "Left Alternative" in the Irish Republic. This "broad left" initiative, which included some left wing members of the Irish Labour Party, collapsed primarily for lack of an agreed programme.

The Workers' Party is indeed, in some ways difficult to define. Its members refute the suggestion that they wish to become an "alternative Communist Party" and describe their Party as a "democratic-centralist" socialist Party, "not dogmatic, but active." The notion that they are competing with, or aiming to displace, the Communist Party is dismissed. As for policy disagreements, it is accepted that the national question is important, for two reasons. They reject the demand for a British "declaration of intent to withdraw" and they oppose the Communist Party's association with Provisional Sinn Fein. Both these criticisms are founded on the view that the Protestant working-class will not accept Irish unity in the foreseeable future. Any attempt to force this on them would be undemocratic. Therefore, the



best strategy for socialists is to work for the development of "class politics" in both states, with "unity by consent" as a long term aspiration. Sinn Fein and the Provisional IRA are seen as traditional and extremely reactionary nationalists with whom a socialist party cannot possibly have friendly relations.<sup>38</sup> The degree of support which the Workers' Party has won in the Irish Republic would seem to indicate that a substantial section of the working-class in Dublin, as in Belfast, is unenthusiastic about the attainment of Irish unity. It is possible to conclude that competition with the Workers' Party has accentuated the already existing nationalist tendencies within the Communist Party of Ireland.

This paper has focussed, almost exclusively on the Communist Party of Ireland's attitudes to the "national question" and neglected other aspects of its programme because this issue remains a central problem for them, as for all left-wing groups in Ireland. The future for Irish Communism does not look especially bright, one could argue that, in comparison with its past, it does not look particularly bleak. Electoral support may be dwindling, but the Party seems likely to maintain its influence within the trades union movement, at least in Northern Ireland, for the foreseeable future. Similarly, Party membership has remained stable in recent years; the youth section (Connolly Youth Movement) provides a supply of new cadres in both states. The disavowal of Eurocommunism has not affected membership figures since the crisis of 1975; it is doubtful whether a more critical approach to the Soviet Union would have brought a dramatic increase in membership. The Communist Party remains a marginal force in both states, however, in spite of the expansion of the constituency for left-wing politics in the Irish Republic. For the foreseeable future, the prospects of its becoming less marginal do not appear bright.

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O'Murchu was one of those who moved from Sinn Fein/Workers Party to the CPI and may be importing previous conflicts into his new Party.
38. Interview with Sean Garland 17 February 1985

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM IN THE WEST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES

by

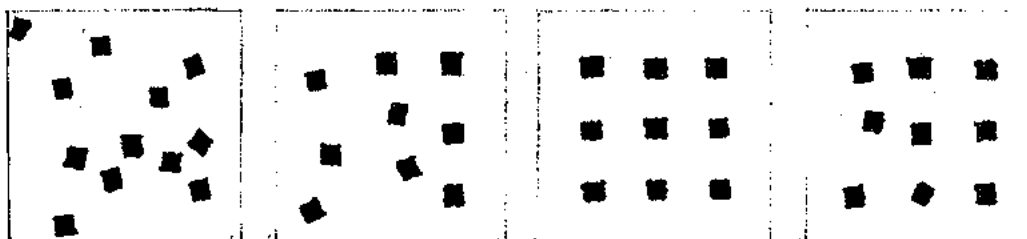
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## Democratic Centralism in West European Communist Parties

CPSU Communist Party of the Soviet Union  
NRCP Non-ruling communist party  
RCP Ruling communist party  
WECP West European communist party

### Introduction

The term 'democratic centralism' made its definitive entry into the vocabulary of communism in 1905 when it seemed at last possible to introduce democratic procedures into the Russian party.<sup>(1)</sup> Although it was not invoked to any great extent at the turning-point of the Bolsheviks' tenth congress in 1921 it had appeared during the preceding two years in two particular contexts. First, an opposition group that was concerned that party life was atrophying under the pressures of the Civil War styled themselves the Democratic Centralists in an attempt, by invoking the term, to rally the party to democratic practices that they judged to be under threat. On the other hand, the term was insisted on in the twenty-one conditions for acceptance of a party into the Comintern, with a different emphasis; on strict 'almost military' discipline. In its infancy, then, and at the point of the creation of the WECPs, the term clearly meant different things to different people. We should note, however, that it still did not have the resonance within the movement that it has since acquired.

When 'the Leninist principle' appeared for the first time in the CPSU's statute in 1934 it had come to be associated, in practice, with the organizational norms of that party and of the parties of the Comintern. By that time the Marxist movement had passed through a number of crises and schisms. The Revisionist controversy had been eclipsed by the triumphant assertion of Leninism in the Russian revolution, the corollary of which

was the splitting of the Left in Western Europe - at which point the parties that retained the 'social democratic' label had ceased to emphasize any Marxist heritage. But the Trotskyist opposition had laid claim not only to the mantle of Marx, but of Lenin too. Like the Democratic Centralists before it, it was to uphold a notion of DC which it claimed to have atrophied in the Bolshevik party.

From the close of the second world war the communist movement has expanded widely and relatively rapidly. The expansion has, again, been accompanied by schism, but this time the rifts have concerned states rather than individuals or groups. The resonance of such rifts within the movement has been great. The expulsion of the Yugoslavs from the Cominform, and the Sino-Soviet split both had a clarity and a finality that have endured. Departures from the established Soviet orthodoxy on the part of the NRCPs have lacked that clarity and finality, but they have nonetheless been significant in some cases - for example in the case of the radical parties of the Latin American Left that have emerged as dynamic rivals to the ex-Comintern parties of that continent, and in the case of Eurocommunism. Diversity, in fact, seems to be all around us in a movement that once appeared to be marked by uniformity.

The fact of the matter is that this question of whether uniformity or diversity is uppermost in communist organization is something of a trap, and has to be treated with great care. Crudely, communist organization exhibits both diversity and a remarkable uniformity, depending on which area of organizational life is under discussion. There is wide variation in the economic organization, <sup>sponsored by</sup> the RCPs, but in the organization of the party itself uniformity holds sway. It is, in fact, important to differentiate between the policies that a given communist party has

sponsored, and the party's own organizational norms. This is not to say that those norms, too, do not vary. It is to say that, given the vast range of the cultural settings, political environments and economic circumstances of communist parties, what is most striking about them is their family resemblance in relation to the way in which they are organized, and <sup>to</sup> the views that they hold - both RCPs and NRCPs - of their proper relationship with society. They themselves are aware of this resemblance; they take pride in it, and when the dust of schism settles it reveals these traditional organizational forms still in place. Needless to say, critics of communism, too, have been quick to register this uniformity.

In view of the historical record of diversity and schism, and of continued communist expansion, it is legitimate to seek answers to the following questions:

- Is the degree to which communist parties today subscribe to a common organizational pattern over-estimated? That is, is the idea of DC subject to differing interpretations?
- To what extent has there been change in the political organization of individual parties, or groups of parties?
- More importantly, was there ever so high a degree of uniformity in party organization as is customarily believed?
- What range of variation is there?

This paper will discuss how these questions might be approached in the particular case of the West European communist parties (WECPs), through an examination of the theory and practice of DC in those parties. None of the questions is particularly novel. What makes it worth reformulating



them is the fact that the world itself changes. Yesterday's answers to perennial questions do not necessarily suffice for today.

There is particular value in taking the WECPs as a case study. The emphasis so far in studies of communism has been above all on the Soviet Union and to a lesser degree on the other ruling parties. This is understandable. Success in revolution gave the Bolsheviks an overwhelming authority in the Marxist movement. With two minor exceptions the Soviet Union was for a quarter of a century the single bastion of established Marxist-Leninist socialism, and the organizational forms that the CPSU developed during this period became a major point of reference for communist parties. As other communist parties came to power they too benefitted from a comparable attention. Again with one or two exceptions, these parties, including the CPSU, have come to power in agrarian societies; that is, they have shared a predicament of economic and cultural disadvantage. What students of communism have been studying in addressing themselves to the ruling parties is the politics of development, in a setting of the struggle of poorer nations against richer nations. To that extent - and despite the misgivings of Africanists - Mozambique, Angola, even Ethiopia offer the analyst of communism more of the same. The communist parties of Western Europe (and of Japan and Anglo-Saxonia) in one sense offer more of the same, in that they have been so heavily influenced by the Comintern, and draw their identity from that. But on the other hand their profound difference from the ruling parties in terms of the tasks that they face and of their cultural and economic environments should lead us to expect differences also in terms of their organizational behaviour. If we do not find significant differences then we should expect them either to

emerge or for these parties to face trouble and possible extinction. The same considerations offer a prima facie case for expecting organizational differences within the category of the WCEPs deriving, again, from differences in the tasks that they face, in their respective cultural and political environments and in their developmental circumstances.

The aim of this paper is to approach in a critical spirit the acclaimed uniformity of communist political forms, and we do this by examining two major problems with which the 'Leninist principle of DC' confronts the student of communism.

#### 1) The Question of Definition

In view of the frequency with which the concept of DC is invoked, of the symbolic power that it carries, and of the status that it is accorded by friend and foe of communism as the hallmark of communist political organization, it is disconcerting to discover that there are very real problems in defining it. In one sense the symbolic power renders definition otiose. Concepts are political tools; when they are used as rallying cries, that particular political use invites a response that belongs more to the realm of ritual than to that of ratiocination. The profound attachment to the idea of DC and the very positive responses evoked by the word itself are quite compatible with an equally profound lack of definition in the term's reference, or even in its associations.

If precision is required, for normal purposes recourse is had to rules of thumb: for example, 'freedom of discussion, unity of action'. But in themselves these rules of thumb are not distinctive; they express the aspirations of any political organization that makes the slightest

claim to be democratic and that aims to maintain the cohesion necessary for survival. Interestingly, the definitions set out in the statutes of the various parties offer little more. In most cases these formulations (see appendix) recommend political practices which conform to the basic notions of liberal democracy: they require accountability through an electoral system and through the revocability of elected representatives, they assert the majority principle, and they conjoin a degree of acceptance of executive authority which is not at all uncongenial to liberal democracy. It is this that enabled Jean Ellenstein to claim that no constitutional revision would be needed to give reality to the party's statute; and Althusser has made the same point (2).

There is, of course, nothing unusual in a party's constitution being discrepant with its practices. Political life is like that. But it is a situation that gives problems to anyone who has to grapple with the problem of definition. If the party statutes do not tell us what is distinctive about DC, and rules of thumb are conceptual husks with little informative content, where then should we look?

One does encounter occasional theoretical treatments of DC which tell us rather more - that, for example, produced by Gramsci in his prison cell. Since this treatment is both rich and dense, and at times open to differing interpretations, it is difficult to abstract from it. But it is important to make the attempt because here we have an indigenous West European presentation of what might justly be termed a philosophy of DC.

It revolves around the basic concept of organicità. Organicità expresses on the one hand the unity and cohesion of the revolutionary movement, and

on the other the movement's forward drive. For organicità to prosper both cohesion and forward drive must be maintained:

Organicità can only be found in DC, which is, so to speak, 'centralism' in movement - i.e. a continual adaptation of the organization to the real movement, a matching of thrusts from below with orders from above, a continuous insertion of elements thrown up from the depths of the rank and file into the solid framework of the leadership apparatus which ensures continuity and the regular accumulation of experience (3)

Gramsci opposes DC to 'bureaucratic centralism', when 'the leading group is saturated' and turns into 'a narrow clique which tends to perpetuate its selfish privileges by controlling or even stifling the birth of oppositional forces' (4).

In another place Gramsci talks of the party in a very particular (and now very familiar) way:

The modern prince, the myth prince, cannot be a real person, a concrete individual. It can only be an organism, a complex element of society in which a collective will ... begins to take a concrete form. History has already provided this organism, and it is the political party - the first cell in which there came together germs of a collective will tending to become universal and total (5).

The points worth noting from this presentation are as follows:

- 1) There is, in Gramsci's idea of organicità, a notion of a collective interest (indeed a collective will) which transcends individual interests and wills. That is, one does not have to father the high value put on collective unity in WECPs on Soviet (and Russian) collectivist thinking and practice. Western European communist itself contains this strand, which has, of course, another manifestation in the ideas of Rousseau.
- 2) There is in Gramsci's insistence on the value of living tensions in the political organism and in his strong warning against bureaucratic centralism the basis for a criticism of Soviet views of DC which

use the traditional ban on fractional activity (see below) to promote a preference for political harmony and social homogeneity. We shall see that it is the Soviet view which today's orthodox communist parties have inherited rather than Gramsci's, though the influence of the latter's thinking on that of his own party today is also to be noted.

- 3) Gramsci's view of the Modern Prince, however, could be held to endorse Leninist views of the party and of its role. This reading brings the later Gramsci into conflict with the earlier, whose political activity in Turin in the Ordine Nuovo period situates him rather in the tradition of the council communists. For our purposes it is enough to note that there is this ambivalence in Gramsci.

Far less formal, but more informative factually, is an interview which Paul Laurent gave for France nouvelle in June 1977 (6). As in the case of the party statutes and rule of thumb definitions (a version of which Laurent gives: 'an intense democratic life, confidence in the leadership, unity in the struggle') DC is here associated with the most general democratic processes: 'to enable all communists to participate actively and with political awareness in forming the party's policies and in putting them into action'; 'democratic election'; 'information must circulate in the communist party as widely and as democratically as possible'. But a substantial part of his definition of DC is drawn quite simply from the PCF's organizational practices, and is a rationalization of those practices. It is practice that does the definitional filling-in, telling us what form 'democratic elections' take and how congresses should be run, and leading him to explain that 'between two congresses it is not normally possible for there to be a public expression of different points of view' (7).